

Greek and Germanic Mythology

in the Light of Esotericism

GA 92



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by

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Siegfried reforging the sword of the Empire (Reichsschwert), Bismarck-Nationaldenkmal, Berlin, completed 1901

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The Prometheus Saga

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You will have come to realise from many of my lectures that a deep significance underlies the world of saga, that myths are the expression of esoteric truths. Today I should like to speak of one of the most interesting of these sagas, one that has a bearing on the evolution of our fifth root-race. ^[1] At the same time I shall be able to show you that the esotericist can pass through three stages in the understanding of saga. First, the sagas live in one or other of the peoples and are understood exoterically in their literal meaning. Then disbelief in their literal interpretation begins, and educated people search for their symbolic meaning. Behind these two interpretations are hidden five others, for every saga, has seven interpretations. The third stage is the one in which they can, in a way, be taken literally again. Of course, you have first to come to understand the language in which they are expressed. To-day I want to speak of one that is not very easy to understand, I want to speak of the Prometheus saga.

In a chapter in the second volume of her *Secret Doctrine* ^[2] Madame Blavatsky refers to this saga, and what she writes will enable you to see what a profound meaning is hidden in it. Nevertheless, it is not always possible to say the last word in published works. To-day we can go a little beyond the explanations given by Blavatsky.

Prometheus belongs to the world of Greek saga. He and his brother Epimetheus are the sons of a Titan, Japetus. The Titans are themselves sons of the ancient Greek god Uranus and his wife Gaia. Uranus means 'heaven', and Gaia 'earth'. And let me draw your attention to the fact that Uranus is to the Greeks the same as Varuna to the Indians. Thus Prometheus is a Titan and one of the sons of Uranus, as is also his brother Epimetheus. Chronos (Time) usurped the throne of his father Uranus and obtained the rulership for himself. For this he was in his turn dethroned by his own sons and, with all the

other Titans, cast into the underworld. Only Prometheus and his brother Epimetheus remained loyal to Zeus during these events. They fought side by side with Zeus against the other Titans.

Now Zeus had created the human race. But humanity had become rebellious, hence he wanted to exterminate it. Then Prometheus made himself humanity's representative. He devised a plan to give men the means whereby they could save themselves and be no longer entirely dependent upon the help of Zeus. Thus we are told that Prometheus taught men the use of writing and of the arts, but above all the use of fire. Because of Zeus's anger Prometheus was chained to the Caucasus, and was forced to endure there much suffering over a long period.

Further, we are told that the gods, with Zeus at their head, then caused Hephaestus, the god of the smiths, to make a statue of a woman. This female statue was provided with all those external attributes which adorn human beings of the fifth root-race. This woman was Pandora. She was sent to bring gifts to mankind, first to Epimetheus, the brother of Prometheus. Prometheus warned his brother not to accept the gifts, but the latter allowed himself to be persuaded. All these gifts of the gods, except one, were showered upon humanity. They constitute for the most part human miseries and sufferings. Only the gift of hope was withheld in Pandora's box.

Thus Prometheus was chained to the Caucasus and a vulture gnawed continuously at his liver. But he knows something which will ensure his rescue. He knows a secret of which even Zeus is ignorant, a secret which Zeus is trying to discover. But Prometheus does not betray the secret, although Zeus sends to him Hermes, the messenger of the gods.

Now in the course of the story we are told of a remarkable release. Prometheus can only be freed through the intervention of an initiate. Such a one "was Hercules, who performed the twelve labours. The execution of these twelve labours was the achievement of an initiate. They symbolise the twelve tasks of initiation. Moreover it is said of Hercules that he had undergone initiation into the Eleusinian Mysteries. Nevertheless someone had to be sacrificed, and so Chiron

the centaur was sacrificed for Prometheus Chiron was already suffering from an incurable malady. He was half animal and half man. That is how Prometheus was rescued.

This is the exoteric saga of Prometheus. In it lies the whole history of the fifth root-race, and in it real Mystery-truth is hidden. The story was told in Greece as genuine saga; but it was also represented in the Mysteries, so pupils in the Mysteries had a knowledge of the destiny of Prometheus before them. And in Prometheus and his destiny they were meant to see the past and the future of the whole of the fifth root-race. You will only be able to understand this if you bear in mind one thing.

In the middle of Lemuria there came about for the first time what we call incarnation, incarnation in the sense in which we have human beings to-day. Mankind was guided by great leaders and teachers whom we call 'the sons of the fire mist'. To-day the fifth root-race is also guided by great initiates, but our initiates are different from the leaders of mankind at that time. You must now come to understand what this difference was. There is a great difference between the leaders of the two preceding root-races and those of our fifth race. The leaders of those races too were united in a White Lodge. But they did not undergo their earlier evolution on our earth planet, but in another environment. They descended to earth already mature, descended as human beings of higher development, in order to instruct men who were still in their infancy, in order to teach them the first arts which they needed. This period of instruction lasted through the third, fourth, and right into the fifth root-race.

This fifth root-race originated in a little band of men who were singled out from the previous root-race. They were led into the Desert of Gobi and later dispersed over the earth. Their first leader, the leader who gave the impulse for this evolution of mankind, was one of those whom we call the Manus, he was the Manu ^[3] of the fifth root-race. This Manu is still one of those leaders of the humanity who descended at the time of the third root-race, one of the leaders who had not gone through their evolution only on the earth but who brought maturity to earth with them.

It was not until the fifth root-race that the development of men such as we are ourselves began, the development of men who, like us, have undergone their evolution on the earth alone, men who have evolved from their lowest stages entirely on the earth.

Thus we have some human beings who are already exalted Leaders and Masters, and others who strive to become such Leaders. Within the fifth root-race, therefore, we have Chelas and Masters ^[4] who have passed through all that our earth has passed through. One of the Masters who has the guidance of the fifth root-race is destined to undertake the guidance of the sixth. The sixth root-race will be the first to be guided by an earthly Brother as its Manu. The earlier Masters surrender the leadership to mankind.

With the dawn of our fifth root-race we have the beginning of all that we call the development of the arts, the development of skill and dexterity. The Atlanteans still led quite a different life. They had no inventions and discoveries. They worked in an entirely different way. Their technique and their skill were quite different. It was only with our fifth root-race that what we call engineering and craftsmanship in our sense developed. The most important discovery was that of fire. You must be quite clear about this, you must be quite clear how much of our widespread engineering, industry and craftsmanship depends upon fire. I think that the engineer will agree with me when I say that without fire nothing of modern engineering would be possible, so that we may say that the discovery of fire was the fundamental discovery, the discovery that gave the impulse to all others. And you must also understand that at the time when the Prometheus saga arose, the term 'fire' comprised everything in any way connected with warmth. Fire was also understood to be the cause of lightning. Fire was the comprehensive expression for the causes of all phenomena of warmth.

The consciousness that humanity of the fifth root-race stands under the sign of fire is what is primarily expressed in the Prometheus saga. And Prometheus is none other than the representative of the entire root-race. His brother is Epimetheus. Prometheus means 'thinking in advance', Epimetheus means 'thinking afterwards, reflecting'. There you have the two activities of human thought, clearly contrasted in the man of reflection and the man of forethought. The reflecting man is the man who allows the things of this world to work upon him, and then thinks; such thought is the Kama-Manas ^[5] thinking. To-day the

man of the fifth root-race still thinks predominantly like Epimetheus. However in so far as he does not merely allow what is already there to work upon him, but becomes an inventor or a discoverer, to that extent he is a Prometheus. Inventions could never be made if all men were like Epimetheus. An invention occurs when a human being creates something that was not there before. It is first there in thought and then the thought is converted into reality. That is Prometheus-thinking. This Prometheus-thinking in the fifth root-race is Manas-thinking. [6] Kama-Manas and Manas run like two streams side by side in the fifth root-race. The Manas-thinking will gradually become more and more widespread.

This Manas-thinking of the fifth root-race has yet another peculiar characteristic, which we understand if we look back to the Atlantean root-race. In Atlantis there was more of an instinctive thinking which was still bound up with the life-force. The Atlantean root-race was still able to make motor-power from the force in seeds. Just as to-day we have in our railway coal-yards a kind of reservoir of power for the movement of engines and freight, in the same way the Atlanteans had stores of plant-seed containing power, which they were still able to convert into power to drive those air-ships which are described in Scott Elliott's book on Atlantis. [7] The spirit of the Atlantean man was still able to subjugate living nature; the spirit of the fifth root-race can only control lifeless nature, the latent forces that lie in stone, in minerals. Thus the Manas of the fifth root-race is chained to the mineral forces, as the Atlantean race was bound up with the life forces. All Promethean force is chained to the rock, to the earth. Hence, too, Peter is the rock upon which the Christ built. It is the same as the rock of the Caucasus. The man of the fifth race has to seek his evolution on the physical plane. He is chained to the inorganic forces.

Try to acquire an idea of what we mean when we speak of this engineering, this technology, of the fifth root-race. What is its purpose? Viewing the matter generally, you will see that when intelligence, the power of Manas is applied to the inorganic, to the mineral world, the results of all these powers of invention and discovery, however prodigious, are by and large in the service of human egotism, of men's personal interests. Starting from the earliest inventions and going on right up to the telephone, one of our latest inventions, you will see what mighty forces have been made

serviceable to us. But what ends do they serve, what is it that we transport by rail and steamer from foreign lands? Foodstuffs. We order food by telephone. It is really human karma that begins with these inventions and discoveries in the fifth root-race. This is what an objective study of the matter must make clear to us. Then we shall understand that the higher man, that higher man who has been plunged into matter, is in fact, during the fifth root-race, chained to it. Therefore it is in matter that his karma will reach its fulfilment.

If you enter into esoteric realms, you will find that man's principles have a specific relationship with his organs. Sometime I will explain this more fully. To-day I will mention only that our seven principles have a specific relationship with the organs of the human body.

First we have what we call the physical. This has an occult connection with the upper part of the face, with the root of the nose. When the physical structure of man took its start (man was formerly purely astral, and then built himself into the physical), it began with this part; the physical structure began at the root of the nose and built itself up from that point, so that the esotericist recognises the root of the nose as belonging to what is essentially physical-mineral.

The second principle is Prana, the etheric body; with this we associate the liver. The liver has a specific occult connection with the etheric body.

Then comes Nama, the astral body. This has developed its activity in the structure of the digestive organs, represented by the stomach. If the astral body did not have the specific stamp in man which in fact it has, then the human digestive organs, including the stomach, would not have the specific form which they have to-day. If you study firstly the physical basis of the human being, secondly his etheric body, and thirdly his astral body, you have what in the fifth root-race is fettered to the mineral element.

Through his higher bodies man wrests himself from his fetters again, and mounts up to something higher. Kama-Manas works its way up again, in Kama-Manas man frees himself again from the pure nature-basis. Therefore there is an occult connection between Kama-Manas and the organ through which man is severed from his nature-basis.

There is an occult connection between the lower Manas and the umbilical cord. If there were no Kama-Manas in man, then the embryo would not be severed from the mother in this manner.

If we pass on to the higher Manas, we find that it has a similar occult connection with the human heart and with the blood.

Buddhi (Life-Spirit) has an occult connection with the larynx, and Atma (Spirit-Man) with what fills out the entire man, with the Akasha contained in man.

These are the seven occult, relationships. In considering them we have to stress the importance for our fifth root-race of the relationships with the etheric and the astral bodies. And if you bear in mind what I said earlier of the control by the Atlanteans over Prana (the life-force permeating the etheric body) you will see that in one way the Atlantean stood at a still lower stage. His etheric body still had the original relationship with the external ethers and because of this he controlled the Prana of the outer world. Because man has risen to one stage higher, his work has become one stage lower. That is a law. If there is an ascent on the one hand, there must be a descent on the other. Whereas formerly man worked on Kama from Prana, now he has to work with Kama on the physical plane.

You will see how profoundly the Prometheus saga symbolises these occult connections. A vulture gnaws at Prometheus's liver. The vulture symbolises Kama, which really destroys the forces of the fifth race. The vulture gnaws at the human liver, the basis of life; so does this force of the fifth root-race gnaw at the essential life-forces of man, because man is chained to mineral nature, to Peter, to the rock, the Caucasus.

During the fifth root-race only human initiates are able to bring release to fettered man. Hercules, a human initiate, has to go all the way to the Caucasus in order to set Prometheus free. It is thus that the initiates will wrest men from their bondage.

The human being who still has a connection with the animal nature — the centaur Chiron — must make a sacrifice. The man of earlier times must be sacrificed. The sacrifice of the centaur is as important for the development of the fifth root-race as man's release by initiates.

It is said that in the Greek Mysteries the future was foretold to men. This does not mean that people were given a vague abstract account of what was to happen in the future, but they were given indications as to the paths that are to lead over into the future. The great Mystery-drama of Prometheus is an expression of what is to evolve as human capacity.

By the three generations of gods — Uranus, Chronos and Zeus — we have to understand three Beings who were leaders of men one after another. Uranus means heaven, Gaia the earth. If we go back beyond the middle of the third race, the Lemurian, we find no men as we now know them, but one man, who is called in the secret doctrine Adam Cadmon ^[8] — the man who is still without sex, who does not yet belong to the earth, who has not yet evolved the organs for earthly sight, who still belongs to the Uranus-nature, to heaven. By the marriage of Uranus with Gaia there arose the man who descended into matter, and thereby stepped into Time. Chronos (Time) becomes the ruler of the second generation of gods from the middle of Lemuria right up to the beginning of Atlantis. The Greeks symbolised these leading Beings as, first of all Uranus, later Chronos, and after that they went over to Zeus. But Zeus is still one of the leaders who did not undergo their training on earth, he is still one of the immortals, as in fact were all the Greek gods.

During the fifth root-race mortal man is expected to stand on his own feet. This humanity of the fifth root-race is represented by Prometheus. The fifth race was the first to acquire human skill and the primeval art of fire-making. Zeus is jealous of this race, the race in which men come to have their own initiates, initiates who in the sixth race will take the lead into their own hands. But humanity has to pay the price for this. Hence its primordial initiate must first of all take upon himself the sum of all suffering. *Prometheus is the archetype of the initiate of the fifth root-race*, one initiated not only into *wisdom* but into deed. He runs through the whole gamut of suffering, and is released by the man who makes himself mature enough to free humanity little by little and to lift it above the mineral realm.

The saga thus expresses great cosmic truths. That is why I said at the outset that anyone who reaches the third interpretation may take it literally once more. Every saga undergoes change. It is derived from primordial times and transforms itself at a certain point There is a

point in every saga at which it is to be taken literally again. In the Prometheus saga you have the vulture gnawing at the liver. That can be taken quite literally. The vulture gnaws at the liver of the fifth root-race. This Promethean struggle with suffering is repeated in the fifth root-race in every single man. What is here expressed in the saga is to be taken quite literally. Without this struggle the destiny of the fifth race would be quite different.

Thus sagas can be interpreted in three ways. First there is the exoteric meaning, secondly the allegoric — the human struggle — thirdly, the occult significance, where again a literal interpretation enters in. From this you will see that so far as these sagas can be interpreted in this way, they originate in the Mystery Schools, and are no less than the record of what has been revealed in those schools as the great destiny of man. Just as I was able to show you that Odin represents what took place in the Druid Mysteries, so in Prometheus we have what the pupil of the Greek Mysteries experienced to give him energy for life in the future. ^[9]



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The Argonaut Saga and the Odyssey

14 October 1922, Berlin

To-day I should like to speak about a very important myth, also Greek, one which, like all myths, can be interpreted at many different levels. We will endeavour to uncover its real kernel. But before going on I should like to preface what I have to say by a few more theoretic observations.

In the last number of *Lucifer-Gnosis*^[10] I stressed that the last three culture-periods of Atlantis saw the beginning of a particular influence on the human race which still endures even to-day. It has to do with the fact that men then became mature enough to work in what we call our intellect. Before that time man was more a being of memory. Up to the fourth Atlantean culture-period man's memory was especially developed. The faculty of intellectual combination, the calculating faculty, in short, all that makes up our present-day culture, began in the fifth Atlantean period with the Ur-Semites. And it was this that made the Ur-Semites capable of originating the whole of the fifth, the Aryan, root-race. The Aryan root-race had as its primary task the development of the intelligence which is active on the physical plane. When such a new phase of human evolution occurs, it becomes possible for new Beings, Beings who up to that time had led hidden lives, to gain an influence on evolution. And in fact, since the fifth culture-epoch of Atlantis, a particular host of Beings have participated in human evolution, the activity of whom had not hitherto been noticeable. You must think of these Beings as very highly evolved, far more highly evolved than man at the stage he then was. But in a certain way they had lagged in their development behind the Beings who in the middle of the Lemurian time had intervened in the affairs of the human race. It was a fresh setback which took place at that time. The Beings of whom I am now speaking belonged in their whole nature to what we call the Moon evolution. They went through their development on the Old Moon, but they were not so far advanced as the Beings who were able to intervene in the middle of the Lemurian time. They had remained behind the normal development on the

Moon. They had advanced to the point of recognising that the faculties which man had now attained were analogous to their own, to the point of recognising that they could obtain control over those human faculties. Up to this time men had not been Beings of intelligence, now they acquired the intellect. And these new Beings made use of this human intellect for their own further development. Thus it came about that a phase of human evolution now set in which we call the phase of cold, objective science. Prior to this time there was no such thing, and one day there will again be no such thing. All wisdom hitherto attained in human evolution has been fundamentally associated with love. Cold, calculating science is under the influence of these backward Beings. Thus the influence of these Beings, who are still active, will come to an end only when our whole intellectual activity, everything which we are capable of knowing, is again permeated with love. When intelligence and love are once more united in the higher wisdom, the influence of those Beings, who are not visible on the physical plane, will disappear. To make clear their influence, in the first place to the pupils of the Mysteries, and then to mankind, was the task of the Greek Mysteries

About the eighth century B.C., a very important epoch sets in as regards these Beings. If you think of the culture-epochs of our fifth root-race — of the ancient Veda culture, then of the ancient Persian culture, of the Chaldean-Egyptian culture, if you think even of the time of the Druid culture, you will find that an objective, dispassionate science of knowledge did not exist. It first emerged at the dawn of the fourth culture-epoch, which one can place in about the eighth century B.C. With it there dawned an objective knowledge, completely detached from all the rest of the contents of the human mind. A Chaldean priest who cultivated astronomy still sought to fathom the purposes of the rulership of the world; and this can also be said of the Egyptian and Druid priests; they sought to acquire insight into the purposes of the world-ruler. A purely intellectual knowledge first dawned in Greece. This intellectual knowledge had been prepared step by step, and emerged, bound up with the rest of human activity, under the influence of the Beings I have mentioned; it was fully released in the fourth culture-epoch of the fifth root-race. Those who were initiated in the Mysteries of that time, confronted by the external wisdom, looked upon the ancient wisdom, which had formerly been at the disposal of mankind, as something lost, something which men must seek to regain.

Now there was a particular way of describing the point of time in which this dispassionate, dry wisdom separated itself from the all-embracing primeval wisdom. In the eighth century B.C., the passage of the sun through the sign of the Ram, which then took place, was experienced as the repetition of an earlier passage through the same sign thousands of years previously. It is well known that the sun moves forward through the whole of the zodiac, through the Ram, the Bull, the Twins, through Cancer, the Lion, the Virgin and so on, so that it has already passed through the Ram many times. The last time it had passed through the Ram, man was in possession of a knowledge united with love, and thereby of the primeval wisdom. This primeval wisdom had now been lost, and had given place to a culture of external wisdom. The priests of the Greek Mysteries expressed this whole process in its occult significance through the profound symbol of the Argonaut saga, in which the ram is the symbol of the union of love and knowledge.

Let us first call to mind the whole of the myth. We are told that Phrixos and Helle had to suffer many things at the hand of their bad stepmother. Therefore their dead mother appeared to Phrixos and advised him to run away and to take his sister with him. She gave him a large ram with a golden fleece, upon the back of which they were to cross the sea. Helle fell off and was drowned in the Hellespont, but Phrixos reached Colchis with the ram. There he is said to have sacrificed it and to have given its fleece to King Petus, who hung it on an oak in front of a cavern. Later, the Greek hero Jason, together with the most important of the Greek initiates of the time, Orpheus, Theseus, Hercules and others, set to work to recover the fleece from the alien people of Colchis. Through winning the hand of the king's youngest daughter, Medea, he was enabled to bring it back to Greece. First he had to overcome two fire-breathing bulls. Then he had to sow a dragon's teeth. From the dragon's teeth grew armed men, who began to fight. With Medea's help he was able to bring this conflict to a successful conclusion. It was she too who enabled him to capture the fleece and to set out, together with it and her, on the homeward journey to Greece. In order to deceive her father Medea had taken her brother with her, had slain him and had thrown his dismembered body into the sea. While the lamenting father was collecting his son's limbs she was able to continue her flight with Jason into Greece.

In the eighth and ninth centuries B.C., the pupils of the Greek Mysteries were taught the occult meaning of this saga. They were taught that the Beings who made use of the dry, dispassionate human intelligence had now attained a special importance. The longing awoke in them for the ancient culture which had obtained when the sun had passed through the sign of the Ram on the occasion before the last. That the twins Phrixos and Helle were carried by the ram to Colchis means simply that an earlier race — the Persian-Iranian, with its twofold nature (it stood under the sign of the gods Ormuzd and Ahriman) — had regained the union of knowledge and love. This race had borne the fleece to hidden realms. Still earlier, in Atlantis, this fleece, this wisdom, had been the common possession of human culture; then it had been carried into distant Mystery-schools. It had to be brought back again. Thus the Argonaut saga is an expression of the founding of the Greek Mystery-schools.

Thus we are told that a primeval wisdom existed among the people of Atlantis. It was then the common possession of humanity. It had been lost and was now only to be found in the caves and crypts of the pupils of the Mysteries. But the Greeks established the Mysteries anew; by bringing the primeval wisdom back again to Greece, Theseus, Orpheus, Hercules and others became the founders of this Greek Mystery-wisdom.

A dispassionate, cold intelligence, which is objective, is introduced by Thales, Anaximenes, Socrates and other philosophers. The Mystery-wisdom is united with love. It is a wisdom which cannot be attained without purification of the passions, the forces of Kama. ^[11] The other kind of knowledge can be obtained without purification of Kama.

Thus the very important Argonaut saga puts before us the transition from the third to the fourth culture-epoch of our present root-race. Human culture, which formerly was one stream, now separates into two — into mystery-wisdom and external knowledge. The one stream was hidden — it was the recovery of the golden fleece but it was nevertheless effective. It had an influence on Greek art and culture. Only on external knowledge was it henceforth to have no influence. This is the saga of the voyage of the Argonauts.

The Odyssey too is concerned with the transition from one race to another. The Odyssey has been given the most varied explanations. To-day I only want to indicate the bare framework of the saga. In my book *Christianity as Mystical Fact* I tried to make use of its second stage of interpretation; to-day we will look at the third.

Odysseus, who took part in the siege of Troy, by his cunning and his cleverness, helped the Greeks to conquer Troy. He made lone voyages, voyages in which he went astray — voyages on the water, be it noted. He came to the land of the Cyclops and overcame their one-eyed leader; then he went further, to Circe, who, we are told, turned his companions into swine. Then he descended into the underworld, and made the acquaintance of the dead heroes of Troy. Then he came under the influence of the sirens, who lead men astray by their magic songs. We are further told that most of his companions succumbed to the temptation, but that Odysseus caused himself to be bound to his ship, and thus saved himself; we are told how he then came to a place between Scylla and Charybdis where his ships were in danger of being wrecked. To save himself he had to pass through a whirlpool. Then he comes to the island of Calypso, sojourns there seven years and is enabled to leave by the intervention of Zeus, who orders Calypso to let him go, and at last he reaches his home country.

He is led by the goddess Pallas Athene into his house and to his wife, who has had to withstand many dangers because of the suitors who beset her. So she unravels by night the weaving she accomplishes by day, because she has promised her hand to one of her suitors when the work is finished.

Now let us go through this outline of the Odyssey as it is known to us from Greek occult wisdom. The schools of initiation, in which was actually enacted what I have just recounted, led the pupils on to the astral and the mental planes ^[12] in such a way as to enable them to survey a stretch of human evolution, to survey the period from the middle of Lemuria to the time when in Greece, in the school of initiation which had been founded by Jason together with Orpheus, Theseus, Hercules and others, man was again able to find the primeval wisdom. Thus the pupil was led on to the astral and the mental planes and was shown the events which humanity had to pass through between the middle of Lemuria and the point of time when

the Trojan war took place. The Argonaut saga is a picture of the primeval wisdom. It shows us that it existed at that time side by side with external knowledge.

What was it that was shown to the pupils of the Mysteries in the Odyssey? Odysseus himself is its expression. Let us turn back for a moment to the middle of the Lemurian time. Man was then in a state of transition from the hermaphroditic to the condition of sexuality, in a state of transition from the condition of being able to see without an external physical sense-organ to that of seeing with the physical eye. Up to the middle of Lemuria every man had one eye, which was then replaced by two external physical eyes. It was into this phase of evolution that the pupil of the early Greek Mysteries was transplanted. He had to experience the transition from the first half of Lemuria into the second half of Lemuria, into the time after the middle of Lemuria up to the emergence of the second eye. The Cyclopes were the men of the early Lemurian time. Odysseus came to know these men upon the astral plane. After this time, human astral bodies were plunged into matter which was becoming denser, more solid. We then come — so were the initiates instructed — to the first periods of Atlantis. The Atlantean acquires more and more the capacity to make use of the forces of life, to apply these forces for his own ends. They were fully developed astral forces which the Atlantean possessed, and it was only on the astral plane that a Greek could be transported into them. This was the time, so often spoken of in occult writings, when the Atlantean races lapsed into the wildest arts of black magic. This epoch was brought before the pupils of the Greek Mysteries in these shifting scenes. This was the age when human passions became so distorted under the influence of the forces of black magic that their astral bodies resembled those of the lowest animals. This was the picture which the Turanians presented when they lapsed into these wild magic arts. The astral body was so changed under the influence of these black arts that it could only be expressed symbolically as the changing of the comrades of Odysseus into swine. This was the moment of human evolution which the Greek initiates of that time experienced. Then Odysseus descended into the underworld. In the world of Greek mythology this always signified an initiation. Whenever it is said of a hero that he descended into the underworld, the narrator wants to express the fact that the hero concerned has been initiated, made acquainted with things that lie beyond death. Odysseus was an initiate and the Odyssey itself is the description of his initiation.

Now we go on to a point when, after the Atlantean flood, men became acquainted with the first operations of those Beings of whom I have spoken, acquainted with the effects of external culture, science and art, with forces which influenced intellectual life after the flood. The first periods of purely external physical culture were brought before the initiates as the temptations of purely worldly arts, worldly culture. These are the siren songs of the young fifth root-race. It was of these siren songs of the young fifth root-race that so much is said in occult writings. For on the one hand we have the great wisdom teaching of Manu ^[13] who, in the sub-race which was the originator of the fifth root-race, draws men's attention to the fact that their intellect has to lift itself up to the divine. This found its expression in the Vedas, and in what the Persian Zarathustra left to his co-religionists. But then we have the pure culture of the intelligence, which diverts men from what was developing in them under the influence of Manu. In all occult writings you find described the events which then took place. Manu chose a small band and went with them into the Desert of Gobi or Sebamo. There it was only a handful that remained true to him, whilst the others were unfaithful and dispersed in all directions. This important event was shown to the candidates for initiation — that is to say, they were shown how the Manu had chosen some of the Ur-Semites, but that of those chosen only a small number followed him, whereas the others ran into destruction through following the siren-song of external culture.

Then a still more important moment of human evolution was represented by the passage between Scylla and Charybdis. What is it which now really begins in mankind? The essential Kama — Manas culture now first begins. It had gradually been prepared up to this point; it is only now that it really begins. Our fifth root-race possesses preeminently this Kama-Manas culture. Kama is in the astral, and even to-day is still active in the astral body. But Manas is what is active in the physical brain. The man of the fifth root-race thinks with the physical brain. It is only in a future phase of evolution that Kama, the astral body, will be so advanced that it will be able to think. To-day Manas has taken hold of the physical brain. We have to pass between the hindrances on either side — Scylla-Manas and Charybdis-Kama. The passage of Odysseus is a picture of this. There is on the one hand the astral whirlpool of the instincts, appetites and passions into which man can fall; on the other hand there is the physical intellect chained to the rock. The rock occurs also in the Prometheus saga, where we

meet the rock again. The human intellect is exposed to all the dangers of the physical, of the rock. Man sails between the physical intelligence and the whirlpool of the astral life. If he has accomplished that successfully, if he has recognized the dangers of the passage, and has nevertheless kept his footing, then he comes to Calypso, to the hidden wisdom. Then he can take a look into the future of humanity, then he can undergo the testing time, which lasts seven years. That is why Odysseus remains with the nymph Calypso seven years. Every man who seeks initiation goes through a seven-year testing period, and this is represented by the sojourn with Calypso. Only then can he reach the point to which the soul aspires. Read Homer's *Odyssey*! He means that man is in search of his own soul. He who really wishes to understand the *Odyssey* cannot accept the view of a modern investigator who asserts that Polyphemus and the Cyclopes only mean that Etna had erupted and that the scene of the conflagration seemed to Odysseus like the eye of a giant.

At last Odysseus returns home as a beggar, without any external property. This means that the man who had recognized the unimportance of the external world and of worldly goods, seeks his soul's home not in Maya, but behind Maya, thus in a mystical sense he returns home as a beggar. That he is truly wise is shown by his being led into his house by Pallas Athene. In all esotericism the soul is represented as feminine, it is always the feminine nature that is chosen as the symbol for the striving of the individual soul. Goethe calls it the 'Eternal Feminine'. In Medea in the Argonaut saga, in Penelope, we have to understand the real soul, to which Odysseus seeks the way again. The Virgin Mary too, in the Christian religion, is the striving human soul, only there the significance is infinitely deeper. Strictly speaking, Penelope is the human soul in the fifth root-race. The fifth root-race has to cultivate human intelligence. Human intelligence is utterly unfruitful when it is only turned upon itself. When it has something that one can call a content, then the intelligence can be applied to it. Intelligence is a network which is spun around things we have from some other place. When external experience teaches you something, you can weave around it with your intelligence. When the higher occult wisdom teaches you something, you can also weave around it. Men say that occult wisdom contradicts reason. Nothing contradicts reason! When something new dawns on their horizon men have always said that it is contrary to reason. But the intellect is only there for purposes of combining. Out of itself it can

win nothing. This barrenness of the intellect, which is nevertheless the real soul of the fifth root-race, is expressed in the perpetual weaving and unraveling of Penelope's cloth. Odysseus is led by wisdom. The initiate must find the way to the soul of the fifth root-race, but he will only unite himself with this soul in the right way if he is guided by Pallas Athene. Pallas Athene too is a feminine deity, another soul-force, wisdom, the real guide. But man has to reach intelligence through many by-paths, in so far as they are paths of development — for there were many by-paths in the Lemurian epoch. And in this journey Pallas Athene must be his guide. This was brought before the pupils of the Mysteries in Greece and this is what Homer wanted to express in his profound saga.

What is described in the Odyssey is initiation as it was carried out in Greece at that time — an initiation which was a repetition on the astral and mental planes of experiences from Lemurian times right down to the time of the Mysteries themselves. Odysseus is the clever man, the cunning man, and Troy was overthrown through his ability. The clever, intellectual man is the man of the fifth root-race. But to be able to find his way rightly in the fifth root-race, he must again on his devious path seek his home country, his Penelope. The man who is merely cunning and clever would never find the right way. He must first come out of himself, broaden his view, by looking back on the long journey of the human race. Odysseus is the representative of the cunning Kama-Manas man, who has to wander through many byways, in order to be led back again to the soul of the fifth root-race.



3

The Sigfried Saga

21 October 1922, Berlin

In order to acquire a right understanding of the Siegfried saga we must first find its place in the great cosmic happenings in the world. Before our present root-race there were four others; we are in the fifth. The first sub-race of the present race consists of the Indian folk; we call this the Spirit-race, because the import of the fifth race was first given by the Manu in its spiritual form to this sub-race. The second sub-race we call the Flame-race, the race to which Zarathustra gave a religion. The third sub-race was the star-race, the race of the Chaldeans, Babylonians, Assyrians, from which later sprang the Israelite tradition. The race of the Greek and Roman peoples, whose first representatives are mainly to be found in Greece and Rome, became the fourth sub-race. It is the one in which Christianity first took root, in Asia Minor, Greece and Rome. But it is our fifth sub-race which was to be the most strongly influenced by Christianity and was to carry it over into the sixth. Christianity came to our fifth sub-race as a tradition, after the beginning of the Christian era. But before this, for some centuries before Christianity was introduced into these regions, and even earlier, ancient Druid initiations were in existence. These were maintained until it became quite obvious that the evening of these preparatory Celtic races had come.

You must understand that all the streams I have named do not reach the northern world. None of the currents which passed over the Flame-race, the Star-race, the Greco-Roman race, got as far as the northern regions. In the north there still remained something from the culture of Atlantis which had been brought over by Atlantean initiates. Wotan was an initiate of the northern peoples. He is none other than the bearer of the elements of Atlantean culture into these parts. Everywhere in these northern regions the Druid initiation was still practised. I have already said that one of its founders, one can say its chief founder, was named Sieg. And in these northern parts something happened rather like what happened later in Palestine at the Foundation of Christianity. Sieg renounced his body and placed it at

the disposal of a higher individuality. Hence later the transformed Sieg was named Odin. Odin is the highest initiate of the northern Mysteries. He is the bearer of the spiritual culture of that time. Sieg therefore was the Chela of the north who placed his body at the disposal of the higher, more spiritual Odin. He himself lived later as an initiate Master. Sieg is a quite special case. He is not able to introduce a movement as the Master Jesus ^[14] did after the foundation of Christianity. Sieg had to lead this northern culture to its downfall. He is called upon to guide the northern peoples until the fifth sub-race of the fifth root-race reached them from the south. The ancient Chela Sieg is the one who had to lead the northern peoples into tragedy. Hence he is also called Sieg-urt, which means, "he who leads into the past." 'Fried' is the same word; it means, "that which leads to death, to destruction." It is still found in the word 'Friedhof,' (graveyard). The very same Chela who had paved the way for the great initiate who is to lead the northern culture to its downfall. Its spiritual content declines and is replaced by the rising Christianity. What I am now saying is a prophetic augury which found expression everywhere in the later northern Mysteries. "We have to be a race that is led to its death". That is the note which sounds forth in the various Mysteries of these northern peoples. The whole of the future event, which had been indicated in the scriptures since primeval times, and which was to take place in the future, was predicted in the northern Mysteries, and through this prediction arose what later became the content of the Nibelungenlied. The second part of the Nibelungenlied gives us the fulfilment of the Nibelungs' karma.

I must draw attention to one feature which we always find in such a situation in human evolution. Before a new phase takes root the earlier phases of evolution have to undergo a brief repetition. This repetition is plainly to be seen in the north. We are shown how all that has been experienced here in the north since the time of Lemuria and Atlantis has to be overcome before these northern nations will become mature, will really develop up to the level of the Christianised fifth sub-race. He in whom all that lives is the initiate Siegfried. Let us briefly run through the salient points of the Siegfried saga.

To begin with, life at the Court in Worms revolves round three heroes: Gunther, Mogen and Giselher. We are further told that the hero Siegfried is wooing Brunhild. At the same time we are told that Siegfried is acknowledged to be a personality out of the ordinary. This

he certainly is, for he has slain the possessor of the Nibelung treasure; in the fight with the dragon he has made his body hard as horn; he has won the cloak of invisibility. Thus he has two qualities that are always shown by the initiates of pre-Christian times; they are invulnerable and they are unrecognisable. They are made invulnerable by something that has preceded Christianity, has preceded the spirit. In the Gospel it says: "And there are three that bear witness ... the Spirit, and the water, and the blood." [15]

It is the blood which must be conquered, and it is the blood which made the heroes invulnerable in the times preceding Christianity. But these invulnerable initiates are always vulnerable in one spot. Achilles is an example of an initiate of these early times. He was plunged into the Styx and was vulnerable in his heel. Siegfried is bathed in the blood of the dragon and is vulnerable in the shoulder. The initiate can make himself unrecognisable to his own people. He can do that through the possession of the cloak of invisibility. It is this that makes the possessor of these higher occult faculties invisible to the outer world. The possessors of the Nibelung treasure had these faculties. They originated in Atlantis, Atlantean initiates in particular had them. But they were also retained by the initiates of the fifth race and hence by Siegfried. He came into possession of the Nibelung treasure. What is this treasure?

It expresses the fact that the northern peoples supplied the basis upon which the fifth sub-race could arise. We also call the race the race of the great discoveries and inventions, the race that has conquered the entire physical plane and that waxes great amid the harsh difficulties of the external world. It has both to possess things, and to develop its possessions. We shall see that 'Nibelungenhort' (the treasure of the Nibelungs) is merely a modification of the old word 'Nifelheim, Nebelheim' (land of mist). This it is what in the north is recognized as the physical earth, the earth in the moment of becoming physical. It is a firmer hold on the physical that this race of forerunners propagated and opposed to Christianity. Nibelung treasure represents earthly property. It is something that the forerunner possesses, which it is permissible for him to possess, because he can guard it in a suitable way.

Now you all know how the Siegfried saga goes on in this old form. It is not the oldest form, but it is the one that concerns us. You know that Gunther woos Brunhild of Iceland. Twice Siegfried overcomes Brunhild, who believes that it is her suitor Gunther who has conquered her. Gunther woos her, but Siegfried in the cloak of invisibility fights at his side, and is glad that she becomes Gunther's wife. Now Kriemhild later in a weak moment betrays to Brunhild that in reality it was not Gunther who had vanquished her, but that Siegfried was there invisibly. Brunhild is incensed by this and plots to kill Siegfried. But she has yet to learn how she can do it. She wins to her side Hagen of Trony, who dwells at the court. We can recognise the figure of Hagen as deriving from the ancient Druid Mysteries. Hagen is a significant name among the ancient Druid initiates. Not only is he an initiate who represents the highest streams of spiritual life, but, what is more important here, he illustrates the fact that the predecessor always comes into conflict with his successor. Siegfried is the immediate predecessor of Christianity. Hagen belongs to an earlier Druid stream. Hagen therefore is sent for to bring about Siegfried's ruin. To this end Kriemhild must betray that he is vulnerable in one place. Here the significance of this place is revealed. Kriemhild betrays that he is vulnerable between the shoulders, in the very place where the Cross will have to be borne. He has not yet got the Cross. These early peoples have not yet got Christianity. To this spot the Christian initiate will have to come — so says the Siegfried saga — because it still lacks Christianity, because the place where the Cross has to rest is still vacant. Hence Siegfried is still vulnerable in this spot. Siegfried, who brings the Sieg-initiate to 'Fried', to rest, is vulnerable in the spot which Christianity will later render invulnerable. There Siegfried too is overcome by the powers which have remained over from earlier stages of northern culture. Hagen kills him and thus illustrates the supersession of the preceding northern races by the fifth sub-race. The import of this transition finds expression in the Siegfried saga.

What are these northern races, the forerunners of Christianity, fighting against? They are fighting against all the old that has remained behind from Atlantis. They have continually to be on their guard against it. Thus in the northern races there still lives something against which the soul of the northern peoples has to protect itself, something that still forces its way in from the remnants of Atlantean culture. An earlier stage of culture has been preserved into the fifth sub-race. But those who have remained behind in the Atlantean

culture are a hindrance to further development, they have to be overcome. Hence the struggles that followed are represented by Gudrun. This Gudrun is the soul of the northern peoples. In an older version she wages war against the great initiates who continually come over from Asia from the remnants of old Atlantis. The initiates, the remnants of the Turanians, come over from Asia in a series of incarnations. This is why we also meet there the famous Attila, identical with Etzel, who was initiated in the Atlantean culture. In fact the historic Attila, who was called 'the scourge of God' by his own people as well as by the Europeans, was an initiate who fought at the head of his people with quite outstanding occult forces. Hence a battle with the Huns was quite rightly described as a fight in the air. To anyone who knows these things it is quite clear what is meant. Attila shrank from nothing that he encountered in Europe; from the Pope alone, of his own free-will, he drew back. The races of northern Europe knew that they had to beware of the influence from the East. Christianity knew that this influence could do it no harm.

Now in the later saga we are told that Kriemhild plotted to take revenge on those who had killed Siegfried. She achieves this by throwing in her lot with these Atlantean elements and succeeds in wooing Attila's following to her cause. She becomes Attila's wife. Before that she had lived for a while at the Burgundian court. She came into possession of the Nibelung treasure and had been a great benefactress in her use of it. But the inevitable enemies, who belonged to an earlier culture, and who were represented by Hagen, had sunk the treasure in the Rhine. Now how wonderfully the events which followed are described; Kriemhild clung to her plan to destroy her enemies, her old northern enemies, with the help of Attila. They were enticed to Attila's court and on their way there they met the very spiritual power by which they were to be superseded. On the Danube, in Rudeger of Bechlaren and his wife Gotelind, they encounter Christianity. It is Christianity that is to supplant the northern European culture. Here we have an indication of the dawn of Christianity. Those who have paved the way for it go to meet their downfall. They are murdered at the court of the Huns. Kriemhild had her revenge but she herself must perish. How is this brought about? Kriemhild is really a metamorphosis of Gudrun, with the difference that in the earlier time the tragic outcome had not taken hold of men's hearts. It is Gudrun herself, the folk-soul who slays Attila. In the later version she unites

herself with Attila. The soul of the earlier culture avenges itself on the culture which has brought about its downfall. Kriemhild herself perishes.

If you are studying the matter from the literary point of view, you will naturally ask how it comes about that, right at the end, at the court of the Huns, Dietrich of Bern, Hildebrand and all the Germanic heroes are introduced, for they belong to a period that has already gone over to Christianity. They are Christian heroes. Christianity brings death to the ancient folk-soul. First we have the dawn of Christianity in Rudeger of Bechlaren, and then Christianity reaches the essential element of the ancient folk-soul. This is not something told after the event, but something experienced as prophecy within the Mysteries long before the emergence of Christianity. These events were the subject of Mystery-initiation. Initiation into the Mysteries includes not only initiation into truths of the present, but also into truths of the past and of the future. Apocalypse always forms part of it. The Siegfried saga had long been the apocalypse of the northern peoples.

It is not a saga that has arisen somehow or other out of separate fragments, as philology supposes. 'The folk' does not make literature in this way. Only someone who has no clue to what goes on in a folk-soul could say this. The sagas are nothing but an account, a rendering of what had taken place in the crypts of the Mysteries. Just as in the south we have the word Mystery, so in the north a similar mystery event is called a 'Mahr', from which we get the word 'Marchen' (fairy tale). "Viele Wunderdinge melden die Mahren alter Beiten" ^[16]. The 'Wunder' (wonder or miracle) is just a sign. There are things that must be regarded as events on a higher plane. The northern saga-world is so interesting because it expresses something that is not to be found in the entire range of southern saga. The sagas of the southern peoples express a step up; in them the people have always received something which leads them upwards. Of course, the Indian, Persian, Babylonian, Chaldean peoples and those who succeeded them at later stages also had their tragic figures. We need only remind you of the Chronos saga. But here in the north we have the thing in its most developed form, for these people had so long to wait, so long to live in a state of expectancy. Theirs was a culture of preparation, which lasted until a higher initiation evolved. And that is the important point. It was a culture that descended so low, that its initiate is human, is man. The Indian initiate is the Bodhisattva, then come the Rishis, later

in Greece we get 'the sons of the sun', such as Hercules and Achilles, Only when the initiate had descended to the lowest rung of the ladder do we get, here in the north the initiated man who lacks only one thing, what is comprehended in the Christ. The Christ he has not got. Thus this culture has come so far that it has human initiates and the man-become-god. In the north we encounter the divine man — the divine Man who for us is the Christ — in an attitude of expectation, with the vulnerable spot which Christianity will have to cover.

Thus you have four levels which come one after another. First you have Wotan, who comes over from Atlantean times; then Odin. Wotan corresponds with what develops during the second sub-race of the fifth root-race. The last before Siegfried is Balder, the sun-hero. He corresponds with what develops in the Chaldean-Babylonian-Assyrian epoch. But whereas what developed in the south is an ascending, a progressive culture, here in the north we find a mood of suspense, of expectancy, of waiting for something to happen Then we come down from god to man; and while the southern sub-race developed further, Siegfried became the initiator of this culture of suspense. It is steeped in tragedy. Because this northern culture is coming to an end you have the tragic deaths of Baldur, of Siegfried.



4 The Trojan War

28 October 1922, Berlin

Since there are some newcomers present to-day, I should like briefly to explain that in the course of these lectures I have tried to show how the various myths and sagas are expressions of an esoteric content, and that one only needs to know how to interpret their language to find on occasions deep esoteric truths in them. To-day I should like to speak of one in particular of those sagas which are remarkable in that, while on the one hand they are sagas, yet at the same time they have an external meaning on the physical plane, that is to say, they record quite specific external events.

Before I begin to speak about this saga, I should like to refer to something else that most of you already know, but it is a thing which one has to stress again and again. In the course of our fifth root-race, thus, in the time lying between the end of Atlantis and the beginning of the next, the sixth, root-race, an advance in human evolution of the highest importance will be made; the leaders of mankind, their Manus, will arise in mankind itself. None of the great leaders who brought men forward, the leaders who gave them their important impulses during the earlier root-races, went through their own evolution entirely on earth; they underwent it in part on other planets, and thus they brought from other worlds what they had to give to the earth as great impulses. The Manus of Lemuria and Atlantis, as well as the chief Manu of our fifth root-race, are super-sensible individualities, who underwent the sublime schooling which enabled them to become the leaders of mankind, on other planets. But during the fifth root-race highly developed human individualities have trained themselves so that from the sixth root-race onwards they will be capable of becoming the leaders of mankind. The leader of the sixth root-race, in particular, will be a man as we are, only one of the most advanced, indeed the most advanced among men. He will be a being who began his development when incarnation started, approximately in the middle of Lemuria, one who has always been a man among men, only that he was able to advance more rapidly, and one who has gone

through every stage of human evolution. This will be the fundamental characteristic of the Manus of the sixth root-race. Such beings have to undergo all kinds of initiation, they have to be initiated again and again. Hence the fifth root-race from its outset has always had initiates, men who were so initiated as to enable them to walk their own freely-willed path. This was not the case during the Lemurian period, nor even in Atlantis. Both in Lemuria and Atlantis those who helped mankind forward, those who ruled and guided mankind, those who were political leaders and leaders of great religious communities, were under the influence of higher beings. They were directly dependent upon higher Beings, Beings who had gone through their own development on other planets. It is not until the fifth root-race that mankind is left free. Then we have initiates who have a connection with higher Beings, but to whom such comprehensive guidance is not given; more and more freedom is allowed to the initiates of the fifth root-race in matters of detail. Guidance is given on general lines, not only to the initiates, but to those who are stimulated by them. Impulses are given to them, but yet in such a way that it is out of their own spirituality that they have to carry things out.

The five sub-races that we know are: first, the sub-race of *Spirituality*; this is the sub-race from which the Indian cultural community arose. Then we have the sub-race of the *Flame*, that is the Persian cultural community. Then we have what we call the ancient Chaldean sub-race, the sub-race of the *Stars*, of which the Israelite people forms a branch, indeed the most important branch. The fourth cultural community is the one which produced Greece and Rome, the sub-race of *Personality*. The fifth sub-race is that of the *World*, the culture within which we ourselves live, the culture of the present stage of evolution, which will be replaced by a cultural community coming from Asia.

Last time I discussed the great initiates of the northern region. On that occasion I pointed to the fact that the initiate, or anyone who is in any way connected with initiation, has a distinguishing mark, and that to be invulnerable is one of these symbolic distinctions. This invulnerability, which we find in Siegfried, is also to be found in Achilles. In fact in the myth with which Achilles is associated, a deep esoteric meaning is hidden. You must realise that what I put before you comes about gradually in the fifth root-race. The Manus so arranged the guidance of the race that the entire leadership of

mankind was in the hands of the priesthood, which received its inspiration direct from higher spiritual beings, from super-men. This priesthood could be entrusted with the classification of mankind. It would have been impossible to carry out a division into castes rightly, except in cultural communities guided by priestly rulers. Hence caste is only to be found in the authentic priestly cultures, in ancient India and in Egypt, where initiated priests were at the head of affairs, initiates who followed no impulses derived from kama but only intuitions from above, and they could be trusted to bring about that important classification which in its origin in the Egyptian and the Indian castes was fully justified. When you study these castes, you find that they are an expression of the whole plan of development of the fifth root-race.

According to this plan, the guidance of this fifth root-race should pass over gradually from the priestly outlook to that of the world. A worldly king, a king who was not a priest, would, in the early stages of the fifth root-race, have been quite impossible. It was impossible in Atlantis, when the leader still worked with other forces, when the impulse did not yet pass through the thinking mind. But in the fifth root-race there had to come a halt, guidance had to be entirely withdrawn from cosmic powers and handed over to those who receive divine inspiration. Hence in the Indian and Egyptian cultures we have priestly rulerships. The priest is the Regent, it is from him that everything emanates. The priest belongs to the first caste, the warrior to the second. After that come the castes which follow purely worldly occupations. We come down in stages to those who are concerned with agriculture. Little by little these castes are to attain independence.

Thus the first caste was the priestly one, the second the warrior caste. We never find that the temporal relationships which emerge in the course of evolution are the same as those which show themselves externally in space. I beg you to note that if a spatial relationship is to become a temporal one, it occurs in the ratio of four to seven, occurs in such a way that the fourfold expands to sevenfold. Thus during the fifth root-race the four castes find their outward expression in time in the gradual training to independence of the seven sub-races. The ratio of four to seven comes from a quite specific law. To-day I will merely say that evolution takes place in such a way that in the first sub-race, in all essential matters, guidance is entirely in the hands of the priests

In the second sub-race we have one led by the priest-kings. Zarathustra, the true magician, is the counselor of priest-kings. During the third sub-race the rulership is able to pass over to worldly kings, who however still follow the guidance of the priests or the priest-kings. It is only during the fourth sub-race that we find purely worldly kings, kings who are no longer associated with priestly power. This fourth sub-race has its first beginning in the Greek folk. It is in Greece that we first see worldly kings, and, as the Greek colonies become established, in them too we find worldly kings.

The saga of the Trojan War is a representation of the spread of Hellenism; it is the mythical presentation of an esoteric truth, the efflorescence of the fourth sub-race of the fifth root-race, and the replacement of the priestly rulership, now in its last stage, by the purely worldly rulership.

That is very subtly indicated at the beginning of the Trojan saga. You probably know that matter is always represented by water I need only call attention to the familiar Nicene Creed, which says "suffered under Pontius Pilate". As the esotericist knows, this is an incorrect rendering. What it really says is "suffered in *ponto*i pilato*i*", which means merely "in compressed water", and signifies "descended in order to suffer in matter". This sentence in the Creed which is said all over Christendom has come about through the word "ponto*i*" having become "Pontius". When Thales states that everything has originated from water, he is referring to the comprehensive physical matter of which alone we can treat when we would speak of physical things. He is using the term 'water' for physical matter. Physical matter is to be the all-important thing for those who now take over guidance. The predominance of physical matter then led to there being worldly kings. Previously there had only been kings who stood in relationship with the Divine. Peleus is the king who is to rule on the physical plane, deriving his strength from the physical plane. This is represented by his marriage with the goddess Thetis — the marriage of the leader of mankind with the matter of the physical plane, with the goddess of water, the goddess of the sea.

And from this union sprang Achilles. He is the first initiate of this kind. Hence he is invulnerable except in the heel. All those who were initiated in the fourth sub-race were vulnerable in some spot. It is only

in the fifth sub-race that there will be initiates so advanced as not to be vulnerable anywhere. Achilles is plunged into the Styx. That means to be dead to the earthly and withdrawn to a higher plane of vision.

There we have an important transition. Spiritual life descends for the first time in the middle of the fourth sub-race. For the first time we have to do with physical struggle. Thereby something remarkable comes about. The earlier leaders of the world were free from kama, for they had had to divest themselves of everything connected with kama during their previous initiation stages up to their spiritual initiation. So long as there were priests in the old sense, it was not possible for any trace of kama to enter into the guidance of the world. Kama caused separation, caused beings to turn against one another. Earlier, too, men who were opposed to one another were to be found, but that was not due to kama-manas, but happened because men were not advanced enough to distinguish between good and evil. At that time men could not measure the fight by the standard of good and evil. They could not say "war is good" or "war is bad" any more than they could say a lion was good or bad; good and evil first began in the moment when kama-manas descended, so that kama worked together with manas, and man became his own master and turned consciously towards or against his fellow man. It was then that conscious war arose. This is indicated in the saga, where we are told that all the gods were present at the marriage of Peleus with the sea-goddess Thetis — except one, a goddess who hitherto had had no influence on the earth, because the stage had not yet been reached when the union of manas with kama occurred. Now on the physical plane the goddess Eris, the goddess of discord, begins to be active. She tosses an apple, discord, into human nature. By so doing she was the sole cause of the first war in the fifth root-race which took place with full human responsibility. In the Trojan war the mythical comes to expression. Before that, strife was determined by instinct.

All that followed, according to the myth, is only a further elaboration of a tendency that was already there. The most beautiful apple is said to be the Eris apple. The three goddesses, Hera, Pallas Athene and Aphrodite — that is to say, all that earlier was divine soul — disagree among themselves, for the three goddesses signify different stages of soul-life on the higher, spiritual plane. Now things are no longer decided on the higher level, but Paris is called upon to make the decision from the stand-point of the physical plane. Everything

descends to the physical plane. The decision too descends to the level of the physical. But something comes about through this. Here lies the crux of the matter, this is where it becomes clear what is at stake. What is it that we have to face because the decision is made from the standpoint of the physical plane? The union of manas with kama. Hitherto man had had a certain relationship with kama, single beings had turned against one another, but this had not yet the significance of good and evil. But now kama unites itself with manas, and the deed becomes conscious. You know that the densest kama fell away from the earth and accompanies it as a satellite which is our moon. Hence in the language of esotericism we might call all that accompanies us to-day in the moon the 'leitmotif' of the lower nature; it is what draws us downwards, the great signpost showing us what we can come to if we succumb to our lower nature.

Thus, what is momentous in the union between manas and kama during the fourth sub-race is that the man who has to make the decision unites himself directly with the kama of the moon, with Selene. Selene is none other than Helen. The union of Paris with Helen in the fourth sub-race of the fifth root-race is a symbolical expression of the marriage between kama and manas. The man endowed with manas, finding himself on the physical plane, seizes hold of the moon principle. You meet this everywhere in writings of an esoteric nature. It is also a Helen who drags down Simon Magus and unites him with the element of kama.

Thereby is brought about the full union between the principles of manas and of kama on the fully conscious physical plane. It corresponds not only with what the Trojan War stands for symbolically but also with what really happened. The Trojan War did actually take place. Although it was a series of physical events, these events have a symbolic meaning as well, they are mystical facts. The concept of mystical fact comprehends not merely mystical content, but a mystical content which runs its course outwardly on the physical plane.

Please try to understand this. At the beginning of the sixth root-race an influence will have developed, not in higher spheres, but in the sphere of the present-day conscious mind; in the fifth sub-race this influence is still in its infancy, but it is nevertheless already developing. It is something which emanates from the musical element. For the fifth root-race music will be not merely art, but the means of

expression for quite other things than the purely artistic. Here is something that points to the influence of a specific principle on the physical plane. The most significant impulse by those directly initiated in the fifth sub-race will, to begin with, be given solely in the sphere of music. What has to flow in is not astral, but it is something of great significance in the sphere of the mental life of the fifth root-race. It is something that the human intelligence will come to recognise as important, something which has been called the Kundalini fire. ^[17] It is a force which to-day still slumbers in man, but which will gradually gain more and more importance. To-day it already has a great importance, it has a great influence upon what we perceive through the sense of hearing. During the further development in the sixth sub-race of the fifth root-race the Kundalini fire will acquire great influence on what lives in the human heart. The human heart will really have this fire. At first this seems to be mere symbolism but man will then really be permeated by a force which will live in his heart, so that during the sixth root-race he will no longer make a distinction between his own well-being and the well-being of the whole. So deeply will man be permeated by the Kundalini fire! He will follow the principle of love as his own innermost nature.

In the seventh sub-race of the fifth root-race the whole of mankind will be in a real chaos, for the root-race will then be near to its collapse. But a small number of the seventh sub-race of the fifth root-race will become the true sons of the Kundalini fire. They will be permeated with its full power. They will provide the material, they will pass it on to the leaders of those who will develop: man further. Thus is the fifth root-race directed to the heights which kindle the divine fire; thus is kindled out of inmost depths with holy fervour the divine principle which no longer separates man from man, but evokes brotherliness as far as the human understanding reaches. And thus far shall brotherliness be quickened in our own root-race and in the next. This fire will live in single individuals; and in those who are initiated in the course of the fifth root-race there already lives a spark of this divine fire which is the capacity for brotherliness and will put an end to separation.

But it is only in its beginning, it is still hidden, veiled by the existing life of separation. The power of kama still conceals the Kundalini fire. And because it emerges in veiled form as premonition, as foreboding, in the immediate future it will assume another character. *On the plane*

of illusion the divine fire is the divine wrath. When the whole of mankind is permeated by this brotherliness it will become the divine love. But so long as it makes itself felt in individuals as zeal, it is the divine wrath. It asserts itself by working with great power in individuals and since the others are not yet ripe enough, it manifests itself as the divine wrath.

The poet, the initiate, who speaks of such things, always expresses this at the outset of his poem. As I pointed out to you in the case of the *Odyssey*, its main theme is announced in the first lines. And in the *Iliad* too you will find that the blind poet indicates his theme at the very beginning. "Sing, O Muse, of the wrath of the divine hero Achilles." It is of the Kundalini fire that the poet speaks when he says this. Only in the fifth race can it be thus spoken of. At the very outset, when the priest Calchas takes the side of the priest-king of Apollo, you see the wrath flare up between Agamemnon and Achilles. And what is it that is overthrown? A priest-king state. Troy is a state in which the king is under the influence of the ancient priestly rulership. The rulership is replaced by the purely worldly principle. There you have a perfect illustration of the fact that what is victorious is nothing else but worldly cleverness. The initiate of the fourth sub-race is Odysseus, the cunning one, who receives initiation in the course of his wanderings. He was not previously an initiate, he became one only as a result of the experiences he went through. In the strangling of the priest of Apollo by the snake you see the same thing symbolised. The snake is the purely worldly cleverness, it ensnares Laocoon, the priest, the representative of the old Trojan priesthood.

If you understand all this you see that the Trojan saga, like so many others, is simply adhering to a true world-historic continuity. This is the secret that the Mysteries have guarded. They have shown the great events in the history of the world to the initiates from this lofty standpoint. In the Mysteries themselves such events were plainly taught, and in the old Greek Mysteries — the ancient ones that long preceded the Eleusinian Mysteries — this important moment, the beginning of the fourth sub-race of the fifth root-race and its whole significance, was among other things brought before the pupils.

To those who are not conversant with theosophical teachings this sounds fantastic. But it is a fact. The Trojan War was shown in the Mysteries before it took place. This is the essential principle of the

Mysteries, and it is this which makes it necessary to keep them secret, because they reveal not only the great events of the past, but also events to come. These were not revealed to satisfy curiosity or the undue thirst for knowledge. Those who are initiated into the Mysteries are called upon to take a part in the fashioning of world-history. They have to derive from the Mysteries the forces to enable them to do this. That is the significance of the Mysteries. Hence their betrayal would mean the public announcement by someone of what is to happen in the future. Anyone doing this causes utter confusion among his fellow men. Suppose something important is to happen in five hundred years time. In order for this to come about mankind needs to be prepared.

Individuals receive impulses enabling them to bring mankind to the point at which they will live under other conditions, to the point at which they will become ripe enough to adapt themselves to the transformation and to bear it. The initiates are in a position to endure these conditions and to further them. Suppose that one were to bring about an event straightway, years before it was due. Then mankind would not be mature enough for it. Every Mystery will one day under quite different conditions become common property, but it must be under other conditions. To-day there are still Mysteries which will not be revealed until the sixth root-race. The next root-race will live in quite other conditions. Universal brotherhood will then be something quite different. Suppose that to-day someone were to be told a secret that is only suitable for a being with the quality of brotherliness. He would misuse it. There are no absolute Mysteries, there are only things which under certain conditions cannot yet be borne, and men who cannot yet bear them.

That is the essence of the Mystery. It translates itself into the external course of world-history. Those who understand something of this are terribly afraid lest the initiates should in some way, through lack of foresight, betray something too soon. It was always the case that the betrayal of the Mysteries bore the severest penalties. In ancient times the penalty was death. It was not the priests who exacted this, for they knew that a betrayal cannot actually happen. But those who knew something about the matter from the outside, and were not themselves initiated, feared the betrayal of the Mysteries. Socrates himself was a victim of such an attitude.



Notes

1. △ *Root-races*. The root-races are the main periods of earth-evolution The fifth root-race is the fifth main period.
2. △ *The Secret Doctrine*. Vol. 2, Part 2, Section 6. (pp. 546 – 556 in the third edition.)
3. △ *The Manu of the fifth root-race*. In the English version of *An Outline of Occult Science*, this Being is called 'the leader of the Christ-initiates' or 'the leader of the Christ-oracle'. (p. 177 in the 1949 edition).
4. △ *Chela* means pupil of the Mysteries; *Master* means teacher in the Mysteries.
5. △ *Kama* is the astral body, *Kama-Manas* the intellectual or Mind-soul, the lower Manas.
6. △ *Manas*. Here is meant the higher Manas. In the book *Theosophy* Rudolf Steiner calls it 'the spirit-filled Consciousness-soul' or 'Spirit-Self'. (p. 57, revised English edition, 1954).
7. △ *The Story of Atlantis*, by W. Scott-Elliott, published by the Theosophical Publishing Co., London, 1896. See also Rudolf Steiner's *Atlantis and Lemuria*.
8. △ *Adam Cadmon*. See also Rudolf Steiner's lecture given at Oxford, 22nd August, 1922, which appears in English in the book *Man's Life on Earth and in the Spiritual World*.

Here is an excerpt from this lecture titled, *The Birth of the Sun Spirit as the Spirit of the Earth* which explains who Adam Cadmon is:

When understanding was lost of what had streamed from cosmic worlds in the event which would rightly have been celebrated on the 6th of January, forces working in hidden depths of the soul caused the picture to be presented of man as a being of soul-and-spirit before physical embodiment, at the starting-point of evolution as a physical human being. The picture is of the new-born child whose soul is as yet untouched by the effects of contact with the physical body, of the child at the beginning of physical evolution on earth. But this is not a human child in the ordinary sense; it is the child who was there before human beings had reached the point of the first physical embodiment in earth-evolution. This is the being known in the Kabbala as Adam Kadmon — Man who descended from divine-spiritual heights, with all that he had acquired during the periods of Saturn, Sun and Moon. The human being in his spiritual state at the very beginning of earth-evolution, born in the Jesus Child — this was presented to mankind by a Divine wisdom in the festival of Jesus' birth. At a time when it was no longer possible to understand what had descended from cosmic worlds, from heavenly spheres, to the earth, remembrance of their origin, of their state before the advent of the Luciferic forces in earth-evolution was engraved into the souls of men. And when it was no longer realised that in the highest and truest sense it could be said of the Baptism by John in the Jordan: From cosmic worlds there has come into human souls the power of the self-revealed Godhead, in order that peace may reign among men who are of goodwill — when understanding of how this picture could be presented as a sacred festival was lost, another affirmation was presented in its place, the affirmation that at the beginning of earth revolution, before the Luciferic forces began their work, man had a nature, an entelechy that can inspire him with undying hope.

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9. △ Unfortunately no report exists of the lectures to which Dr. Steiner here refers, but reference can be made to his lectures given in Berlin, *29th, April (Isis and Madonna)*, 1st and *6th May, 1909 (The European Mysteries and Their Initiates)*, published in Dornach, 1955.
 10. △ The article here mentioned, which first appeared in the periodical *Lucifer-Gnosis* was later published and forms chapter 1 of *Atlantis and Lemuria*. (See link in note 7 above)
 11. △ *Forces of Kama*. The forces of the astral body.
 12. △ *Astral plane and Mental plane*. These are the "soul-world" and "spirit-land" in Rudolf Steiner's *Theosophy*.
 13. △ *Manu*. Described in *An Outline of Occult Science* as "the Christ-initiate" or "the leader of the Christ-oracle".
 14. △ The Master Jesus is described by Rudolf Steiner as a being who sees through history as the guide of the Christian spiritual stream, with relatively short intervals between each death and rebirth. He is not to be confused with Jesus of Nazareth. See also *Lecture 7 of Rudolf Steiner's Course on the Luke Gospel*.
 15. △ ⁶This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. ⁷For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. ⁸And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.
I John 5: 6-8 NKJV
 16. △ This is the first line of the Nibelungenlied. Rudolf Steiner has spoken of the Nibelungen on various occasions, in lecture 8 of the Course entitled "*The Spiritual Beings in the Heavenly Bodies and in the Kingdoms of Nature*", given at Helsingfors in April,

1912, and in *"Das innere Verhältnis der Sprache zu den Gedanken. Das Nibelungenlied and Wilhelm Jordan"* given in Dornach, 28th March, 1915, and not yet translated.

17. △ The expression 'Kundalini fire' is used by Dr. Steiner in the first edition of his book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*. In later editions he replaced the term by another which is translated in the 1937 English edition as "the spiritual perceptive force in the organ of the heart", (see p.185).



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