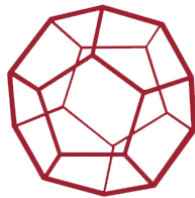


Philosophy, Cosmology and Religion

GA 215



Philosophy, Cosmology and Religion

GA 215

by

Rudolf Steiner

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Synopsis

1. **The Three Realms of Anthroposophy**

Anthroposophical research, occultism and mysticism — the 'spiritual eye' — methodical rigor and constant watchfulness. Philosophy the course of all knowledge — the past, thanks to awareness of the etheric body — substantial and abstract thought. Cosmology in former times encompassed the life of the cosmos and the human being. Thinking, feeling and willing in everyday consciousness; the reflection of the astral. Formerly, religion rested on the experience of the divine world by the I or Spirit-Man.

2. **The Exercise of Thinking, Feeling and Willing**

Philosophy in the past made possible by a condition of half-awake consciousness during which men perceived images. Developed thought can lead to separation from the physical body. Imaginative consciousness gives to philosophy its substance. Inspired consciousness allows the construction of a cosmology that includes man. Exercises to develop the will and intuitive knowledge; this is the foundation of a true religious life. Abstract thinking is unnatural but can reflect nature in an objective manner and guarantees human freedom.

3. **How to Acquire Imaginative, Inspired and Intuitive Knowledge**

Meditation and consciousness — strengthening of character and moral qualities — dangerous influence of subconscious forces — the small child is an unconscious philosopher. Transition to inspired knowledge by eliminating the images (pictures). Appearance of cosmic realities which have their physical reflection in sun, moon and planets. Yoga, its role and the danger it presents in our epoch. Intuitive knowledge and cosmology.

4. **Cognition and Will Exercises**

Knowledge of the planetary cosmos through inspiration in the eternal human entity. As the corpse is produced by the etheric, so thoughts are corpses produced by our living forces. Philosophy can reach this conception through deduction. In the absence of the faculty of inspired cognition human beings have given birth to a

'rational' cosmology. Its failure in the realm of the science of nature. 'Rational' theology and its powerlessness. Direct and incommunicable experience of the divine is an illusion.

5. The Life of the Soul During Sleep

The idea of the 'unconscious.' Unconscious experiences of the soul during sleep. First phase: indeterminate feeling of expansion, longing for God, uncertainty of dreams. Second phase: feeling of multiplicity and anguish — the help in overcoming this given by the Christ. The movement of the planets — meeting with those human beings with whom we are united by destiny. Influence of the experience of sleep on mood and creative energy.

Third phase: Experience of the constellations of the fixed stars — consciousness of our eternal being. The first stage of sleep corresponds to a real philosophical content, the second to a substantial cosmology, the third to a union with the divine. Return to waking consciousness by the reverse path.

6. Passage from Spiritual Life to Earthly Existence

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7. Christ, Humanity, and the Riddle of Death

Different conditions of consciousness through evolution. Darkening of picture consciousness at the moment of the Mystery of Golgotha. This had to be lost in order to found the consciousness of the 'I.' Failure to understand the role of the Christ, studies limited to the historical personage, Jesus. Mission of the Christ on earth. Initiate knowledge of the facts about the third and fourth centuries A.D. Transmission of dogmas only after this time. The consciousness of the I and the riddle of death. If we open our hearts to the reality of the Mystery of Golgotha our soul gains the strength to pass through the various stages of life after death. Higher knowledge of the Trinity.

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Imaginative consciousness and the loss of thought: appearance of the entire course of our life-time becomes space. Perception in pictures cannot be remembered. Imaginative consciousness and 'visions' are essentially different. Man always imagines, but consciously. Elimination of the tableau of existence, and perception of cosmic realities that give birth to the etheric. Knowledge of the astral. Perception of the process of incarnation. In thinking, man is awake, in willing he is asleep. The eternal spirit disappears entirely in the head organism. During earth life the will is in gestation. How to avoid losing consciousness of the I at the moment of death. St. Augustine, Descartes and 'doubt.' Bergson and 'duration.'

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10. **The Action of the Will beyond Death**

The intellectual soul, the sentient and the willing soul (consciousness-soul) and their relationship with the organism. Thinking transformed into purpose takes hold of our lower organism and our limbs. Life and death at all times present in us: role of asceticism in the past — today it would damage the physical body and thus the consciousness of self. Education and the knowledge of man. The durations and illnesses resulting from the forces of construction and disintegration. Building of a healthy physical body

thanks to the force of the Christ. In the sphere of the moon man finds again the totality of the judgments passed upon his acts, and this prepares his future destiny.



Foreword

The lecture cycle now being published in its entirety for the first time in English has always been known as the "French Course" for an interesting reason — although it is directed to anthroposophists everywhere as much as any other of Rudolf Steiner's major cycles. The course was given in September, 1922 exclusively to members of the Society, and it was held in the old Goetheanum. French members were specially invited, and a considerable number of them were present. A French translation was provided by Jules Sauerwein, a distinguished bilingual French member, editor of *Le Matin*, the leading Parisian newspaper of the time, whose sister Alice was to become in the following year the first General Secretary of the Anthroposophical Society in France. Determined to spare no effort to make the cycle, difficult and detailed though it was, comprehensible to the French members present, Rudolf Steiner every night prepared an outline of what he was to say, and gave it to Jules Sauerwein the following morning, so that he could study it and decide how best he could translate it into French. During the lectures Steiner paused three or four times to allow him to translate the gist of what he had said, a procedure he followed also with George Adams Kauffman during these years when the audience was composed of English-speaking members.

The reason for this special invitation to the French lies far back in anthroposophical history. Eduard Schuré, the Alsatian author of *The Great Initiates*, a book greatly admired by Steiner, was twenty years older than Steiner and by 1900 had won a considerable reputation in Europe, becoming at the same time interested in Theosophy. It was in 1900 that he became acquainted with Marie von Sievers, who was in Paris studying to become an actress. Knowing of her interest in spiritual matters he suggested that she might look into Theosophy, but in fact she did not do so until she paid a visit to Berlin later in the same year. There she heard of some lectures being given in the Theosophical Library by a certain Rudolf Steiner, and later wrote a glowing letter to Schuré about him. Meanwhile she herself translated two esoteric dramas by Schuré, though of course she continued working from 1902 onward with Steiner, eventually in 1914 becoming his wife.

Thus, Schuré already had begun to play an important part in Steiner's life before he met him personally when he came to Paris in 1906 to give some lectures at a Theosophical Congress. On that occasion he was tremendously impressed by the man he was willing to admit was the first modern initiate he had known, and he wrote an enthusiastic introduction to Steiner's work *Christianity as Mystical Fact* which appeared at this time in a French translation. Meanwhile Marie von Sievers translated Schure's esoteric dramas, the first of which, *The Mysteries of Eleusis*, was presented by the German Theosophists at their Congress in Munich in 1907. Immediately after the Congress Steiner and Marie von Sievers were guests of Schuré at his property in Barr, in Alsace, and Schuré persuaded him to write an autobiographical sketch of his life and spiritual development, which is **the oldest such document known** (printed, together with Schure's introduction in the *Golden Blade of 1966*).

Thus, the two men were friends and collaborators of long standing by the time of the outbreak of World War I. But unhappily Schuré, like so many Alsatians who had bitterly resented the German annexation of their province in 1871, was a strong French patriot, and it seemed to him that Steiner was too pro-German in the early years of the war. So the two men became estranged, and the estrangement continued for some years after the war, and it was even thought by many Frenchmen that Steiner had been an unofficial adviser of General von Moltke at the beginning of the war. Jules Sauerwein helped to clear up this misunderstanding by publishing an interview with Steiner in his paper, and gradually it became clear to Schuré that he must make an effort to meet Steiner again and become reconciled to him, while Steiner, for his part, had never harbored anything but friendship for Schuré. The reconciliation was consummated at the Goetheanum in 1922 at the time of the French course; and it marked at the same time the reconciliation with the French people, so many of whom had shared Schure's extreme patriotism and wanted as little as possible to do with the Germans. The meeting of the 81 year old Schuré with the 61 year old Steiner was the warmest possible, and the entire course, in which the French had been given such marked consideration, was suffused with the glow of the reconciliation.

The outline prepared by Rudolf Steiner for Jules Sauerwein has survived, and it is extremely interesting to compare it with the course. Steiner explained on several occasions that when he lectured he spoke always directly out of his supersensible perception of the spiritual worlds and could never speak out of what he remembered or had given previously. It will be evident that he did not deviate from his rule even when he had given his

translator an outline of what the night before he had decided he would say. Especially the last highly esoteric lectures of the course when he speaks of the influence of the Christ in earth evolution go so much farther than the outline that Sauerwein must have felt he had been given little enough to help him through his exceptionally difficult task.

Even so, the outline is in itself a most remarkable work, and it is not surprising that Harry Collison published two editions of it (1930 and 1943) in English translation, and that Marie Steiner's German edition was published long before the full course. The Anthroposophie Press is planning to publish both the outline and the course, as either may be studied with profit separately, and both are most suitable for group study, though requiring somewhat different responses from the students. The very bareness of the outline demands extremely careful attention to each sentence and each concept, whereas the course does not invariably supply all the knowledge to fill in the outline. What it does is to provide an enormous amount of detailed information, some of it hard to come by elsewhere, on how to attain higher development and the kind of exercises that are needed, following this with a dense and packed account of the period between death and rebirth, and especially the role of the Christ after death, as revealed to imagination, inspiration and intuition. This material differs significantly from that given in most of the better-known cycles devoted to this subject. It is hard to escape the conclusion that Steiner, faced with a highly educated French audience in the Goetheanum in which he had already given so many difficult scientific lectures, took special pains to direct everything he said to their thinking and understanding — even taking the trouble to provide an outline in advance for his translator. The result is a course that is in many respects unique in all his work, and it is very good that at long last it should be made available to English-speaking readers.

Colmar, Alsace, France Stewart C. Easton



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The Three Realms of Anthroposophy

6 September 1922, Dornach

Before I begin my lecture today may I express to our esteemed guests my heartiest greetings out of the spirit that prevails here in the Goetheanum and that underlies all the work that is developed here. This kind of spirit does not spring from any human one-sidedness, but from a total all-encompassing humanness. For this reason, what is offered and accomplished here can originate in scientific knowledge, art and religious devotion while at the same time its spirit should be that of a free humanness, combined with generosity of heart and soul.

Now when the construction of the Goetheanum was begun in 1913 it was upon this spirit that it rested, as on the finest foundation stone. At a period when the whole of Europe and vast areas beyond were embroiled in warfare and bitter hostilities, here in Dornach people from all the nations of Europe worked together out of a free, encompassing humanness. Here, the international work never ceased. Allow me to point to this fact especially today because I desire to bring you this greeting out of such an international spirit. Out of no other spirit can the work done here be carried on, for only this spirit of many-sided, universal, free humanness can produce genuine spiritual science, spiritual art and truth-filled religion, which in itself can only be spiritual and international. But this spirit also gives, I think, that largeness of heart that is able to welcome and greet every human being affectionately. So, it is out of this spirit that rules here at the Goetheanum that I speak of these first words of greeting. They are therefore meant from the heart. In this heartfelt manner, then, may I express the wish that in the days to come we may successfully work together and exchange ideas on some topics drawn from the most varied areas of science and life, something that everyone who had wanted to come here will carry home with a certain measure of gratification. When we who have worked at the Goetheanum for years find that our visitors look back with joy to what they have experienced here, we are filled with special satisfaction. With this feeling let me welcome you and thank you for coming and express the wish that your visit may prove gratifying to you all.

As already indicated, the aim here is to engage in spiritual research so that it will be the foundation for making life in all its aspects more fruitful. The spiritual knowledge we seek here at this Goetheanum should not be confused with much that today is promoted as occultism, or the many things that go by the name of mysticism. This occultism, pursued today in many forms, actually runs contrary to the spirit of our age, the spirit of real modern life, which results from the development of natural scientific knowledge in recent times. What is cultivated here as spiritual knowledge must certainly reckon with what in the strictest sense of the word is in keeping with the spirit of modern scientific knowledge. What is frequently called occultism today is founded on ancient traditions; it is not directly governed by the spirit of the present time. Old traditions are revived. But since present-day humanity cannot unfold corresponding perceptions from the same substrata of soul, one can say that these old traditions are often misunderstood; as such, they are presented in dilettante fashion by one or the other group today as a knowledge intended to gratify the human soul.

We have as little to do with such partly misunderstood traditional occultism as we have with the kind of occultism that seeks to do research in the supersensible worlds by borrowing the usual scientific methods of sense observation and experimentation. If this is done, the fact is overlooked that the methods of scientific research developed during the past few centuries are preeminently adapted for gaining knowledge of the external sense reality; for this very reason, however, they are unsuitable as a means of research into the supersensible realm.

On the other hand, much is said today about mystical immersion, inner mystical experience. There, too, one often has to do with nothing else than immersing oneself in the soul experiences of the old mystics, trying to repeat these soul experiences of the past. But again, the unclear introspection that is used can lead only to a dubious knowledge.

I only pointed to these things in order to warn against confusing the work here at the Goetheanum with what is often carried on in such an amateur, dilettante fashion, even if out of sincere good-will. Here a scientific method for gaining supersensible knowledge as being cultivated, as rigorous, as exact and as scientific as is demanded today of the methods in the area of natural scientific research. We can reach the supersensible realm only if we do not remain limited to the paths of research suited only to the sense world. We cannot, however, scientifically ascend into the supersensible worlds by proceeding in a spirit other than the one that has proven itself so well in the domain of the sense world. Today I should like to give just a

few indications concerning the purposes and goals of the work carried on here. Therefore, more detailed discussions of what I will but mention today will follow in the days to come. May I point out first that for the purpose of supersensible research here we are concerned with drawing from the depths of the human soul those forces for gaining knowledge that can penetrate the supersensible world in the same way as the forces of the outer senses penetrate the physical sense world. What the spiritual research requires first of all is to direct his soul's attention to his own soul-spiritual organism, which is able to approach the super-sensible. This distinguishes the spiritual investigator from the ordinary scientist. The latter uses the human organism as it is, directs it toward nature, and employs the exactness needed to gain results about the facts of outer nature. But the spiritual researcher, just because he is grounded in correct natural scientific knowledge, cannot proceed in this way. He must first direct his attention to the soul-spiritual organ of knowledge — I can perhaps call it 'eye of the spirit.' But this attention, which initially prepares and develops the spiritual eye, must be such that the inner conformity of this spiritual eye appears before it exactly; as exact, for instance, as a mathematical problem appears to a mathematician, or the content of his experiment appears to the experimenter. This work that must be applied by the researcher upon himself in preparation for the actual attainment of knowledge is the essential point in spiritual research. Thus, as the mathematician or natural scientist is exact in the search for results, the spiritual researcher must be exact in preparing his soul-spiritual organism, which then can perceive a spiritual fact as the eye or ear perceives facts in the sense world.

The spiritual research referred to here must be exact, in the same way that mathematics or natural science is exact. But I should say that where natural science with its exactness stops, spiritual science with its own kind of exactness begins. It must be rigorous in developing one's own human nature, so that all the work man does on himself in order to become a spiritual researcher is carried on in rigorous manner. For this exact work, then, fully justifiable to science, turns, as it were, into the inner spiritual eye when it begins spiritual research and encounters the existence of the supersensible world. While what is often termed mysticism has little clear understanding of the soul, in genuine spiritual research every minute step must be taken with the same clarity and insight as is required of a mathematician confronted by a mathematical problem. This will then lead

to a kind of awakening, an awakening on a higher level of consciousness comparable to what we experience when we awaken from our usual sleep and have the sense world around us again.

When I speak here of the exactness needed especially for spiritual research, the word relates to the exact, scientific preparation of what must precede the research, namely the soul-spiritual organization of man. It is this above all that must stand before the spiritual researcher in transparent clarity. Then he may begin to penetrate within the world of supersensible phenomena.

This is just a preliminary indication, not one that proves anything. Because one strives for this exactness in preparing for genuine spiritual perception, if one is to call the kind of spiritual perception meant here 'clairvoyance,' one can indeed speak of 'exact clairvoyance.' It is to be the specific characteristic of the spiritual research carried on here that it is based on methodologically exact clairvoyance. The exactness of the clairvoyance is to be the distinctive mark of the spiritual research practiced here. From this point of view, one would want to consider not only a narrowly circumscribed area, but to attain to something into which flow all other sciences and patterns of life of the present age. What is spiritually achieved here is not merely to be a spiritual super-structure having as its foundation the natural scientific mode of observation; what humanity has developed in the spirit of this modern natural scientific point of view should also be led up into the spiritual region in order that the attainments of natural science may be crowned with what spiritual research can provide.

As an example, I may cite medicine. The way this science has developed today out of materialistic knowledge, and has achieved its admirable results, is fully recognized by what is cultivated here as spiritual knowledge. But it is possible to carry further by means of the spirit of an exact clairvoyance what has now been achieved out of a purely external approach to medicine. Only then will the whole fruitfulness of natural scientific medicine as presently practiced be attained. Similarly, we desire to gain here in a spiritual way knowledge that is in a position to lead the artistic into the spiritual. We strive for an artistic element here, which in a spiritual way arises out of the totality of man's nature, as does the knowledge we seek. A religious, a social element is also to be cultivated here in such a way that they both arise as something self-evident flowing from the spiritual knowledge attained.

The spiritual knowledge we strive for is to lay hold of the whole man, is to come forth from him, not from a single human faculty. It is therefore the nature of this knowledge that it desires to have all areas of theoretical as well as practical life flow into the spiritual life, and that thereby only the completely human, the universally human, is to be achieved. From this standpoint I would like to speak to you in these lectures mainly about three areas of knowledge, using these three examples to show to what extent the spirit of modern science can lead into the spirit of higher spiritual science. I would like to speak to you about philosophy, cosmology and religion, in a manner that shows how through anthroposophy they are to gain a certain spiritual form.

Philosophy was once the all-inclusive knowledge, which, in ancient times, threw light on all the separate areas of reality that men experienced. It was not a specialized science. It was the universal science, and all the sciences we cultivate today developed fundamentally out of the substance of philosophy as it still existed in Greece. In recent times, a specific philosophy has arisen by its side that lives in a certain sum of ideas. The strange thing that came about is that this philosophy, out of which all other sciences actually have grown, has now come to the point of having to justify its own existence before them. The other sciences, which have indeed grown out of philosophy, busy themselves with this or that recognized field of reality. The field of reality is there for the senses, or for observation, or experiment.

One cannot doubt the justification for all this scientific pursuit of knowledge. In spite of all these separate areas of study having been born out of philosophy, it is forced today to justify its own existence, to explain why it develops a certain body of ideas, whether these ideas are perhaps quite unreal, do not relate to any reality, are merely something people have thought out. Just consider how much hard thinking is devoted nowadays to justifying those ideas, which, incidentally, have already taken on a quite abstract character and today are called the content of philosophy, in order that they can still enjoy a certain standing in the world. They have nurtured the sciences, which, I might say, are well accredited in regard to their own specific areas of reality. Philosophy, on the contrary, is not accredited today. It first has to prove that its existence is justifiable. In ancient Greece that was never brought into question. There, a man who was capable of developing himself far enough to attain a philosophy felt the reality of philosophizing in the same way a healthy person feels the reality of breathing. But today, when a philosopher examines his philosophy, he experiences the abstract, cold, sober quality of the ideas he

has developed in it. He does not feel that he stands solidly in reality. Only a person working in a chemistry or physics laboratory, or in a hospital, has matters well in hand, so to say. One who nowadays has philosophical ideas and acts upon them often feels miles removed from reality.

There is an additional consideration. It is with good reason that philosophy bears a name that does not point merely to theoretical knowledge. Philosophy is "love of wisdom," and love exists not only in one's reason and intellect but has its roots in the whole human heart and soul. A comprehensive soul experience, the experiencing of love, is what has given philosophy its name. The whole human being should be engaged in the development of philosophy, and one cannot love, in the true sense of the word, what is mere theory, matter of fact and cold. If philosophy is love of wisdom, those who have experienced it assume that this Sophia, this wisdom, is something worth loving, something real and tangible, whose existence does not require to be proven. Just think a moment. If a man were to love a woman, or a woman a man, but would find it necessary to first prove the existence of the loved one — , quite an absurd thought! But this is just the case with philosophy taken in its present sense. From something that was warmly alive and received in a heartfelt way by man, the existence of which was self-evident, philosophy has turned into something abstract, cold, dull and theoretical. What caused this?

When one turns back to the origin of philosophical life — not through outer history but with an inwardly experienced and felt knowledge of history — one finds that philosophy originally did not live in man as it does today. Man, today, basically only recognizes as valid what is achieved through sense observation, or through experiments developed in the field of the senses, when he thinks in a scientific way; this is then put together by the intellect. But these achievements belong to physical man, for the senses are physical organs imbedded in the physical body. What man's physical body attained in knowledge is today considered scientifically acceptable, but in this way one only reaches as far as physical man. In him what the ancients considered as philosophy cannot be found. I will go further into this in the days to follow but must here point out that what was called philosophy in the golden age of Greek philosophy — that spiritual substance experienced within the soul — was not experienced in the physical body but in a human organization that permeates the physical body as etheric man.

In present-day science we really know only physical man. We do not know the body that, as a fine etheric organism, permeates man's physical body and in which the Greek philosopher experienced his philosophy. In the physical body we experience breathing, and the process of seeing. But just as we have this physical organization before us, so man also has an etheric body; he is an etheric man. When we look at the physical body we see something of the breathing process; physically and biologically we can make clear to ourselves the process of seeing. When we look at supersensible, etheric man we see the medium in which the Greek carried on his philosophizing. The Greek constitution was such that a man of that time felt — lived — in his etheric organism. In the activity of exerting himself through his organism — as one does physically in breathing and seeing — philosophy came into being in the etheric man. As there never can be any doubt about the reality of our breathing, because we are conscious of our physical body, so the Greek never doubted that what he experienced as philosophy, as wisdom, which he loved, was rooted in reality, for he was conscious of his etheric body. He was clearly aware that his philosophizing took place in his etheric body.

Modern man has lost perception of the etheric body. In fact, he does not know he has one. Therefore, traditional philosophy is a sum of abstract ideas for the reason that it considers to be reality only what one experiences as reality while philosophizing. If one has lost the knowledge of etheric man, the reality in philosophy is also lost. One feels it as abstract; one feels the necessity to prove that it really exists.

Now imagine that man were to develop an organism still more powerful, solid and material than his present physical body. Then the breathing process, for instance, would gradually appear to be almost imperceptible by comparison with this more powerful experience, until finally he would no longer know anything about what is now his physical body, just as modern man knows nothing about his etheric body. The breathing process would be a theory, a sum of ideas, and one would have to 'prove' that breathing was a reality, just as one must now prove that philosophy is rooted in reality. Doubt as to the reality of what one should love in philosophy has arisen because the etheric body has been lost to human perception, for it is in the etheric, not in the physical body, that the reality of philosophy is experienced. If, then, one is to recover a feeling for philosophy as a reality one must first gain a knowledge of etheric man. Out of this knowledge a true experience of philosophy can come. The first step in anthroposophy therefore is to bring out the facts concerning man's etheric organism.

I want to proceed in three steps and would like to ask Dr. Sauerwein ^[1] to translate now. After the translation I shall continue.

In philosophy man has initially an inner experience of himself, of his etheric body. From the time humanity began to think it has also felt the need to incorporate each single human being into the whole cosmos. Man not only needs a philosophy, he needs a cosmology. As an individual firmly grounded within his organism at a certain place on the earth, he wants to understand in how far he belongs to the whole universe, and to what extent he has evolved out of it.

In the earliest stages of human evolution man felt himself to be a member of the whole cosmos. As physical man, however, he cannot feel himself as part of the cosmos. His experience as physical man between birth and death belongs directly to the life of his physical sensory surroundings. Beyond this he has his inner soul life, which is completely different from what he bears in his physical body out of his physical sensory environment. Since man wishes to feel, to know himself as a member of the whole cosmos, he also must feel and know his inner life of soul as part of the universe.

In the most ancient periods of human evolution men were actually able to see the soul life in the cosmos, not only by means of what today is mistakenly called anthropomorphism, but through an inner power of vision. They could perceive their own soul life as part of the soul-spiritual life of the universe, as one can see one's physical bodily life as part of natural sense existence. But in most recent times men have only developed in an exact way natural scientific knowledge based on sense observation, experiment, and a thinking similarly limited. Out of the natural scientific results achieved in this way, bringing together all the separate findings, a universal science, a cosmology, has been formed. But this cosmology contains merely the picture of facts from sense reality that are combined by thinking. One constructs a picture of the universe, but the separate parts of this picture are only the recognized laws of physical sensory phenomena.

This picture produced by the natural scientific cosmology of modern times is not like that of ancient times, which also contained the life of soul and spirit, for it contains only the sense world that natural science is able to examine. In this picture that stands as cosmology of the modern age man can re-discover his physical body, but not the inner life of his soul. In ancient times the inner soul life could be derived from the picture of

cosmology; the soul's inner life cannot be derived from the cosmological view based upon natural science. This is in turn connected with the fact that modern perception cannot see the soul-spiritual in the same way as an old primitive perception was able to do. So, when modern knowledge speaks of the soul element in the body it speaks of the manifestations, the inner experiences of thinking, feeling and willing. It views the soul's life as being an outflow of what comes to expression in what is thought, felt and willed, separately and intermingled. It makes a picture of those three activities as phenomena playing a role in the soul's inner life.

When one observes the inner life of soul and spirit in this way one is forced to say, "Yes, what you have recognized and designated as an intermingling of thinking, feeling and willing arises in embryonic life, develops in the child, and perishes at death." A scientist holding this view cannot fail to conclude that the soul must disappear at death. For actually, this thinking, feeling and willing between birth and death appear to be intimately bound up with the life of the physical body. Just as we see its members grow we watch thinking and feeling grow. As the body calcifies and we see it approaching physical decline, we see also how the phenomena of thinking, feeling and willing gradually diminish.

The distinguishing quality of the ancient viewpoint was a perception of the inner soul life that went beyond what lives in mere thinking, feeling and willing. The ancients perceived hidden within these a foundation for the life of soul of which they are only a reflection. We see thought, feeling and will originating and then developing further between birth and death. What lies beneath — of which thinking, feeling and willing are but the outer reflection — was beheld by the old primitive clairvoyance as the astral being of man.

So, as one at first recognizes the etheric body as a super-sensible member in physical man, one recognizes the astral body as a higher member in physical etheric man. This astral being of man does not consist of thought, feeling and will. It is the basis for them. It is the being which, out of soul-spiritual worlds, finds its way into our existence between birth and death. This astral man clothes himself between birth and death with the physical and etheric bodies, and after death goes out into a soul-spiritual world. In regard to this astral nature of man birth and death are only outer manifestations. Thinking, feeling and willing can be understood only in the context of man's physical organization, and can be found only between birth and death. There they develop, gradually decline, and

disappear. The astral being underlying them, the foundation for the inner life of the soul, extends above physical and etheric man and is incorporated in a cosmic world. It is not enclosed within man's physical organism.

In order to arrive at a comprehensive cosmology, we need a knowledge of etheric and astral man, of which thinking, feeling and willing are a reflection. But, as manifested in each individual man, they cannot be incorporated in the cosmos. What constitutes their background, what is concealed in them between birth and death and is only accessible to a primitive or an exact clairvoyance — that can be incorporated in a spiritual cosmos of which the physical sensory cosmos is merely the reflection.

Modern cosmology is but a super-structure founded on the results of natural scientific research; a combination of facts found in the physical sense world. In such a cosmic picture man's inner life cannot be incorporated; but we only have such a cosmology because modern knowledge does not provide a picture of astral man. Anyone conceiving soul life as merely a combination of thinking, feeling and willing cannot defend the idea of its continuing beyond birth and death. Only if one first advances from these three activities to what lies concealed within them, to astral man, only then does one arrive at the human element that is no longer bound to the physical body and can be thought of as membered into the soul-spiritual universe. But man will never re-discover such a spiritual cosmos after abandoning it, because he has lost the perception of astral man. He will never be able to construct a picture of such a spirit-soul cosmos until he regains a picture of man's astral being. The possibility of a cosmology that again has soul-spiritual content depends upon the development of a perception of man's astral being. If we have merely an external cosmology comprising the physically perceptible, man himself has no place in it. We have come to such a physical cosmology because the perception of astral man has been lost. If the perception is again achieved, it will be possible to have a picture of the cosmos in which man himself is incorporated.

So, our concern is to succeed in developing a knowledge of man's astral being. Then we will also be able to attain a true cosmology that includes man. This is to be the second step for anthroposophy.

After Dr. Sauerwein has been so kind as to translate the second part, I shall discuss how matters stand with the third step in the last segment of my lecture.

Man experiences himself as condensed together into himself as for example when he philosophizes — and he also feels himself to be a part of the cosmos as depicted by cosmology. But in addition, he experiences himself as an entity independent of his own physical body as well as of the cosmos to which he belongs. He feels himself to be independent of his own corporeality and does not even feel part of the cosmos when he points to his own higher spiritual being — something that is today only hinted at when we utter the word 'I.'

When we say, 'I,' we do not refer to that part of us encompassed by our physical, our etheric, or our astral body, insofar as through the latter we are part of the cosmos. We refer to an inner, self-contained entity. We feel it as belonging to a special world, to a divine world, of which the cosmos is only the outer reflection, the external replica. As human beings who address themselves as "I," we feel that this entity, this spiritual man indicated by the word "I," is only enclined with everything in the cosmos; that even the physical sense body is a covering of the actual being.

Because man in ancient times — through an inner if primitive vision — experienced his human entity as independent both of his body and of the cosmos, he knew he belonged to a divine world. But he also knew that between birth and death he was placed outside of this world and was clothed in a physical body. He knew he was placed in the soul-physical cosmos. He knew that his ego, the essence of his being, is concealed by the cosmic, by the physical-bodily elements, and he sought for union of this I-being with the divine world to which it belongs. In this way primitive man — with his clairvoyant experience of his egohood attained above and beyond his physical and etheric bodies and his astral nature — attained a union, religion, with the divine world. Religious life was that into which flowed a perception that was both philosophical and cosmological. Man found himself united with that from which he had been separated by his own body and by the outwardly visible soul-sensory cosmos. In religious experience he was united with the divine world, and this religious experience was the highest flowering of the perceptual life.

This religious experience on a primitive level, however, depended on a real inner experience of egohood, of the real spirit man. Only when the ego is experienced can the longed-for union with the divine world be attained — the religious feeling.

But to the modern way of thinking, what has the ego, this true spiritual man, become? It has become nothing but the phenomena of thinking, feeling and willing conceived of as a single, abstract idea. The ego has now become a kind of cosmic, or at most one or another composite formulation made up of thought, feeling and will — in any case something abstract. Philosophers themselves arrive at a notion of the ego by combining the experiences of thought, feeling and will into an abstract concept. But in this composite, nothing has been found that is not disproven every night when a person sleeps. Take the characterizations of modern philosophers concerning the "I," for example, Bergson. Throughout, you will only find in these characterizations something that is disproven every night in sleep, for what the ego absorbs of these concepts, these ideas, is extinguished every night in sleep. Reality refutes these definitions, these characterizations of the ego. Furthermore, what I say here is not refuted by claiming that memory reconnects us after sleep with the "I." It is not a matter of interpretations, but of facts. This implies that modern knowledge, even the finest philosophical knowledge, has lost perception of the ego, the true spirit man, and with it also the way to an understanding of religion.

So it has developed that in recent times, alongside the knowledge resulting from the attainable world of observation and experimenting, there are traditions handed down from a true religious life of past ages. They are accepted in a historical sense. But man's knowledge no longer has access to them; therefore, he only believes in them. Thus, for modern man, who will not extend knowledge to cover religious experience, science and faith confront each other. The whole content of the faith of today was once knowledge and is brought up only as a memory retained in tradition. No declaration of faith exists that is not a reminder of ancient knowledge. Because mankind today does not have a living perception of the true ego through exact clairvoyance — the ego that is not extinguished with every sleep but underlies both the sleeping and waking conditions — the path of knowledge is not pursued all the way into religion. Faith, which actually only perpetuates the memory of old traditions, is then placed alongside knowledge.

Today, therefore, what once was a unity — knowledge both of the physical and the divine worlds — has split into two external, parallel fields, knowledge and faith. That has come about because the old, primitive clairvoyant vision of the true ego — the foundation of man's being even when sleep extinguishes thought, feeling and will — that ancient knowledge has been lost, and exact clairvoyance is not yet advanced enough to see man's true egohood, the spiritual man. Only when it wants

to advance to this point — as it must advance to seeing the etheric and astral parts of man's constitution — only then will a direct extension of knowledge of the outer world into knowledge of the divine world take place. Then, again, the content of science will pour into religious life.

This gap between knowledge and faith exists because the living, clairvoyant vision of the true ego, the fourth member of man's being, has been lost. Therefore, it is the task of the new spiritual life to restore knowledge of the true ego through exact clairvoyance. Then the way will open for advancing out of world knowledge to divine knowledge, out of the knowledge of the world to a renewal of religious life. We shall be able to view faith only as a special, higher form of knowledge, not, as now, something specifically different from knowledge.

So, what we need is the possibility for a real knowledge of the ego. From that will also result the possibility for a new experience of religion. We need to bring about this ego knowledge so that it takes its place within spiritual science just as does the previously characterized cognition of etheric man, who is not perceived in the human physical body, and the perception of astral man, who endures beyond birth and death. Thus, too, a perception of the ego, which exists beyond sleeping and waking as the foundation for both, needs to be cultivated to bring about a revitalization of life. This is to be the third step of anthroposophy. What should result organically from the viewpoint of anthroposophical research is therefore:

A modern philosophy through an exact clairvoyant knowledge of the ether body.

A cosmology that includes man, through a clear grasp of his astral organism.

A renewal of religious life through an exact clairvoyant comprehension of the true human ego which exists beyond sleeping and waking.

From this point of view, I will make further observations in the next lectures on philosophy, cosmology and religion.



2

The Exercise of Thinking, Feeling and Willing

7 September 1922, Dornach

Philosophy did not arise in the way it is carried on at the present time. Now it is a sum, a group of connecting ideas whose inner, real content is not experienced by the philosophers; instead, they seek theoretical proof for it to show that it relates to reality. So the philosopher is not able to verify his ideas in reference to reality as directly as one always can in the case of any given fact in the real world. Of course, people can certainly harbor some illusions concerning a given fact, but they can easily come to mutual understanding about it when confronting it. In philosophy, the ideas, which despite one's belief to the contrary are actually taken only from tradition, can be related in various ways to reality because this reality is not experienced. In this way the various, diverging systems of philosophy arise. The validity of none of them can be absolutely established because, as reasons for the one or the other system are presented, one can always bring forward opposing reasons to refute them. Since it is only a matter of relative correctness, one can say then that the one who proves something and the one who refutes it are, in most cases, equally in the right. While at the present time a philosophy can be attained that differs from that of one or the other philosopher, it is impossible to arrive at anything that both could be felt directly as real and that also carries conviction because of the directness of observation.

Philosophy has originated out of a state of consciousness differing completely from that of abstract thinking in which it is now produced. Therefore, one must learn once again to live with one's soul in that state of consciousness. But since humanity has in the meantime progressed in its evolution, one cannot just resume the ancient consciousness that gave rise to philosophy. While something similar must be attained if one is to have a philosophy today, it is nevertheless something quite different. The old state of consciousness, which gave birth to philosophy and by means of which a philosopher experienced the activity of his own etheric organism, was partly unconscious.

Compared to modern consciousness in which we think scientifically, that consciousness was dream-like. What we must keep in mind as an ideal for a new philosophy is to be able to experience philosophy in the etheric body, but not in that dream-like way as was the case in olden times. But it must be realized that these dreams of ancient philosophers were not dreams in the same sense as dreams are today. Today's dreams are pictorial conceptions in which, however, the reality factor is nowhere assured by the content of the dream conceptions themselves. These conceptions may consist of all kinds of reminiscences of life; they may relate to processes of the physical organism. In the dream conception itself one never has a convincing indication of any reality. With the consciousness that cultivated philosophy in ancient times it was otherwise. Those conceptions were also pictorial, but they arose in such a way that the picture absolutely guaranteed the presence of a spiritual, an etheric reality, indicated by the picture itself. Today we cannot abandon ourselves to this dreamy, half-conscious soul state. Our scientific manner of forming concepts requires that we think in a fully conscious way, that in all respects we live in full consciousness in our soul life if we want to attain knowledge. Therefore, to achieve a new philosophy we must develop a way of thinking that takes its course in the etheric organism, but at the same time is as fully conscious as the scientific thinking we utilize in mathematics or natural science.

Such fully conscious, pictorial thinking that relates itself to an etheric reality is achieved today in anthroposophical research by means of an inner meditative exercising of the soul. These meditative exercises consist basically in the concentration by the soul on a conceptual content easily visualized at a glance. I shall have to describe details concerning this meditating in the following lectures. You will find it also in my book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment*, and in my *An Outline of Occult Science*. Here I shall only mention in principle that it consists in concentrating all the forces of the soul, disregarding everything that makes impressions from outside or from within, so that the soul's forces may rest undisturbed upon an easily surveyable concept. If, with the necessary energy and perseverance, you repeat for months or perhaps for years such a meditative exercise, you arrive one day at the point where you notice that in your soul-spiritual life you are becoming entirely independent of the physical organism so that you can actually come to the realization, "When I think in the physical organism I am making use of it as a tool. To be sure,

thinking itself does not run its course in the physical organism, but, because of its finer organization, the latter gives a reflection of the thinking; thereby I become conscious of it. "

Without the physical organism the thinking of ordinary consciousness cannot be carried out; ordinary consciousness, therefore, is bound to the physical organism. Just as we realize clearly that all ordinary thinking takes place only with the help of the physical organism, we also see clearly that in meditation a pictorial thinking activity is brought into play; for by means of meditation, through these ever-recurring periods of the soul's resting on an easily visualized conceptual content, in this inner soul activity we are set free of the physical body. Now, a picture world is experienced that surrounds us, which, in regard to this pictorial quality, resembles the picture world of the ancient thinkers who acquired their philosophy from it. It is experienced, however, with the same clear presence of mind found in any clear concept produced by the observations and experiments of natural science.

In this picture world that he has before him, man now gains an overall view of those forces in his own being that have been active since birth as the forces of growth, and that were responsible for the increase in his bodily size. He also gains a view over the forces active in the metabolism, in nutrition, and in the processes of digestion. In other words, he gains in picture form a complete survey of the life forces that permeate him out of the spiritual etheric world, and build up in him a particular etheric organism, bringing about his form and his life. Again, there arises in man, but in full consciousness, what was present in the earliest philosophers in a dream-like condition, from whom later philosophers have simply taken, in a more abstract form, what is now commonly known as philosophy. In other words, he now rises to the level of supersensible knowledge, which may be designated as imaginative knowledge, the knowledge of imagination. In this imaginative knowledge he surveys the forces of his own growth and life.

But what one perceives here as the etheric or life organism is not as sharply separated from the outer world as, in sense observation, objective things are separated from what is subjective. In sense perception I know: the object is there, I am here. In etheric imaginative perception one's own etheric organism grows together, so to say, with the etheric cosmos. In like manner, one experiences oneself within one's own etheric organism and in the etheric cosmos. What is thus experienced through the confluence of his own etheric nature with the etheric weaving and pulsing in the cosmos,

man is now able to bring into sharply outlined picture concepts, and then also to formulate and to express it in human language. In this way man can acquire a philosophy once again.

This philosophy, therefore, can be recovered through the fact that man works himself up to the development of imaginative thinking. But when the imaginative thinker — at the level of exact clairvoyance it may be called imagination — expresses his insights in speech and in thought forms, the matter is formulated in such a way that another person, who cannot perceive imaginatively on his own, can carry over into the full consciousness of ordinary thinking what the philosopher says, and, because it is different, it is also felt and experienced differently. But through the verbal communication and its comprehension, that reality is also experienced in ordinary consciousness. The imaginative thinker can imbue his words with this reality, for he acquires his conceptions out of the real etheric world.

Thus, a philosophy can again be achieved that has been won out of the etheric world, out of the human etheric organism and the etheric cosmos. It affects the listener in such a way that in taking it in with his ordinary, healthy understanding he feels: It has been brought out of the supersensible — first of all from the etheric — reality. So, when imaginative thinking is attained, a true philosophy will be restored to the world whose authenticity is guaranteed.

For cosmology, the meditative life must be extended. This can take place, if — with the whole range of its forces — the soul accustom itself not only to dwell on a surveyable concept, or complex of concepts, and to dwell on it over and over again in order to enter into an increased intensive activity — which finally is torn loose from the physical organism and continues in the purely etheric — but the soul must also reach the point of being able to eliminate from its consciousness again those concepts on which it has been dwelling. In the same fully willed manner in which it concentrates totally on certain concepts, holding them in its consciousness, so the soul must be able to eliminate them again and to enter a condition of mere wakefulness and full consciousness, devoid of any soul content derived from the senses or from thinking. The soul must be awake but have within itself nothing of all the contents acquired through ordinary consciousness.

When, in full wakefulness, the soul brings about an empty state of consciousness after meditation and attains a certain invigoration with inner strength in maintaining this emptiness of soul while fully awake, then the

moment finally comes when a soul-spiritual, cosmic content not previously known flows into this emptiness — a new spiritual world, a spiritual outer world. This, then, is the stage of inspiration, which follows the stage of supersensible perception through imagination.

If one has this capacity for receiving a soul-spiritual cosmic content into the emptied consciousness through inspiration, one is also able to take hold of what I called yesterday man's astral organism. It is that part of him that lived in a soul-spiritual world before it descended to earth and clothed itself in a physical and etheric body. Man becomes acquainted with his own soul-spiritual life before the embryonic life, before birth. He learns to know the astral organism that leaves physical man at death and lives on further in the soul-spiritual world. In inspired cognition he thus learns to know the astral organism that in ordinary consciousness lives itself out in thinking, feeling and willing.

But at the same time, he learns to know the spiritual cosmos. As man has the physical cosmos before him by means of his senses and his sense-bound thinking, he now confronts the spiritual cosmos; only, what within his physical and etheric organism is the work of this spiritual cosmos is much more real than the sense impressions received in ordinary consciousness. One can indeed say that what flows into man through inspiration, whereby he comes to a soul life independent of his body, can be compared with the breathing in of real oxygen. Among other things, through this inspired knowledge one gains a more exact insight into the nature of the human breathing process, and also into the process of blood circulation, which is rhythmically connected with the process of breathing. Through inspired knowledge, one gains an actual view of all the rhythmical processes in man. One attains a view of how the astral organism works in rhythmical man, and further, how this organism, ensheathed by the physical and etheric organisms, is connected with the breathing, with the whole rhythmic system, inserting itself directly in the rhythm of breathing and blood circulation.

Now we are also in a position to comprehend through cognition what is merely hereditary in the physical and etheric organisms and is therefore subject to the laws of heredity that are of the earth, and what man brings with him out of the supersensible, cosmic world, as soul and spirit being. This being enters the earthly world and only clothes itself in the physical and etheric organisms. One can then distinguish between man's inherited characteristics and what he brought with him out of a spiritual world into his physical existence.

In what we now perceive through our astral organism and its reflection in the rhythmic human processes, we have something that can now be integrated into the spiritual cosmos surrounding us, made accessible to us through inspiration. We attain a cosmology that can include man. One gains a cosmic picture of how man's astral organism, with the ego — of which I shall speak shortly — enters the physical organism on the waves of breathing and the other rhythmic processes. We see the cosmos in its fundamental, lawful order as it continues into man through his rhythmic processes. We arrive at a cosmology by which the astral organism is understood; likewise, the rhythmic processes in each individual person.

Thus, inspired knowledge becomes the source of a genuine, modern cosmology that is on a par with that ancient cosmology, which by man's dream-like forces of soul made him similarly a member of the whole cosmos, of a soul-spiritual, cosmic world. The knowledge gained in inspired perception, however, is gained in full consciousness, and can then be seen in its reflection in the etheric body. It is like this: The experiences of inspiration project themselves in pictures upon the etheric body. The insight thus gained in inspiration in the cosmos connects itself with the experiences of fantasy in the activity of the etheric body. What is inspired out of the cosmos is to a certain degree inwardly in motion and cannot at once be brought into sharp outlines. This only happens when it links itself with the experiences of fantasy in the ether body. Then, cosmology also can be brought into sharp outlines. Thereby arises a cosmic philosophy completely appropriate for modern man; a philosophical cosmology, which in this way is formed through a flowing together of inspired knowledge with the imaginations experienced pictorially in the ether body. It is such a cosmology that I have sought to give in my book, *An Outline of Occult Science*, translated into French as *La Science de l'Occulte*.

In order to establish the religious life on a basis of knowledge, further development of the meditative life, of soul exercises, is necessary. These exercises must now be extended to the human will. So far, we have chiefly described a form of soul exercises based on a special development of the life of thought. Now the soul's life, insofar as it is revealed in the will, has to be set free from the life of the spiritual researcher's physical and etheric organisms. That happens when the will is employed otherwise than in ordinary consciousness. I will illustrate this method by an example.

The events in the outer world are ordinarily observed as following one upon the other: the earlier one first, subsequently the later one — and thus we trace them also in our thinking. Now, however, we must try to

place these events in reverse order, putting the last one first, then the immediately preceding one next, and so on back to the first event. In this way, through an exertion of the will in the soul, we accomplish something not achieved in ordinary consciousness. Normally, you follow the course of outer events with the will that lives in thinking. By means of this thinking in reverse order, thinking differently from the actual course of events in nature, you tear the will free from the physical and etheric organisms. The will that otherwise is merely a reflection of the astral organism is thereby bound to this astral organism. Since the latter is lifted out of the physical and etheric organisms through the other meditations, the will is carried along out of the physical organism into the spiritual world outside. In thus taking the will out of your own organism in the astral body, you also take with it, out of the physical and etheric bodies, what is the real spiritual man, the 'I.' Now, it is possible to live with the ego and the astral organism in the spiritual world together with the spiritual beings. As we live by ourselves in our own body in the physical world, we now learn — through such a training of the soul's life — to live together in the outer spiritual world with all the beings who first revealed themselves in imagination and inspiration. In this way we attain the ability to lead a life in the spiritual world independent of our own physical organism.

Such exercises can be strengthened still more, so that the will puts forth another kind of effort. The more exertion needed for this development of the will, the better it is for experiencing the spiritual world outside the physical and etheric organisms. Man can change his habits by making the deliberate, conscious resolve, "This or that habit you have had for many years; you will now change it into something else by an energetic use of your will so that in four, five or ten years it is so transformed that in regard to it you will appear like a different person." They may, for example, be small, insignificant habits, of the kind that persist without being given much attention. If you work at them they are the most effective for the sort of supersensible knowledge I am now characterizing. For example, you have a certain form of handwriting. With all your energy, you apply yourself to changing it into a form different from what you are accustomed to and have developed since childhood.

When one devoted oneself for years to such will exercises, the soul finally becomes strong enough to live outside the physical and etheric organisms with the spiritual beings of the outer spiritual world, with human souls either before they are incarnated, or after they go through death and are living in the spiritual world before returning into physical existence and also with those spiritual beings who are only in the spiritual world and dwell

there in such a way that, unlike human beings, they never have a physical and etheric body. In this way one arrives at living with one's soul and spirit in that world where the content of religious consciousness is experienced. In full consciousness one enters that world described by the ancient teachers of religion as the divine world; at that time this happened through a more dream-like familiarization with the divine, but now, it is through a fully conscious one, the same fully conscious state of mind as is only developed in mathematics or the exactness of modern natural science. In this way the third level of supersensible knowledge is cultivated, that of true intuition.

Through this true intuition by which we learn to live in the divine-spiritual world, we are able to bring back experiences from that world so as to form them into the content of religious consciousness. Once again, we learn to recognize a basic fact of human nature: how man, with his true 'I' and his astral organism, can live in a purely spiritual world. We now gain a view of man's condition in wakefulness and in sleep; we gain insight into how the ego and astral organism envelop themselves during the waking state in what I have described earlier as the processes of breathing and circulation, the rhythmic processes; but how, as the 'I' creates a reflection of itself in the physical organism, the metabolic processes that live in the circulation of the blood are included in this reflected nature. What man in his ordinary consciousness calls his 'I' is merely a weak reflection of his true 'I.' The true ego is rooted in the divine-spiritual world characterized above. In ordinary consciousness this ego is perceived through the permeation of the circulatory system by the metabolic processes. In these latter, pulsating in the circulation, one senses, feels, what in ordinary consciousness is perceived as the ego. But that is only a weak reflection of the true ego.

In the waking state the reflection of the ego lives in the metabolism that circulates through the rhythmic system of man. That is to say, the true ego exists, but ordinary consciousness only contains its reflection produced in metabolism. When, however, the human physical and etheric organisms use the processes of breathing and circulation, permeated by metabolism, when they use the forces of this rhythmical man themselves, as is the case in the state of sleep, then the true ego, with the astral body, lives in the outer spiritual world. Breathing and circulation, with the pulsating metabolism contained within, then care for the needs of the physical and etheric organisms on their own; the true ego and the astral organism carry on an existence aside from the physical and etheric bodies in the spiritual world. One beholds these alternating conditions by means of true intuition — how the physical and etheric organisms need the breathing and blood

circulation, with the metabolism contained in them, to renew their forces. During this time the true ego and the astral organism stay for a while in the spiritual world, carrying on their own existence. When the forces of the physical and etheric bodies are regenerated through rhythmical man to the extent that further rhythmical regenerative processes are not needed, the astral body and ego return and permeate the metabolic process pulsating through the breathing and blood circulation, and man is then awake again.

Thus, one sees how the true ego and astral organisms pulsate in the metabolism. Thus, one learns to know that world designated by the old religions as the divine world in which the ego of man, the true ego, has its innate home. Since what one grasps in this way through intuition is once again reflected in the physical and etheric organisms as in a mirror, one can also express in words, in pictures, in concepts, what one experiences in the purely spiritual world, independent of all human corporeality. This can then be grasped in turn by man's healthy human reason. It can be felt and sensed, it can be experienced in the human heart, and then it forms the content of religious consciousness, which thereby is founded on knowledge.

It is not necessary for every person to find his way into the divine world through intuition. That must be done by one who becomes a researcher of the spirit. But when the spiritual researcher puts what he discovers in the spiritual world into words in the manner characterized above, it then takes on such forms that, through what comes to be revealed in this way, one experiences in the ordinary state of consciousness: "Here, words are spoken that do not relate to this world, but with the power of the reality inherent in them they fully come to life in the human soul." It is through this power that what is drawn from the spiritual world by spiritual research through an intuitive experience of the divine-spiritual world has its religious influence upon our consciousness.

If men want to acquire once more through their own efforts a religious life based on knowledge, they must accept what the spiritual researcher is able to reveal as his own experiences in the divine-spiritual world gained through true intuition. The religion will return to what it once was. In its inception, every religion was a revelation from the divine-spiritual world: a revelation of those experiences that can be had with those divine beings that earlier reveal themselves to imaginative and inspired perception, but whom one meets on their own level only through intuition.

The kind of thinking that can live in abstractions, that is chiefly employed in scientific research and on which we base our observations and experimentations, has been attained only in the course of human evolution. It did not exist among those people from whom the early philosophers and teachers of religion came — those who founded the old philosophy, cosmology and religious life, of which much has been preserved by way of tradition. In those times, half-conscious dreamily imaginative, inspired and intuitive experiences prevailed. It is from these experiences that men of earlier ages drew their knowledge in every domain of life. Only since the rise of modern natural science do we have what we experience as abstract thinking. One should not believe that only scientists think in this way. Nowadays, it is absorbed through the ordinary schools and by the simplest person living in a rural area far from all urban culture.

No trace of the consciousness that is spread through the civilized world today by this abstract thinking existed in any part of humanity even in the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. Everywhere there lived what had been attained by means of the other three states of consciousness. But the fully conscious condition, which we must interpret as the true expression of mankind today, could be achieved only by the fact that abstract thinking, now the pride of scientific life, has integrated itself into the human experience. In other words, the form of thinking that utilizes man's physical organism and needs it in order to think as is the case today — such thinking did not exist in ancient times. Then, man thought only with the etheric and astral elements in his nature and with his ego organization. His thoughts were given him by the revelations of imagination, inspiration and intuition. This is still the case today with people who, through some circumstance that we will mention later, possess a kind of clairvoyance. That is not the modern, exact clairvoyance but something inherited from ancient conditions of dreamlike clairvoyance. Such persons are never able to control their soul experiences, but they can have them, as people in earlier times had them. It is often surprising what clear thoughts are given to such people in their dream-like visions; thoughts based on a far more brilliant logic than even a philosopher can produce. Those are just the thoughts revealed out of the spiritual world. In ancient epochs of human evolution, only such thoughts existed, that is, revealed thoughts.

Abstract thinking, the only kind known today, is obtained by using the physical body as a tool. It is experienced through the instrument of the physical body. This characterizes what modern humanity has achieved in rising to its full consciousness. In regard to the spiritual world, such thinking achieved through the physical body is actually a displaced

thinking. For particularly through what I have just characterized, thinking shows that it belongs to the spiritual world. It is now displaced when man employs his physical organization in his thinking. Thereby, thinking lives in an element that is not its very own. But man, nevertheless achieves something in this thinking that he could never attain if thinking would merely result as a revelation out of imagination, inspiration and intuition. Because thinking is obtained through the physical organism it substantially contains nothing from the spiritual world. It is fundamentally an activity taking place solely in the physical body. In other words, this abstract thinking experiences nothing real; it is as if pressed out, filtered out of imagination. What is experienced is illusion. What we experience in abstract thinking is an illusory experience just because we become fully conscious in this thinking.

We can experience two facts in this thinking. First, the illusion in it, which does not itself pretend to express something, becomes a reflection of objective nature. Only thereby has man attained what he is so proud of today, an objective natural science. Outer occurrences in nature could not be objectively presented by a thinking filled with substance of its own. We cannot acknowledge such descriptions of natural processes as were given in olden times as objective natural science. Just because thinking has only a life of semblance, the outer world can reflect itself in this semblance. In a thinking that does not have a substance of its own, the substance of the outer occurrences of nature appears in picture form. So, humanity in its progress is indebted to objective natural science for the fact that it attained full consciousness in an illusory experience of thinking. The epoch in which abstract thinking arose also became the time when objective natural science was attained.

A second fact that man owes to this advance into abstract thinking is his experience of freedom. What man experiences as moral impulses through imagination, inspiration and intuition, even when he experiences it in a dream-like manner as in ancient times — when it was always experienced through dreams, instincts and emotions and thus became an impulse to action — this always puts a constraint on man. An instinct underlying an action in man's organism is something that drives him, forces him here and there. What is brought out of the real etheric world in imagination as moral impulses impels me; I cannot do otherwise than follow it. So it is also with what derives from inspiration and intuition.

Between birth and death man experiences the illusory life of abstract thinking, of pure thinking that is nothing but thinking, yet is carried out through the physical organism. If man now takes moral impulses into this thinking, they then live in the pure thinking that has only an illusory life and cannot force him to do anything, anymore than a mirrored image can compel one to some action. Something that thrusts at me in reality does coerce me. But something that has a mere semblance of life, as, for example, what we experience in pure thinking, cannot compel a person. I myself must decide whether or not I want to follow it. In this way, through the illusory experience of thinking, the possibility of human freedom is given at the same time. Even though a man's thinking is able to experience nothing but semblance, when moral impulses rooted in the spiritual world enter into it and form its content, then they become free impulses.

Man, therefore, owes two things to his advance to illusory experience in thinking: the era of objective natural science, and the attainment of real freedom. Just as I have described the ascent into supersensible worlds in the books *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment*, in *An Outline of Occult Science*, and in *Theosophy*, likewise have I sought to present the basis for attaining the consciousness of freedom in the modern age in my *Philosophy of Freedom*. Thus, we can say that in the epoch in which man has achieved his full consciousness because thinking has streamed down into his physical organism and makes use of it, this thinking has rejected the old dream-like clairvoyance that was once the basis of an old philosophy, an old cosmology and an old religious life. Thereby man has gained the possibility of developing objective natural science in his physical organism between birth and death, and further, the possibility of developing freedom.

Today, however, man is at the point where, retaining his full consciousness, he must again travel the road into the supersensible world in fully conscious imagination, inspiration and intuition. He must do this in order to attain — in addition to what he can experience in objective natural science, and in freedom — a new philosophy, a new cosmology, and a new religious life built upon knowledge of the super-sensible world. These, as revelations from the supersensible world, satisfy modern man in the same way that he is satisfied when by means of his wideawake consciousness in the sense world he attains to an objective science, and to freedom.

Thus, we have now characterized freedom and objective natural science on the one side, and on the other modern spiritual science, and thereby shown how humanity must go forward from the present into the future, so

that through attaining supersensible knowledge it can participate in the true human advancement demanded by the world order.



3

How to Acquire Imaginative, Inspired and Intuitive Knowledge

8 September 1922, Dornach

Through the meditative exercises that are to lead to imaginative cognition man's whole inner soul life becomes transformed. Likewise, the relations of the human soul to the surrounding world change. Meditation, as meant in the previous lectures here, consists in concentrating all the soul's powers upon a definite, easily grasped complex of ideas. It is important to keep this clearly in mind: it should be an easily envisioned complex of ideas to which the soul-spiritual part of man can give its immediate, undivided attention, in such a way that while the soul rests on this complex of ideas nothing flows into it of soul-impressions that well up from the subconscious or unconscious, or from our memories.

To bring about imaginative knowledge in the right way, it is necessary to confront the whole idea-complex, on which all one's powers of soul in meditating are centered, and view it as one would a mathematical problem, in order that neither emotion-filled thoughts nor impulses of the will play into the meditation. When we concentrate on a mathematical problem we know at every moment that our soul activity remains concentrated on what our mind is focused. We know that nothing emotional, no feelings, no reminiscences of past experiences may be allowed to enter the process of bringing about a solution of the problem. The same soul condition is also necessary for rightly carrying out a meditation.

It is best then if we concentrate on an idea-complex that is completely new, something we are certain we have never thought about before. For if we were simply to choose an idea from our store of memories, we could never be sure what would be playing into the meditation from unconscious impulses or feelings. Therefore, it is especially good to be given advice by an experienced spiritual scientist, because he can see to it that the conceptual content will not have been previously thought of by the person

meditating. In this way, the subject of meditation enters his consciousness for the first time, nothing out of memory or instinct plays into it; only the purely soul-spiritual is engaged in meditating.

When such a meditation, which requires only a short time each day, is repeated over and over again, a state of soul is finally brought about that lets man have the definite feeling, "Now I live in an inner activity that is free of the physical body; a different activity from that of thinking, feeling, or exercising my will within the physical body." What one encounters especially is the definite feeling that one lives in a world separated from one's physical corporeality. Man gradually finds his way into the etheric world. He feels this because the nature of his own physical organism takes on a relative objectivity. Man looks upon it as if from outside, just as he looks ordinarily from within his physical body out upon external objects. But what appears in inward experience if the meditation is successful, is that the thoughts become, as it were, more compact. They not only bear their usual character of abstraction, but in them one experiences something akin to the forces of growth that turned one from a small child to a grown man, or the forces daily active in us when metabolism nourishes our body.

Thinking certainly takes on the character of reality. Just for this reason — that man now feels himself in his thinking the same way he felt himself previously in his processes of growth, or his life processes — this imaginative thinking must be acquired in the manner just described. For if unconscious, or perhaps physical elements had played into meditation, those forces, those realities now experienced in supersensible thinking would also reflect back into man's physical and etheric organisms. There, they would unite with the forces of growth and nutrition; and by persisting with such super-sensible thinking man would alter his physical and etheric organisms. But this cannot in any circumstances be allowed to happen! All activity engaged in for the purpose of achieving imaginative knowledge, all the forces used in this task, must be applied exclusively to man's relationship with his surrounding world, and in no way may they be allowed to interfere with his physical or etheric organism. Both of these must remain wholly unchanged, so that when man achieves the faculty of hovering, as it were, with his thinking in the etheric world, he can look back in this thinking upon his unaltered physical body. It has remained as it was; this etheric thinking has not interfered with it.

With this etheric thinking you feel quite outside your physical body. But you must always be able freely to alternate at will between remaining outside and being completely within your physical organism. A person who has correctly brought about imaginative perception through meditation must be able to be in this etheric thinking one moment — which is experienced inwardly like a growth and nutritional process and felt to be entirely real — and in the next moment, as this thinking disappears, to be able to return into the physical body and see with his eyes as usual, hear with his ears and touch as he did before. At his absolutely free discretion he must always be able to bring about this passing back and forth between being in the physical body and being outside it in the etheric realm. Then a true imaginative thinking is achieved. I shall demonstrate in the second part of the lecture how this imaginative thinking works.

For one who wants to become a spiritual scientist it is necessary that he carry out the most diverse exercises, systematically, for a long time. Through what I have just indicated in principle, one will experience etheric thinking to such a degree that one can test what the spiritual scientist asserts, even though this testing is also possible by the usual healthy human understanding if it is sufficiently impartial and free of prejudice.

If meditation is to bring results in the right way one must support it by certain other soul exercises. Above all, soul qualities such as strength of character, inner truthfulness, a certain equanimity of soul, and especially complete presence of mind must be increasingly developed. It must always be repeated: a presence of mind that permits us to carry out, with the same attitude and disposition of soul as are required in mathematics, the meditative exercises and the exact clairvoyant research that is then undertaken. If such qualities as strength of character, integrity, presence of mind and a certain tranquility of soul have become habitual, then the meditative process, if continually repeated — perhaps for some requiring a few weeks, for others many years, depending on their predisposition — will come to the point of impressing its results into the whole physical and etheric organisms. Then man will really attain an inner activity in imaginative cognition comparable with that called forth in his physical organism when he uses it for perceiving the world through his senses and for thinking.

When man has achieved such imaginative cognition, he is in a position first to view the course of his own life from childhood up to the present moment as a unity, as a tableau in time. It reveals itself as a continuous, inwardly mobile, flow of development. This, however, is not the same as

what usually comes into our mind as our store of personal memories. What man has gained through imaginative cognition that now confronts him, is as real as those forces of life and growth that bring forth from the small child's body the whole configuration of his soul, and then, in the further course of development, thinking, and so on. Man now surveys everything that evolves inwardly and represents the development of the etheric organism in the course of life. From what is thus surveyed — and it is much more concrete than the tableau of memories — the recollections that enter ordinary consciousness appear only as a kind of reflection, a surface ripple cast up from processes in the depths of our life. We now penetrate these etheric processes in the depths of our being, which otherwise do not enter consciousness at all, but have in fact formed and shaped out life from birth to the present moment.

These facts, these processes, confront imaginative consciousness. This gives man a true self-knowledge concerning, at the outset, his earthly life. How we can acquire knowledge of life beyond the earth will be shown during the following days. The first step in supersensible perception consists in confronting our own etheric life — the way it was spent from childhood to the present — in its supersensible character. Thereby we learn to understand ourselves rightly for the first time. What is experienced in this way is mirrored in our physical and etheric organisms in such a way that, in what is thus experienced as our own etheric processes, we have something that shows us how the entire etheric cosmos lives in the individual human being — how the outer etheric world, I might call it, reverberates and resounds in man's etheric organism.

Now, one can say that what is thus experienced can be put into verbal, conceptual forms, and out of the imaginative experience of the world in etheric man, a true philosophy can arise. But what is thus experienced remains completely unconscious for ordinary consciousness. Only the small child, in the time before it has learned to speak, lives wholly within this activity into which man enters through imaginative perception. For in learning to speak, as language develops in the soul's life, those forces that then are experienced as abstract thinking separate from the general forces of growth and other life processes. A child does not yet have this faculty of abstract thinking. The metamorphosis of a part of its forces of life and growth into the forces of thinking has not yet occurred. Therefore, in relation to the cosmos, a child is caught up in an activity into which an adult feels himself carried back through imaginative perception; only, a child experiences it unconsciously. The imaginative thinker experiences it fully consciously with clear presence of mind.

For the person who does not achieve imaginative thinking it is impossible to survey what it is that plays between man's etheric organism and the etheric realm in the cosmos. A child cannot perceive it even though it experiences it directly, because it does not yet possess abstract thinking. A person with ordinary consciousness cannot perceive it because he has not deepened his abstract thinking through meditation. When he does this he actually looks consciously upon that interplay of the human etheric organism with the etheric in the cosmos in which the infant still dwells undividedly.

So I should like to make this paradoxical statement: Only he is a true philosopher who, as a mature adult, can become again like a little child in the disposition of his soul, but who has now acquired the faculty of experiencing this soul condition of the small child in a more wakeful state than that of ordinary consciousness; who can lift again into his whole soul life what he was as a small child before he advanced to abstract thinking through speech. What one thus experiences, surveyed in full consciousness, turns one into a philosopher of the modern age. A present-day philosopher lives, fully conscious, in the condition of a little child before it has learned to speak. This is the paradox which, I think, makes it especially clear how the human soul within modern spiritual life will actually lift itself to a real, genuine philosophical disposition of soul.

For complete supersensible perception, it is necessary to widen the meditative exercises so that they can lead to inspiration. For this purpose, the soul must not only practice resting upon a complex of ideas as previously described, but also — in principle, this has also been mentioned already — it must become capable of obliterating the pictures that enter one's consciousness because of or following meditation. As one has brought about the pictures of imaginative perception quite freely and arbitrarily, one now has to be able to eliminate these pictures from consciousness, from the soul life. It requires greater energy to do this than to eliminate from consciousness ideas that have entered either from memory or from ordinary sense perception. One needs more strength to eliminate meditative ideas and imaginative pictures from consciousness than one needs for such ordinary ideas. But this increased power that the soul must bring to bear is necessary for advancing in supersensible perception.

Man attains this power by striving more and more to free his consciousness from these imaginative pictures when they have appeared, and to permit nothing else to enter in. Then there occurs what one may

call mere wakefulness, without any content of soul. This condition then leads to inspiration. For when the soul has achieved empty consciousness in this way by means of the powerful force released by the act of freeing itself from the imaginative pictures, the spiritual contents of the cosmos stream into the emptied but awake soul. Then man gradually has before and around him a spiritual cosmos, as in ordinary consciousness he is surrounded by a physical sense cosmos.

What man now experiences in the spiritual cosmos represents itself to him in a manner that points back to what he has experienced in the sense world. There, he has experienced the sun, moon, planets, fixed stars, and the other facts of the physical sense world. Now that he is able to comprehend the spiritual cosmos by means of the emptied consciousness in which he experiences inspiration, the spiritual being of the sun, the moon, the planets and stars is revealed to him. Again, it is necessary that by his free will man should be able to relate what he experiences spiritually as the cosmos to what he experienced through his physical body as physical sense cosmos. He must be able to say, "I now experience something like a spiritual being that manifests itself. I must relate it as 'sun-spirit' to what I experience in the physical sense world as physical sun. Similarly, I experience the manifestation of the soul-spirit being of the moon and must be able to relate it to what I experience in the physical sense world as moon; and so on."

Again, man must be able to move freely to and fro while he is simultaneously in both the spiritual and the physical sense worlds. In his soul life he must be able to move freely between the spiritual revelation of the cosmos and what he is accustomed to experience as physical sense manifestations within earth life. When one thus relates the spiritual element of the sun to its physical counterpart, the spiritual moon element to the physical moon element, and so on, it is a soul process similar to having a new perception and being reminded of what one experienced earlier. Just as one combines what meets one in a new perception with what one has already experienced in order to throw light on both, so, in the truly free, inspired life, one brings together what one experiences as revelations of spiritual beings with what one has experienced in the physical sense world. It is as if the experiences in the spirit brought new inklings of what has been experienced earlier in the sense world through the physical body. One must have absolute presence of mind in order to experience this higher degree of supersensible knowledge, which is something overpowering, in the same quiet state of soul as when a new perception is linked with an old recollection.

Experiencing something through inspiration differs greatly from any imaginative experience a person could have had earlier. With imagination he lives in the etheric world. He feels himself as alive in the etheric world as otherwise he has felt in his physical body. But he feels the etheric world more as a sum of rhythmic processes, a vibrating in the world ether, which, however, he is certainly in a position to interpret in ideas and concepts. Man senses events of a universal nature in the etheric-imaginative experience; he feels supersensible, etheric phenomena. In inspiration he feels not only such supersensible, etheric facts merging into each other, metamorphosing and taking on all manner of possible forms, but now, through inspiration, he senses how in this etheric, billowing world, in this rhythmically undulating world, as if on waves of an etheric world-ocean, real beings are weaving and working. In this way one feels something reminiscent of the sun, moon, planets and the fixed stars, and also of things on the physical earth, for example, the minerals and plants, and all this is bathed in the cosmic ether.

This is the way we experience the astral cosmos. While here in the physical sense world we perceive only the exterior of everything, there we recognize it in its essential, spiritual existence. We also attain a view of the inner nature and form of the human organism, as well as the form of the separate organs, lungs, heart, liver and so on. For we see now that everything that gives form and life to the human organism originates not only in what surrounds us and is active in the physical cosmos, but also proceeds from the spiritual beings within this physical cosmos — as sun-being, moon-being, animal and plant being — permeating with soul and spirit the physical and etheric activity, and working so as to give man's organism life and form. We only comprehend the form and life of the physical organism when we have risen to inspiration.

What is experienced there remains for ordinary consciousness completely concealed. We should be able to perceive it with ordinary consciousness only if we saw not merely with our eyes, heard with our ears and tasted with the organs for tasting, but if the process of breathing in and out were a kind of process of perception — if one could experience the in- and out-streaming of the breath inwardly throughout the whole organism. Because this is so, a certain Oriental school, the school of Yoga, transformed breathing into a process of knowledge, metamorphosed it into a process of perception. By converting the breathing into a conscious, even if half dreamlike way to knowledge, so as to experience in it something like what we experience in seeing and hearing, the Yoga philosophy actually develops a cosmology, an insight into how spiritual beings in the cosmos

work into man, and the way he experiences himself as a member of the spiritual cosmos. But such Yoga instructions are not in accord with the form of man's organization which Western humanity of the present time has acquired. Yoga exercises like these were only possible for the human organization in past ages, and what Yogis practice today is fundamentally already decadent.

For a particular 'middle epoch' of earth-humanity's evolution, as I should like to call it, it was appropriate, so to say, for man's organization to make the breathing process into a process of consciousness, of knowledge, through such yoga exercises, and in this way to develop a dreamlike but nevertheless valid cosmology. This knowledge, which led in that epoch to a correct cosmology for the education, in their sense "scientific," humanity of that age, must be re-attained on a higher level by today's human being with his present composition of body and soul — not in the half dreamlike, half unconscious condition of that time, but with full consciousness as I have explained in speaking about inspiration. If Western man were to carry out yoga exercises he would not leave his physical and etheric organisms undisturbed under any circumstances; he would alter them precisely because he now has a quite different constitution. Elements out of his physical and etheric organisms would enter into his process of cognition, and something non-objective would interfere into the cosmology. Just as one must recapture, as a philosopher, the soul condition of one's earliest childhood, but now in full consciousness, so, in regard to cosmology, one must call up in one's soul life that soul state which was formerly valid for mankind, when it was possible to make use of the yoga system. But one must experience it with a total presence of mind, in full consciousness, in a wakefulness higher than the ordinary one.

So we can say that in this fully awakened state of mind the modern philosopher must again bring about in his soul the childlike soul condition belonging to the single human being, while the modern cosmologist must again bring about that condition of soul which belonged to humanity in a middle epoch of human evolution — and now again in full consciousness. The modern philosopher must bring an individual soul condition, that of the child, into full consciousness, while the modern cosmologist must restore in a fully conscious manner that soul condition present in the cosmologists of an earlier humanity. Consciously to become a child means to be a philosopher. The restoration of the condition of the soul, in which a Yogi lived during a middle period of earth evolution, and its transformation into

full consciousness means becoming a cosmologist in the modern sense. In the last portion of this lecture, I would like to describe what it means to be a religious person.

Yesterday, I described how the third level of supersensible knowledge, true intuition, is reached through exercises of the will. You can read about them more specifically in the writings I have mentioned, and they will be further described in more detail in the coming days. Here man is brought into a soul disposition such as existed in a dreamlike soul condition in the humanity that lived as the first, primeval humanity on our earth in the beginning of human evolution. What existed, however, among this primordial humanity was a dreamlike, half unconscious, instinctive intuition.

This intuition must be brought again into full consciousness by a modern person with cognitive faculties for the religious life. The more instinctive intuition of primeval mankind still appears, to be sure, like an echo in some people of the present age, who express what they instinctively perceive in their environment as spiritual forces, with which they live as if in their outer world. These intuitions, which are echoes of the dreamlike intuitions of primeval humanity, can be made use of by such people when they write poetry or create works of art. Original scientific ideas may also stem from such intuitions, and they play a major role in mankind's life of fantasy.

What I am now describing as true, fully conscious intuition, and what is attained in the manner I described yesterday, are two entirely different things. Primitive man had a completely different soul disposition from that of modern man. He lived, as it were, in the whole outer world, in cloud and mist, in stars, sun and moon, in the plant as well as animal kingdoms. He lived in all of it with almost the same intensity as he felt himself living in his own body. It is extremely difficult to make this soul condition of primeval man clear for ordinary consciousness today. But everything that can be recognized by external history points back to such a soul disposition in primeval humanity. It was rooted in the fact that primeval man's bodily conditions were not submerged in the unconscious to the extent they are today. We modern men no longer live with our processes of nutrition and growth, with the processes in our physical organism. Spread out over this experience, which remains entirely in the subconscious, is the more or less conscious soul life of our feeling and willing and the fully conscious soul life of our thinking. But below our direct experiences of thinking, feeling and willing are to be found the actual processes of our human physical organism, and these remain wholly unconscious as far as our ordinary awareness is concerned.

This was fundamentally different in primitive man. As a child he did not experience definite conceptions such as we do. His conceptual life was often almost dreamlike, while his emotional life, although vehement, was even less distinct. The soul's life of feeling resembled bodily pain and pleasure much more than is the case with modern man. By contrast, primitive man felt how he grew in childhood. These processes of growth were felt by him as the life of body and soul. Even as an adult he sensed how food and drink course through the digestive system; how the blood circulates and bears the nutritive juices through the organism. Someone endowed with an organization like that whose development I described yesterday, can still gain an idea today, even though on a lower level, of this bodily experience of primitive man, when he observes how cows, after grazing, lie down, digest and are absorbed in the specific activity of digesting. It is an experience of both body and soul in these creatures that appears simply like the instreaming and inward lighting-up of cosmic processes. The animals experience an inner sense of well-being in digesting, in feeding, in the coursing of nutritive substances through the blood's circulation. You need not be a clairvoyant to be able to tell by the whole external condition and behavior of these animals how they follow their digestion with their animal consciousness.

This is how primitive man, when he entered the development on earth, followed his physical processes that were directly united and formed a unity with his soul processes. Because he could experience his own physical inner being in this way, primeval man could also experience the physical and soul elements of the outer world nearly as intensely as, if I may put it this way, he experienced himself in his lungs, his heart, the processes in his stomach, liver, and so on. In the same way, he felt himself in the flashes of lightning, the rolling thunder, in the ever-changing clouds and in the waning and waxing moon. He lived with the seasons, the phases of the moon, in the same way that he experienced the processes of his digestion. His environment was almost as much an inner world to him as his own inner being. What was experienced inwardly was to him the same as what he experienced in a flowing stream, and so on. The surging waves of the river were to him an inner process in which he participated, in which he immersed himself as he did in his own blood circulation.

Primitive man lived in the outer world in such a way that it appeared to him like his own inner being — as, indeed it actually is. Today this is called animism. But the use of this word gives rise to a complete misunderstanding of the essential nature of his experience, for it supposes that he projected his inner experiences into the outer world. What he

actually experienced in the external world was to him an elementary fact of his consciousness, as much a matter of fact as the meaning we ourselves attribute to the phenomena of color and tone. We ought not to assume that primitive man dreamily projected fantasies into the outer world, and that these have been handed down to us as the content of his consciousness. He actually observed these things and to him they were as self-evident as the things we observe today. Sense observation is only a transformed product of primitive man's original way of observing. He actually perceived in the outer world what those beings were accomplishing in the etheric and astral cosmos, who, in creating, maintain the activity of the cosmos. This he perceived, even as though in dreams, in quite a dull way. But he did perceive it, and this perceiving was at the same time the content of his religious consciousness. Primeval man possessed a certain soul disposition in regard to the surrounding world, but this disposition intensified so much that, in the cosmos surrounding him, he beheld simultaneously the spiritual beings with whom he himself as a human being felt related. In his cognition man acquired the relationship to the spiritual beings that came down to us in derivative forms in the content of our religions. For a man of that early time his religious consciousness was only the higher stage of his primitive cognition.

If we wish to establish a new religious consciousness based on true knowledge, we could not do better than return to the soul disposition of primitive mankind, with the difference that it must now be neither dreamlike nor half-conscious. Our soul must be more awake than in ordinary consciousness, as awakened as it must be for the purpose of attaining genuine intuition, as I have already described. To reach genuine intuition we must acquire the ability to emerge consciously with our ego out of our body and immerse our own being within the other spiritual beings of the cosmos, living with them as we live in our physical organism during our life on earth in a physical body. In earth life we are submerged in our physical organism; in true intuitive knowledge we immerse ourselves with our ego in the spiritual beings of the cosmos. We live with them, and thereby bring about a link between our ego and the world to which it truly belongs. For this ego is a spirit being like those others to whom I have just alluded; and through a religious consciousness we acquire a direct relationship to those spirits, among whom we ourselves are counted. Primitive man was endowed only with a dull, instinctive religious consciousness. We must through our own activity bring back that ancient

soul disposition and experience it now in full consciousness. Then we shall attain a religious perception, a religion firmly based on knowledge and suitable for modern man.

As we have to recover the soul condition of childhood and immerse ourselves in it in full consciousness if we want to become modern philosophers; as we must recover in our own age the soul condition of humanity of an intermediate epoch — men who were able to make the breathing process into a perceptual process of knowledge in dreamlike fashion — and permeate it with full consciousness if we are able to become cosmologists in the modern sense; so we must also revive in ourselves the soul condition of primeval man as it was in its relation to the outer world, and permeate it with our full consciousness in order to attain a religion based on knowledge in the modern sense of the word.

To experience once again the soul disposition of childhood in full consciousness, is the prerequisite for genuine, modern philosophy. To relive, in full consciousness, in our soul life an earlier intermediate epoch of humanity's evolution, in which the process of breathing could become a process of perception, is the prerequisite for modern cosmology. To revive the soul condition of primeval man — the earliest on this earth, who still lived in direct connection with the gods — to activate it in the present soul mood of modern man and to pervade it with full consciousness, is for modern man the prerequisite for a religion based on knowledge.



4 Cognition and Will Exercises

9 September 1922, Dornach

The exercises I have described for attaining inspiration are actually only preliminary exercises for further supersensible cognition. Through them a person is indeed able to view the course of his life in the way I have characterized it; he is able to see the etheric world of facts unfolding in the expanse of earth existence behind man's thinking, feeling and willing. By discarding the picture images achieved in meditation, or in the consciousness following meditation, he also becomes acquainted through this empty consciousness with the etheric substance of the cosmos and the manifestations of the spiritual beings who rule there. When, however, a person becomes familiar in this way with human soul life, the astral organization of man, he realizes first of all how much the physical organism of man owes to hereditary development, that is to say what are the persistent factors in his physical body that have been inherited from his ancestors. Man also gains a glimpse of how the cosmos is active within the etheric organism, and he sees as a consequence what is not subject to heredity but breaks away from it and is responsible for man's individuality. He sees what it is that within his etheric and astral organizations sets him free from his inheritance and ancestors who gave him his physical body.

It is extremely important to distinguish clearly in this way between what is passed on in the continuing stream of physical inheritance from ancestors to descendants, and what, by contrast, is given to individual man by the etheric, cosmic world, for it is this whereby he becomes personalized and individualized and frees himself from his inherited characteristics. It is especially important in education, in pedagogy, to see clearly into these distinctions. Precisely such knowledge as is indicated here can provide teachers with some fundamental principles. I may perhaps refer here to the booklet, which contains a summary by Albert Steffen of the Pedagogical Course that I gave here in Dornach at Christmas a year ago, also to what is contained in the last issue of the English magazine *Anthroposophy*, (July/August), which contains interesting educational material.

The inspired knowledge developed by means of the exercises I have described only acquaints man with the astral organism within the framework of earth life. He learns to know what he is as a soul-spiritual being developing from birth to the present time. But this insight does not yet enable him to say that his soul-spiritual being begins with earthly life and ends with it. He arrives at the soul-spiritual element in his earth life but does not come so far as to perceive this soul-spiritual element as something eternal, as the eternal core of man's being. For that it is necessary to continue and broaden the exercises for eliminating the meditative pictures from consciousness so much that in doing so the soul becomes ever stronger and more energetic. Progress here really consists in nothing else but continued energetic training. One must struggle again and again with all the strength one can muster to remove from consciousness the pictures produced or created by imagination, so that it becomes empty. Gradually then, through practicing the elimination of the images, the soul's strength increases so much that finally it is powerful enough so that one is able to obliterate the overall picture of the course of one's life since birth, as it has been brought before the soul through imagination.

Mark well, it is possible to continue the exercises for eliminating a content of soul and producing empty consciousness, carrying them so far that the soul becomes strong enough to leave out the course of its own life. At the moment, when one is strong enough to do this, one lives in a consciousness that no longer has before it the physical organism, nor the etheric organism; moreover, one no longer confronts anything of the world absorbed through the physical and etheric organisms. For this consciousness, the sense world with all its sense impressions is no longer present, neither is the sum of all the etheric happenings in the cosmos that one had first gained through imaginative cognition. Everything of this kind has been removed. Thereby a higher degree of inspiration is brought about within the human soul.

What appears then by means of this higher level of inspiration is the condition of soul as it existed in a soul-spiritual world before it descended into a human physical organism through conception, embryonic life and birth. In this way one attains a perception of the soul's pre-earthly existence. One looks into those worlds where the soul existed before it received on earth, I may say, the first atom of physical substance transmitted to it with conception. One looks back into the development of the soul in the soul-spiritual world and learns to know its pre-existent life. Through this experience, a person has grasped one side of the eternal nature of the human soul's essence. When he has done that, he has, in

fact, recognized for the first time the true nature of the human ego, of spirit man. This latter is accessible only to this form of inspiration that is capable of disregarding not only its own physical body and its impressions, but also its own etheric body and the latter's impressions as manifested in the course of life.

When one has advanced to this knowledge of the human soul as it existed before birth in its pure soul-spiritual existence, then one can also gain a conception of what thinking, what the forming of concepts really is, as we human beings experience it in the ordinary consciousness of our earth life. Even with the most careful self-examination of which the soul is capable we cannot, by using only the capacities and powers of our ordinary consciousness, grasp the real nature of thinking and the formation of ideas.

If now I am to make clear how the real nature of man's earthly concepts appears to inspired consciousness, I must make use of a picture, but this picture expresses complete reality. Bring to mind a human corpse; it still has the form that the man had in life. All the organs are still shaped the way they were when the person was alive. Even so, in looking at the corpse, we must admit that it is only the remains of what the living man was. When we now make a study of its essential nature, we must conclude that the corpse as it now lies before us can have no original, independent reality. It cannot be thought of as something that comes into being in the same condition as it is as a corpse; it can exist only as the remains of a living organism. The living organism must have been there first. The forms of the corpse, its members, point not only to the corpse itself but to what brought it into being. Anyone who rightly views a corpse in the context of life is directed by it to the living man who produced it. Nature, to which we surrender the corpse, can only destroy it; it cannot build it up as such. If we wish to see the upbuilding forces in the corpse, we must look upon the living man.

On another level, in a similar way, there is revealed to inspired consciousness the essential nature of the thinking or mental picturing that we have in ordinary consciousness. It is actually a corpse; at least, it is something which during earthly life is continually passing over into the corpse-like element of soul. Living thought was present before man came into earth-existence, but instead was a soul-spiritual being in the soul-spiritual world. There, this thinking and conceiving were something quite different; they were living elements within spiritual activities. What we have as our ordinary power of thinking is a remnant of that living spiritual

entity that we were before we descended to the earth. It has remained just as a corpse remains of the living physical man. As we are referred back to the living man when we see a corpse, so, if we now look through inspired knowledge at the dying or already dead thoughts or concepts of the soul, we realize that we must treat this thinking as a corpse of the true "thought being," we see how we must trace this earthly thinking back to a supersensible, life-filled thinking.

It is this that also reveals qualitatively the relationship of a part of our soul life to our purely soul-spiritual existence before birth. Through this, we really learn to know what our ordinary concepts and thinking signify, if we trace them back to their living nature, which is to be found nowhere within earth existence. On earth, it is only expressed in a reflection. This reflection is our ordinary thinking and forming of ideas. Therefore, the abstract character of this ordinary thinking is fundamentally remote from reality, as a corpse is remote from the true human reality. When we speak of the abstractness, of the merely intellectual aspect of thinking, we vaguely feel that the way it appears in ordinary consciousness is not what it should be, that it has its source in something else, which is its true nature. This is what is so very important, namely, that a true knowledge is able, not only in general phrases but in concrete pictures, to relate what man experiences here in his physical body to the eternal core of his being, as it was just done with the thinking and conceiving of ordinary consciousness. Then only will the significance of imagination and inspiration be seen in the right light. For then we comprehend that the dead or dying thinking is basically brought to life again through the exercises undertaken to achieve inspiration; brought to life within physical earth-existence. To acquire inspired knowledge is fundamentally to bring dying thoughts to life again.

Thereby we are not completely transposed into prenatal existence, but rather, through the soul's perception, we gain a true picture of this prenatal existence, of which we know that it did not originate here on earth but that it radiates out of a pre-earthly human existence into man's existence here on earth. We recognize through the picture's nature that it is cognitive evidence of the state of the human soul in pre-earthly existence.

What significance this has for philosophical knowledge will be discussed next.

Just as we are in a position in this way to investigate the true nature of our ordinary thinking, we can also, by means of the supersensible cognition referred to here, bring into view the essential being concealed behind the will. But for this, not only is the higher cognition of inspiration required, but also that of intuition which I described yesterday, when I said that in order to develop it, certain exercises of the will are necessary. If man carries these out, he becomes capable of releasing his own soul-spiritual nature from his physical as well as his etheric organism. He carries it out into the spiritual world itself. It is the ego and the astral organization, his own being, that he carries into the spiritual world. In this way, he learns to know what it signifies to live outside his physical and etheric organisms. He comes to perceive the state the human soul finds itself in when it has cast these aside. But that means nothing less than gaining a preview of what happens to man when he goes through death.

Through death, the physical and etheric organisms are cast off. Thus, laid aside, they can no longer form the covering for man as they have done during earth life. What happens then to the actual core of man's being is something one learns through a preview in intuitive knowledge, when, with one's spirit being, one is outside in the world of spiritual beings instead of within one's physical body. Man actually finds himself in such a condition. Through intuitive knowledge he is in a position to be within other spiritual beings, as otherwise here in earth life he is within his physical and etheric bodies. What he receives through intuition is an experience in a picture of what he has to go through when he passes through the event of death. Only in this way is it possible to gain actual insight into what underlies the idea of the immortal human soul. This human soul — inspired knowledge already teaches this — is on the one side unborn. On the other side, it is undying. Intuition teaches this.

Having thus come to know the true nature of the eternal core of man's being — insofar as it is to lead a life after physical death — one also learns to perceive what lies behind human will. We have just characterized what lies behind human thinking; that is discernible through inspiration. What is concealed behind human willing becomes perceptible, if, through exercises of the will, one brings about intuition. Then the will reveals itself so as to show that behind it something quite different is concealed, of which the will of ordinary consciousness is merely the reflection. It becomes evident that behind willing there is something that in a certain sense is a younger member of the human soul. If we speak of the thinking and forming of ideas as of something that is dying, indeed as something that is already dead, and we view it as the older part of the human soul, then, by

contrast, we must speak of willing as the younger part. We can say that willing, that is, the actual soul element behind the will, is related to thinking as a young child is to an old man, except that in man's constitution old age comes after childhood, while in the soul the two exist side by side. The soul bears continually in itself both its old age and its youth — in fact, both its death and its birth.

In contrast to such a knowledge of the soul based on inspiration and intuition, which is quite definite, what one calls philosophy today is something extremely abstract, for this simply describes thinking and willing. Actual knowledge of the soul, on the other hand, reveals that when willing turns old it becomes thinking, and thinking that has become old — indeed that has died — has developed out of will. Thus, one truly becomes acquainted with this life of the soul; one learns to perceive the fact that what is revealed in this earth life as thinking was willing in an earlier earth life, and what is now willing, something still young in the soul, will become thinking in the following earth life.

So, in this way one learns to see into the soul and for the first time to know it as it really is. The will part of the human soul is revealed as something that leads an embryonic life. When we pass over into the spiritual world with what we harbor within ourselves as willing, we have a young soul, which by its own character teaches us that it is actually a child. Even as little as we can assume that a child does not grow on into old age unless it is sick, so little can we assume that what we perceive as a young soul — initiation reveals this to us — dissolves at death, for it has only just reached its embryonic life. Through intuition we learn to know how, in the moment of death, it goes forth into the spiritual world.

That means actually perceiving the eternal core of man's being according to its unbornness and its immortality. By contrast, modern philosophy works only with ideas taken from ordinary consciousness. But what does that mean? As we can see from what has been said, it means that these ideas are dead soul entities.

When philosophy, working with the ideas of ordinary consciousness, wants to consider the thinking part of the soul correctly in order to reach results, it will say, if it is sufficiently free of prejudice to investigate what is actually present in the thinking of ordinary consciousness, that thought cannot of itself explain its own existence, just as it must be said of a corpse that it cannot come from a corpse but must have come from something else. Physiology indicates this through observation. Philosophy,

from what comes to light here out of intuition, should draw the conclusion that just because ordinary thinking and the forming of ideas have a dying character it is permitted to deduce from this fact that something else existed earlier. What inspiration discovers through contemplation, philosophy can find through logical conclusions, through dialectics, that is, through an indirect kind of proof.

What would philosophy have to do then if it were to choose to remain within ordinary consciousness? It would have to say, "If I will not lift myself up to some kind of supersensible knowledge I must at least analyze the facts of my ordinary consciousness." If it does so without prejudice it finds that the thinking and ideas of ordinary consciousness are corpse-like in character. It would have to say, "Because that is something that does not explain its own nature out of itself, I may conclude that its real nature comes earlier." Of course, this requires an unbiased attitude in analyzing the soul so that thinking may be recognized as possessing something corpse-like. But this impartial attitude is possible. For only a biased attitude discerns something alive in the thinking of ordinary consciousness. Freedom from bias reveals this thinking as something that in its very nature has withered away. This is why I said in the previous lecture that it is quite feasible to grasp the content of natural science with this deadened thinking. That is one side of the matter.

Intellectualized philosophy therefore can only come indirectly to a knowledge of man's eternal essence and indeed, only through recognizing what, in regard to earth life, must be viewed as preceding it. If then such a philosophy not only inquires into thinking, if it desires not only to be intellectual but also includes in its research the inner experience of the will and the other soul forces, which, in the cosmic scheme of things, are younger than thinking, then it can succeed in picturing to itself the kind of interplay through which thinking is linked to willing. Then it can come on one hand to the logical deduction: dying thinking is connected to pre-earthly soul existence. Even though philosophy cannot look upon such an existence and cannot perceive its nature, it can infer that something, although inaccessible and unknown, does exist.

When, on the other hand, philosophy centers its attention on willing or the feelings, and experiences the interplay between thinking and feeling, it will eventually discover not only something dying but incipient in willing. This you can find even in Bergson's philosophy, if you put what he says impartially into the appropriate words. You notice the impulse he himself feels in the way he speaks, the way he philosophizes, and sensing this

impulse he attains an awareness of the eternal core of the human soul. But since Bergson refuses to take supersensible knowledge into consideration, he reaches only a knowledge of the soul's essence insofar as it reveals itself in earthly life. Out of his philosophy he cannot derive convincing indications of unbornness and immortality. Yet, on one side, he does characterize thinking — although he gives it a different name — as something old which superimposes itself over sense perceptions as a corpse-like element. On the other side he feels — because of the living way in which he characterizes it — the incipient, "embryonic" quality of the will. He can vividly enter into this and he senses that something eternal is contained within. Nevertheless, in this manner he arrives only at the characteristic of the soul-spiritual core of man in earth life, not at anything beyond.

Thus, we can say that, if they are unbiased, all philosophies using ideas based merely on ordinary consciousness can, through analyzing thought and will, come indirectly to the conclusion that the soul is a being unborn and immortal, but they cannot come to a direct perception of it. This direct perception, which would bring the philosophies of ideas to fulfillment, this perception of the real, eternal being of the soul, can be achieved only through imagination, inspiration and intuition as has been described here. As a consequence, although the subject is still discussed as part of philosophy, it remains true that anything really substantial concerning the soul's eternal nature must rely only on tradition that rests upon the dreamlike knowledge of the past. Philosophers often do not know this and believe that they produce it out of themselves. This content can be permeated by logic and dialectic. But a true renewal of philosophical life depends on the acknowledgment by our present spiritual culture of the existence of a fully conscious imagination, a fully conscious inspiration and a fully conscious intuition, and not only acknowledging the methods for attaining these capacities but putting their results to use in philosophical life. I will try to explain in the next two parts of my lecture how this relates to cosmology and religion.

When you consider that only through a higher form of inspiration can one arrive at the perception of the eternal core of man's being and how it lives in extra-terrestrial existence, then you will say that only through this higher inspiration and through initiation (as I have described it) can the human being really know himself. What plays into his own being out of the cosmos, he can know only through higher inspiration and intuition. Since this is the case, a genuine cosmology, that is, a picture of the cosmos that

includes man's total being, can arise only on the level of inspired and intuitive perception. Only then does man gain insight into what is also working in his physical and etheric bodies during earth life.

In these organisms, the soul-spiritual nature of man is not merely hidden; during earth existence, it is actually transformed, metamorphosed in regard to waking, everyday life. As little as a root can reflect the exact form of the plant, so little can an observation of man's physical and etheric organisms reveal the eternal part of him. This is attained only when we look into what lives in man before birth and after death. Only then are we able to relate man's true being, which must be observed outside of earth existence, to the cosmos. This is why modern culture had no way of arriving at a cosmology that includes man during the period when it rejected any kind of clairvoyance. This I have indicated before, but it becomes especially clear from what I have described today. Nevertheless, in earlier times, even as late as the beginning of the last century, but chiefly at the end of the eighteenth century, a "rational cosmology," as it was called, was developed from the philosophical direction as a part of philosophy.

This rational cosmology, which was supposed to be a part of philosophy, was also formed by philosophers with the aid of nothing but ordinary consciousness. But, if, with ordinary philosophy, one already had the above described difficulties in penetrating to the true nature of the soul, you will understand that it is quite impossible to gain a real content for a cosmology that includes man if one merely wants to stay within the ideas of ordinary consciousness. The contents of rational cosmology that the philosophers have developed even up to recent times, lived therefore in fact on the traditional cosmological ideas attained by humanity when a dreamlike clairvoyance still existed. These ideas can be renewed only by means of what has been described here as exact clairvoyance. In this sphere also, philosophers have not known that they actually borrowed from the old cosmology. Certain ideas occurred to them. They absorbed them from the history of cosmology and believed they had produced them out of themselves. But what they brought forth were merely logical connections, by means of which they assembled the old ideas and produced a new system. In such a way cosmologies arose in earlier times as a part of philosophy. But since one no longer had a living relationship to what one thus absorbed as ideas taken over from ancient clairvoyance, the ideas of the cosmologies became more and more abstract.

Just take a look at the chapters on cosmology in the philosophical books of earlier times and you will find how abstract and basically empty those ideas are that were developed on the subjects of the origin and end of the world, and so on. It is correct to say that they were all brought across from ancient times when they were alive, because man had a living relationship to what these ideas expressed. Gradually they had become unsubstantial and abstract, and people outlined only superficially what a cosmology should contain, a cosmology which extends not only to outer nature but can encompass the whole being of man, reaching to the soul-spiritual nature of the cosmos. In this connection, the extraordinary brilliant Emile Boutroux ^[2] gave significant indications of how to arrive at a cosmology.

But since he also wanted to build only upon what ordinary consciousness could encompass, he too only arrived at an abstract cosmology.

Thus, cosmologies became more and more devoid of real content, becoming merely a sum of abstract ideas and characteristics. No wonder then that gradually this rational cosmology was discredited. The natural scientists appeared who could investigate nature in the manner that led in recent times to so many scientific triumphs. They could formulate natural laws, postulating an inner ordering of nature from observation and experiment, and from this they put together a naturalistic cosmology. What was thus assembled from the ideas concerning outer nature as a naturalistic cosmology, had, to be sure, a content, the external sensory content. In the face of this, the empty, rational cosmology constructed by the philosophers could not maintain itself. It fell into disrepute and was gradually abandoned. One therefore no longer speaks of a rational cosmology, arrived at merely by logic; one is satisfied now with naturalistic cosmology, which, however, does not encompass man. One can say, then, that it is cosmology in particular that teaches, more than ordinary philosophy, how one must have recourse again to imagination, inspiration and intuition.

Philosophy can at least observe the human soul, and, through unbiased observation of thinking whose dying nature refers to something other than its present state, it discovers that something lies outside all human existence on earth that includes man inwardly; in the same way, philosophy can point beyond death. Therefore, out of conclusions drawn from the soul's rich life of thinking, feeling and will, philosophy can at least make its abstractions rich and varied. This is still possible. But cosmology as a spiritual science can only be established if it is given its content also from spiritual perception. Here one can no longer arrive at a content by

deduction. To attain a content, one must borrow it from the old clairvoyant perceptions, as was the case in the ideas adopted from tradition, or one must attain it again by a new method such as has now been presented.

If, therefore, philosophy is still in a position to carry on in accordance with logic, cosmology can no longer do so. As a rational cosmology based only on ordinary consciousness, it has therefore lost its content and with it its standing. If we wish to advance beyond a naturalistic cosmology to a new one that embraces man's totality, we must learn to perceive with the aid of inspiration and intuition that element in man in which the spiritual cosmos is reflected. In other words, cosmology even more than philosophy is dependent upon the acknowledgement by modern culture of the methods employed by spiritual science for attaining fully conscious imagination, inspiration and intuition — and not only acknowledging them but making use of their results to construct with their aid a genuinely real cosmology. What can be said concerning religion from this standpoint will be described in conclusion.

If our religious life is to be founded on knowledge the experience of the spiritual human being among other spirit beings must be brought back to earth and described. In these experiences we are dealing with something that is entirely unlike life on earth; it is utterly different. In them man stands wholly outside this life; therefore, these experiences can only be undergone by those human powers that are entirely independent of his physical and etheric organisms and for this reason certainly cannot lie within ordinary consciousness. Only when this ordinary consciousness advances and develops clairvoyant capacities can it give descriptions of those experiences that a human being has in the purely spiritual world. Therefore, a "rational theology," a theology that wants to rely upon ordinary consciousness, is in an even worse position than a "rational cosmology."

Rational cosmology still possesses something, after all, that at least sheds a certain amount of light on man's earthly existence. The reason for this is that in a round-about way, to be sure, the form and life of physical and etheric man are to an extent brought about by spiritual beings. But the experiences that the human being has in the purely spiritual worlds and which exact intuition gets to know, can in no way be discovered with the ordinary consciousness, as is the case of philosophy. They cannot even be guessed at. Today, when people want to arrive at all human knowledge by means of ordinary consciousness, these experiences can only be adopted — this is even more true than in the case of cosmological ideas — from

ancient traditions dating from those times when men found their way in dreamlike clairvoyance into the spiritual worlds and carried across into the earthly world what they experienced.

If someone fancies that he could state something about man's experiences in the divine world in the form of ideas based only on ordinary consciousness, he is very much mistaken. Therefore, theology has come increasingly to a point of forming a kind of historic theology, adopting, even more than does cosmology, merely the old ideas of the kingdom of God acquired in earlier clairvoyant vision. These ideas then are made into a system by logic and dialectic. Men believe that here they have something fundamental and original, whereas it is only a subjective system of those who worked on this theology. It is a product of history, poured at times into new forms. But everything that is of real content is borrowed — by those who want only to draw from ordinary consciousness — from tradition, or from history. But for this reason, the formulations of various philosophers — who in earlier times created a rational cosmology and wanted to create a rational theology as well — were through this procedure discredited more than ever. On the one hand, rational cosmology as against naturalistic cosmology fell into discredit. On the other, in the field of religion, rational theology as against purely historic theology was discredited — the historic theology that renounced pure reality — both the direct formulation of ideas about the spiritual world and the experience of it.

This direct relationship, these living connections with experience in the spiritual world, vanished for more recent humanity when, in the Middle Ages, the question arose of proof for the existence of God. As long as a direct relation to experience of the kingdom of God existed, one did not speak of dialectic or logical proofs for divinity. Such proofs, when they were put forward, were in themselves proof that the living relationship to the kingdom of God had died away. Fundamentally, what Scholastic theology said was correct: ordinary reason is not in a position to make pronouncements about the kingdom of God. It can only elucidate the ideas already there, systematize them. It can contribute only something toward making doctrine readily acceptable.

We can observe how in recent times this incapacity of ordinary consciousness to determine anything about the kingdom of God has given rise to two errors. On the one side are the scientists who want to talk about religion, about God, but feel the incapacity of their ordinary consciousness and so formulate merely a history of religion. A religious

content cannot at the present time be obtained in this way. Therefore, the existing, or once existing religions are considered historically. What is in fact considered? It is the religious content once provided by the old dreamlike, intuitive clairvoyance. Or, people consider that aspect of the religious life of the present time that has survived as a residue of the old clairvoyant state. This is then called "History of Religion," and people do completely without producing any genuinely religious life of their own.

Still other people realize that man's clear day consciousness is powerless to determine anything about experiences in the purely spiritual kingdom of God. Therefore, they turn to the more subconscious regions of the human soul, to the world of feeling, to certain mystical faculties, and speak of an immediate, elemental experience of God. This is quite widespread today. It is just the advocates of this kind of experience who are especially characteristic of the spiritual state of mind at the present time. With all their might they shun the possibility of bringing their awareness of God into clear ideas that are logically formed. They give long explanations as to why this instinctive experience of God which, according to their interpretation, is the true religious experience, cannot be logically proved. They conclude therefore that the idea of expressing any religious content in intellectual form must be abandoned. But it must be said that these proponents of a direct awareness of God are the victims of illusions, because what is experienced in any region of the soul can in fact also be expressed in clear ideas. If we were to follow their example and put forward the theory that the religious content is weakened when it is expressed in clear ideas, this would prove nothing but that we should have abandoned all our truly substantial ideas in favor of a series of dreamed-up notions. It is a characteristic feature of present-day religious life that people rely on something which, as soon as it has to be made clear, at once falls into error.

From this it is quite evident that we can succeed in renewing religious life on a basis of knowledge only if we do not reject a method of cognition that can guide us into having a living experience of the spiritual human being and other spiritual beings. We have special need of this method of cognition precisely so that religious knowledge can be placed on a firm foundation. In the realm of religion, ordinary consciousness can at most systematize perceptions, clarify them, or formulate them into a doctrine, but it cannot find them. Without these perceptions, religion is limited to the traditional acceptance of what is derived from quite different soul conditions of humanity in earlier times. It is therefore limited to what would never satisfy a mind trained in modern science.

Therefore, if we are to base our religion upon knowledge, I must repeat for the third time something that I have already expressed today in regard to other areas of culture, but that must be expressed specifically for each separate area. If, out of the spiritual needs of the present time, religious life is to be renewed and undergo vital stimulation, the spiritual life of our age must acknowledge fully conscious imaginative, inspired, and intuitive cognition. Especially for the religious area must this not only be acknowledged but, for a living religious content, our modern spiritual life must also apply these spiritual-scientific results in appropriate ways.



5 The Life of the Soul During Sleep

10 September 1922, Dornach

In recent times, the question of the unconscious has come to the fore and is often spoken of in psychology. Everything in human soul life that cannot be reached, observed or explained by ordinary consciousness is relegated to the region of the unconscious. When this unconscious realm is mentioned, it is always supposed — notwithstanding the assumption that it must remain unknown — that it contains forces that do work into the conscious soul life. The emergence of this idea of the unconscious is due wholly to the fact that a certain skepticism, indeed a feeling of impotence, has arisen in recent times in regard to solving specific problems of philosophy, cosmology and religion. The insight that we have described here as imaginative, inspired and intuitive knowledge has the task now of probing into this undefined reservoir, which figures in so many ways in recent science as "the unconscious." It is just by means of this supersensible knowledge — by reaching other levels of consciousness in which a different soul condition exists, hence a different perceptual capacity — that the concrete facts, which are not accessible to ordinary consciousness, must be investigated. Today I would like to give you an example of such research in an unconscious region of the soul, namely the experiences the human soul undergoes between going to sleep and waking.

Ordinary consciousness remains quite unconscious of what happens to the human soul in sleep. But we should not believe that these experiences have less meaning or are less decisive in a man's life than experiences of waking consciousness. Certainly, for external life, for our work and activities, for humanity's outer progress, the waking hours are of primary consideration. But for the configuration and the development of man's inner being, the rich experiences of the state of sleep are of the first importance. Even though man remains unconscious of them, these experiences are real, and their after-effects play into waking life. Man's general mood of soul during his waking hours is permeated by the after-effects of sleep. His physical and etheric organizations, which are worked

upon by his astral organization and his actual spiritual organization, that is to say his ego organism, are permeated also. They too are influenced during waking life by the after-effects of sleep.

For ordinary consciousness the phenomena of sleep appear as follows: sense perception begins to dim down, in the end it is entirely extinguished; the same also happens in the case of thinking, feeling and willing. Except for the transitional state when we are dreaming, man sinks into an unconscious condition. But what happens to the soul then — and this must be strongly emphasized — is something absolutely real. What remains unconscious to ordinary consciousness in this respect can be illuminated by imaginative, inspired and intuitive cognition. Therefore, I will describe for you

the soul's experiences during sleep. At least sketchily, I will describe how imagination, inspiration and intuition can perceive what, for ordinary consciousness, is unconscious. I will outline the soul's experiences as if they were lived through consciously, for they are experienced consciously through higher cognition. It is not as if the soul were unconscious throughout the night, but what would otherwise have remained unconscious can be seen by means of imagination, inspiration and intuition. Light can in this way be cast upon it so that it becomes visible. The following then comes into view.

When man first enters into the state of sleep, the sense world around him ceases to exist for the soul. He goes into an inner experience that is undifferentiated, in a certain sense indefinite. The soul feels — I say feels but it does not feel; if it were conscious, it would feel — it feels enlarged as in a widespread fog. In this inward feeling and experiencing during this first stage of sleep subject and object cannot at first be distinguished. No separate phenomena and facts are distinguishable; it is a general sensing of a nebulous universality, which is sensed as one's own existence. But simultaneously there appears in the sleeping person what may be called a deep need to rest in the divine essence of the cosmos. With this outflowing of experience into an undifferentiated condition is mixed an indefinite longing — one must use such a word after all — "to rest in God. " As I said, I describe it as if the events, experienced unconsciously, were passed through consciously. Thus, the external world of daytime, everything the soul receives through the senses, is swallowed up. All the stimuli through which the soul feels in the body are gone and, likewise, all the impulses by

means of which the soul sends its will through the body are gone. The soul has at first a general, universal sensation accompanied by a longing for God.

In this condition, which arises initially after falling asleep, dreams can intervene. They are either symbolic pictures of outer experiences, memory pictures, symbolic images of inner bodily conditions, and so on, or they are dreams in which certain true facts of the spiritual world can be intermingled without the ordinary dreamer being able to acquire a definite knowledge of what the dreams really contain. Even for one who views this condition of soul with imaginative cognition — for by means of it one can do this already — dreams do not throw light upon the inner facts, rather do they veil the real truth. For this truth, in relation to what is meant here, can only be perceived by a person, if, out of his own free will, he prepares himself in an appropriate manner through soul exercises such as have been described here. Only as a result of these soul exercises can a clear view of this first stage of sleep be attained.

If you look with such cognitional faculties into this first stage of sleep, when you can divine it, it shows itself to be similar to, but not exactly the same as the unconscious experiences of earliest childhood. Indeed, if man were in a position to bring these experiences to consciousness and pour them into the concepts and ideas of ordinary consciousness, such as philosophy is occupied with, then these philosophical ideas would attain reality. The philosophy to which we should thus attain would be something real. So it can also be said that in the first stage of every sleep man becomes an unconscious philosopher. He attains to what in waking consciousness is cultivated in his soul as ideas, as dialectics and logical laws. If the flowing into the cosmic mists of the etheric world and the soul's longing to rest in God could be permeated with the experience of actuality, if man could bring these two soul experiences to consciousness and pour them into abstract philosophical ideas, then these ideas would come alive. Philosophy would then be as it was in Greece before Socrates, and in still earlier epochs of humanity. It would be an inwardly experienced reality.

We have now learned to know two stages of man's unfolding: that of his earliest childhood, which, if brought to consciousness, would represent the reality of philosophical ideas and the experience of the first stage of sleep, which, as we have noted, is quite similar to the unconscious experience of childhood, and which, when brought to consciousness, could in the same

way give a living experience of reality to a philosophy worked out during waking life. That describes the first, somewhat brief stages that a human being undergoes from the time of falling asleep to waking up.

After the soul has been for a time in the state of sleep described above, another condition sets in. This second stage of sleep is such that instead of the experience of his own physical and etheric bodies, which he has when awake, man has a form of experience through which he feels inside himself the cosmos that in daytime surrounds him. While in the first stage the soul experiences no clear distinction between subject and object, this difference now becomes increasingly meaningful except that during sleep man has come into the reverse condition from that of being awake. He now feels and experiences himself in the cosmos and looks back on his physical and etheric organisms as upon an object. Just as he vaguely feels his organs — lungs, liver, heart, and so on — in day consciousness, now, in sleep, he experiences the cosmic content within himself; he himself becomes, as it were, cosmos in his soul. Not as if he extended out into the whole cosmos; rather, he experiences something like a reflection of the cosmos within him.

The first unconscious experience — which even so is wholly real — is, I might say, a fragmentation of this inner soul experience. The soul feels as if it were divided up into many separate parts of a manifoldness. It feels itself not as a unity but as a multiplicity; as if, when awake, we were to experience ourselves in the brain not as a homogeneous being but as a multiplicity of eyes, ears, lungs, liver and so on, and we were missing the sense of unity. Thus, during sleep, we experience, so to say, the cosmic ingredients without at first experiencing their unity. That brings about a condition of soul which, if we were conscious of it, we should have to describe as permeated by anxiety, even fear. The soul, however, really experiences the objective processes that cause this nightly anxiety, just as the organic processes of the physical and etheric organisms underlie what might be experienced here or there by the soul as anxiety coming from within. They are, in fact, fear-inspiring occurrences that the soul has to live through.

In this stage of sleep, occurrences of waking life now reveal their effects. For modern man living after the Mystery of Golgotha there appear the after-effects of what he experiences in waking life as inner religious devotion to Christ and the Mystery of Golgotha. The attention man gives to it, all reverence and worship that he develops for the Christ and that Mystery during his waking life, have after-effects in this second stage of sleep. It was otherwise for those who lived on earth before the Mystery of

Golgotha. They received from their religious leaders appropriate measures, religious functions to carry out, whose effects they could carry over into sleep and that worked there in such a way that this anxiety could gradually be overcome. For a person living after the Mystery of Golgotha his inner bond with Christ, his feeling of belonging to Him, the religious rituals directed to Christ Jesus, his whole relation to Him and his actual conduct in reference to this relationship, all this now works into the life of sleep and helps to overcome that anxiety which oppresses the soul.

As I said, I describe things as they appear to inspired consciousness, but they certainly are experienced by the soul as reality. So, while I present concepts taken from conscious life, the actual corresponding processes are really present in the life of the soul. If, in daytime, we have developed a relation to the Christ, we actually meet His guiding power during this second stage of sleep. It is this guiding power of Christ through which we overcome the anxiety that oppresses the soul. Out of this anxiety there develops a cosmic relationship of the soul to the world. As a result of the development of this relationship, but in such a way that the soul experiences it as its inner life, the movements of the planetary system in our solar cosmos stand before the soul. It does not expand out into the planetary world during sleep, but an inner replica of it lives in the soul. It actually experiences the planetary cosmos in a replica. Even if what the soul experiences every night as a small, inner globe, a celestial globe, does not illuminate day consciousness, it does stream into the reality of daily life and continues on in the physical and etheric organizations in the systems of breathing and blood circulation, the whole rhythmic system, we find that these processes are accompanied by impulses and stimuli that live in the physical and the etheric body and work into waking life out of the inner planetary experience which the soul has in sleep. While we are awake, therefore, the planetary movements of our solar system pulse through our breathing and circulation as after-effects of sleep.

During sleep — supersensible vision shows us that astral and ego organizations are outside the physical and etheric bodies — the planetary movements do not work directly. They are experienced by the soul outside the physical and etheric organisms. But within the sleeping physical body the impulses from the previous night echo and reverberate, the same impulses that have pulsed through breathing and circulation during the day. During the following night an after-effect of these impulses is present, and they are renewed the next morning as a consequence of what the soul experienced in the night as an inner replica of the planetary cosmos.

Now in addition to this cosmic experience during the second stage of sleep something else happens. The soul receives distinct impressions of all the relationships it has ever entertained with human souls in its various lives on earth. We actually have within us, I might say, "markings" of all the relationships we have had with other human souls in successive earth lives. They now appear before the soul in a certain pictorial form. Although unconsciously, the soul really experiences everything that has been good or bad in its dealings with other people. Likewise, it experiences its developing relationships with spiritual beings who dwell in the cosmos and never live in a physical body, who always live in a super-sensible existence as opposed to the physical life of man. The human soul in sleep thus lives in a rich network of relations with those human souls with whom it has established such connections. These connections reappear, as does everything that has remained from them as after-effects of the right and wrong a person has done to others, the good and evil he may have caused. In short, the existing destiny of a person confronts his soul in this stage of sleep.

What an older philosophy has called karma appears at this stage every night before man's soul. Since the planetary experiences continue to work as stimuli in the breathing and blood circulation, and thus in man's physical and etheric organizations, it is possible for someone capable of perceiving such things through inspired cognition to observe that this experience of repeated earth lives also plays over into day consciousness, even though it is not directly present. It is clearly evident to inspired cognition, which perceives what the soul experiences, that repeated earth lives are a fact, for to the view of inspiration they present themselves directly together with the relationships established at any time with other people. Man's development through repeated earth lives presents itself because these relationships are beheld. One relationship points back to one certain earth life, another points to another life, and so on. In this way, karma appears before man's eyes as an established fact.

The experiences of the soul during sleep work in such a manner into day consciousness that man's general mood, making itself felt during the day in the form of a dull awareness of himself, depends on what we undergo in this second stage of sleep. Whether we feel happy or unhappy in our dimly perceived inner self, whether we feel lively or languid, is to a great extent the result of what is experienced in this stage of sleep. So, during this stage we find ourselves actually outside in the cosmos, even though what we experience within the soul is a copy of the cosmos; and what we experience of repeated earth lives and karma appears before the soul as

images and reflections. These replicas of the cosmos and our destiny that stand before our soul contain what can be called man's inner existence in the cosmos. If you are able to formulate in concepts and ideas what has been attained through inspired cognition by letting it stream back into ordinary consciousness, you arrive at a true cosmology that encompasses the whole of man. Such a cosmology then is an experienced cosmology. We can say that when this stage of sleep is consciously reflected back, man learns to recognize himself as a member of the cosmic order — a cosmic order that is expressed in a planetary sense, as a cosmic ordering of nature.

But now, within this cosmic order, the moral world order arises. This is not as it is in earth life, where on the one side we find the order of nature with its own systems of laws but lacking morality, and on the other side a moral world order experienced as far as earthly existence is concerned only in the soul. Instead, we have a unified world before us. What we experience as a planetary cosmos is permeated and spiritually impregnated by a continuous stream of moral impulses. We live simultaneously in a natural and a moral cosmos.

You realize the full significance of these nightly events for waking life. So, we can say that what the soul experiences in the cosmos between going to sleep and waking is more real and full of meaning for man's outward configuration than what confronts him by day, for the life functions of the physical and etheric bodies, as well as our own moral condition, are results of our cosmic experience during sleep.

The third stage of sleep is characterized by a gradual transition from experiences within the planetary cosmos to an experience of the world of the fixed stars, so that this world is experienced by the soul as a kind of reflection. Yet these are not reflections of those outer sense pictures of the constellations such as we have in waking life. Instead, the soul becomes familiar with those beings of whom it was said in earlier lectures that intuition recognizes as the spiritual beings corresponding to the stars. Here in the sense world in our physical consciousness we experience the physical sense pictures of the stars. When, as I have described, we penetrate the spiritual world with intuition, we recognize that the sun and other fixed stars as perceived by ordinary sense perception are merely the reflected physical images of certain spiritual beings. The soul lives within these spiritual beings of the stars during the third stage of sleep. It feels

after-images of the star constellations, that is to say, it feels the relationships that exist between the activities of the spiritual star-beings. The soul experiences such constellations.

Ancient dreamlike science specifically described how the life of the fixed star constellations and zodiac streamed into the soul. This is, after all, the main part of the soul's experience in sleep. In the sense world you arrive at a better correspondence to the single spiritual beings if you look at the constellations as a whole instead of gazing at single stars. In sleep, the soul, being free of the physical and etheric bodies, becomes so liberated that it confronts them both as objects, just as we usually have around us the objects of the external world as perceived by the senses. The soul really finds its way as a spiritual being into a cosmos consisting of other spiritual beings. What it unconsciously goes through there can be illuminated by intuitive knowledge. But the experiences there also have their after-effects in waking life; the general well-being, health and vigor of the human body — not of the soul as in the first stage of sleep — are after-effects of what the soul experiences during the night among star-beings. Especially there comes before the soul, even if unconsciously, the whole event of birth in its broadest sense; that is, the way the soul enters a physical body through conception and embryonic life. Again, there comes before the soul how the body is abandoned in death and how man's spirit being passes into the soul-spiritual world. Every night, the truth concerning the events of birth and death really confront the soul. It is also an after-effect of the night-time experiences that man has a dim feeling during the day that birth and death by no means signify for human life only what they appear to be to sense observation. It is simply not true that a man with sound common sense could believe that birth and death are nothing but the events they appear to be in outer material life. Man in fact does not believe this, but it is not true to say that the reason for his disbelief is only because in his fantasy he imagines that he is an eternal being whose existence persists beyond death. No, man cannot believe it because of the picture experienced every night by the soul of how man enters earth life from the spiritual world and withdraws again into the world of spirit. This picture streams into the soul by day and is experienced by it as a vague feeling about the world and human life.

What appears during waking life as religious longing, as religious awareness, is an after-effect of the soul's experience among the stars. What I have just described is the stage of man's deepest sleep. In actual fact, it is out of his sleep that man derives the religious feelings of his waking life.

Just as religious life can be founded today in knowledge by means of the experience resembling that of primordial humanity but permeated and formulated in intuitions by the fully developed consciousness, it can also be said that man can attain this religious knowledge if, through super-sensible intuition, he is able to perceive and illuminate the condition of deepest sleep. For what rests in the depths of sleep was also the source of what preserved man's knowledge of the divine. Our day-consciousness is only a reflection of the potentialities for consciousness open to man. Likewise, what man bears within him as a natural religious feeling appears as a reflection of the glory and sublimity experienced by his soul, even if unconsciously, in the third stage of sleep. Man sinks into the life of sleep not only to renew his tired body, or to gain the stimuli from sleep that his breathing and circulation need, or to acquire from the spiritual world the other impulses he needs. What permeates him with religious feeling penetrates to the soul's surface, to the region of day-consciousness from the profound depths through which human soul life streams during sleep.

One might say that as man lives a philosophical life during the first stage of sleep, similar to that of earliest childhood — however paradoxical that sounds to present-day consciousness — and as in the second stage he lives a cosmological life, so, in the third stage, he lives a life of being permeated with divinity. From this third stage of sleep, man must then return to daytime consciousness.

Having retraced the above-mentioned stages in backward sequence during the last stage of sleep, man returns again to waking consciousness. Since man's soul and spirit are outside his physical and etheric organizations in sleep, if this phenomenon of sleep is to be comprehended fully, intuitive knowledge must answer the question: Why is man drawn back into his physical and etheric bodies again? What impulse is at work there? If the intuitive perception of sleep is extended far enough, it is possible to recognize this impulse. As man cognizes these spiritual beings who correspond to the sun or the constellations of the other fixed stars, he then recognizes that the impulse comes from the spiritual beings whose reflection in our physical world is the moon. Indeed, the forces of the moon permeate our whole cosmos, and when, through intuition, we recognize not only the physical existence of the moon but also her spiritual correlations, we find that these spiritual beings, who correspond to the physical moon, are the entities who, in their working together, produce the impulses to bring us back into our physical and etheric bodies after we

have reached the deepest stage of sleep. It is above all the moon forces that connect man's astral and ego organization with his physical and etheric organisms.

Every night, when out of the spiritual world the soul desires to re-enter its physical and etheric bodies, it must place itself within the streams of the moon forces. It is of no concern here — that will be obvious to you — whether it be new or full moon. For even when, as new moon, the moon is not visible to the senses, those forces are nevertheless active throughout the cosmos that bring the soul back into the etheric and physical bodies from the spiritual worlds. They are active even though the moon's phases appearing to the senses as half-moon, full moon, etc., are metamorphosed sense pictures that correspond to events in the soul being of the moon; these, to be sure, have something to do with man's spirit and soul in the physical and etheric bodies. Indeed, the particular configuration in which man's soul-spiritual and physical-etheric natures are linked is determined by those forces that rule and interweave in the cosmos and come to physical expression in the moon, the sense object, with her various phases that we perceive.

Thus, we can also look into the concealed aspects of man's life of waking and sleeping and inform ourselves concerning what it is that brings him back each morning into his daytime life. He returns through the same stages in reverse order, and while he passes through the last stage, which is permeated by a longing for God, the dreams mix again into his sleep life and he gradually submerges into his physical and etheric organizations.

Why is it that when man goes through the gate of death he is no longer subject to the moon forces? How does he withdraw from them when he spends a long time in the spiritual world? These questions as well as the secrets of birth, death and repeated earth lives will be considered in the next two lectures.



6

Passage from Spiritual Life to Earthly Existence

11 September 1922, Dornach

From the descriptions I have given of inspired and intuitive knowledge it will be evident that it is possible for man to experience the cosmos in his inner nature, his soul and spirit. I was able to indicate yesterday that such an experience occurs during sleep, only that ordinary consciousness is unaware of it. Man experiences cosmically, but in ordinary consciousness he knows nothing of it. One can say that man in his physical sense life experiences himself in his physical and etheric bodies and considers their organs as his inner nature. In cosmic experience — as it occurs in sleep, for example — he experiences as his inner nature a reflection of cosmic beings. Thus, even in the state of sleep man's ordinary inner world becomes in fact an outer world. When he sleeps, he simply has before him as an outer world his physical and etheric bodies, which otherwise constitute his being, and the cosmos which to sense observation constitutes the surrounding world becomes in a certain sense an inner world.

But, during sleep, a continuing desire to return to his physical body exists in man's astral and ego nature. This is especially strong in that deepest stage of sleep which I pointed to yesterday as the sleep in what I have called "fixed star consciousness." This desire to return to the physical and etheric bodies naturally is connected with the fact that these bodies continue to exist, fully alive, during sleep. Man develops this intense longing to return because of the spiritual moon forces active in the cosmos, as I described yesterday.

If spiritual science, anthroposophy, is to be rightly understood, one must keep clearly in mind that the various relationships must be presented from the greatest number of viewpoints. For instance, someone might hear me say that the reason why a man wants to return into his physical and etheric bodies in the morning is that his soul yearns to do so. Then someone else could say that this return depends upon the moon forces. Both are correct, only that the wish to return is aroused during man's cosmic experience by the moon forces that also permeate his astral and ego organizations between falling asleep and waking. These moon forces, that is their

spiritual correlation, cannot function when man is in his pre-earthly existence prior to his descent from the spiritual world and prior to his having taken on his physical body. When he is in a purely spiritual cosmos in his prenatal existence, no such relation to a physical and etheric body is possible, for they are non-existent. During sleep, however, they wait to be ensouled and filled again with spirit by the actual inner human entity.

Such a physical-etheric organism is not present in pre-earthly man, but something else is. At a certain stage of his pre-earthly existence he experiences a kind of cosmos as his , inner world. In a way he feels himself to be a cosmos. But in this prenatal existence, this cosmos differs from the one that surrounds us between birth and death and is perceived by the senses. This cosmos, which is experienced at a certain stage of pre-earthly life, is a kind of cosmic seed of the later physical human organism with which man must clothe himself when he descends to earth existence. Just think of everything earthly man possesses as his physical organism, spread out boundlessly: lungs, liver, heart, etc., all their processes — naturally as forces, not as physical-material organs — spread out into cosmic infinity. Man experiences this in such a way, however, that his soul encompasses this cosmos, having it at the same time as his inner life.

When I say that man experiences his future physical organism as a germ, a seed, there is a difference between using the word germ in one instance for spiritual existence and in another for physical existence. In the latter one means something small that unfolds into a larger organism. But when I say that the cosmic germ of man's physical body is experienced in pre-earthly existence as a cosmos, this germ is immeasurably large, and gradually contracts until at last it is small. Naturally, one must consider that in this case — at least for the spiritual, the pre-earthly existence — the word large is used figuratively in relation to the later word small, for in pre-earthly existence one does not experience space as one does here in the physical world. Everything is experienced qualitatively. Space as we know it in our sense world exists only for this sense world. But in order to illustrate this so that we can take something from human language to characterize these conditions of pre-earthly existence, this distinction can well be made. So, we can say that the cosmic human germ is immense, and gradually contracts more and more, until it finally appears small in man's physical organism.

Thus, we must picture to ourselves that in his pre-earthly existence man does not have the same star-filled view of the cosmos as we perceive it from the physical world; he has a cosmos around him that contains soul-

spiritual beings. Man feels himself bound up with them, he feels them, as it were, within him. He feels his soul nature spread out far across this cosmos. This cosmos is actually nothing else than his future physical body expanded to a universe. Man experiences his future inner world as a cosmic outer world, which, however, he experiences along with his inner being. Therefore, we can say that this whole cosmos — I would like to call it the cosmos of man — that man experiences as his own, is his own individual existence. At the same time, he experiences the life of other beings, of other human souls and spiritual beings who do not enter physical existence. He lives into these beings, so that he experiences a kind of universe of his own and at the same time a kind of being-together with other beings. I should like to call this being-together with other beings at this stage of pre-earthly existence an active intuition; a real, experienced intuition. What is at other times reproduced in supersensible perception by intuition is a living reality for pre-earthly existence.

Now, in the way I described it yesterday, while man in sleep lives in a replica of the cosmos — being outside his physical as well as etheric organizations which, however, possess finished and completed form — in pre-earthly life he has the developing physical organism as his being, I cannot even say, around, but within himself. Yet, at the same time, man is within as well as outside himself, and his life consists in active soul-spiritual labor on the development of this organism. Whereas, in physical life, we arrange our work so that outer sense-perceptible objects are purposefully transformed and we ourselves are changed with them, in our pre-earthly life we labor to make our physical organism as it should be. We incorporate into it what later in earth life must be present as wisdom-filled cooperation of the physical organs with each other as well as with the soul, and of the soul with the spirit. Before birth, we live in a universe (which is our own being), whose development consists in being molded purposefully to serve as our future earth organism.

In this pre-earthly condition, we possess consciousness because we are present in this universe not only with our perceptions but also with our activity of spirit and soul. Sleep, by contrast, is without consciousness because the physical and etheric bodies are no longer developing but completed, and we cannot work in sleep on what is already finished. But we experience them in the form described by me yesterday. In the pre-earthly condition, everything representing our link with the developing universe, which draws together increasingly so as later to become our physical organism, all this is force, an inner mobility that expresses itself as a form of consciousness differing from that of earth life. It is a bright,

clearer state of consciousness than the one that comes into being in our physical existence. With it we are able to experience our own working toward earthly life that is to come. If, here in earth existence, we observe our physical organism externally, or in the way it is seen by anatomy or physiology, we certainly cannot compare it with the grandeur, the glorious majesty of the universe that surrounds us as the world of the stars, the clouds, and so forth. Yet, what has been compressed into this human physical organism is grander, more powerful, more majestic than the physical cosmos around us in earthly existence, when it is seen as the universe by the human soul before it descends to earth. If you think of everything contained in materialized form in the physical body, all that is hidden in man here on earth because it has been compressed and covered over by matter, and you picture all this transposed into the spiritual, then you would have to think of a universe with which our physical cosmos, despite all its stars, suns, etc., cannot in the remotest degree be compared for vastness, grandeur and majesty.

We find our way into earthly existence out of a spiritual, pre-earthly world view having a grand, mighty content. The highest cultural work in which we can ever participate here on earth is but a trifle compared to that in which man shares during his pre-earthly existence. I say shares, because countless spiritual beings of the most varied hierarchies work together with man in creating the wondrous structure of his physical organism. This work, when seen in its essence, is of an inspiring and blissful nature. Truly, nothing small and unimportant is indicated, when, to the question, "What does man do between death and a new birth in pre-earthly existence?" — the answer is: At a certain stage he works with the spirits of the cosmos on the configuration, the inner wisdom-filled structure of a physical human body by preforming it as an universal spirit-germ. ^[3] Compared to man's earthly existence, this is a celestial, blissful existence. But everything that happens in celestial existence is concealed in immeasurable depths in the physical organism in which man is clothed on earth. Indeed, as far as ordinary consciousness is concerned, these celestial events belong to the most concealed aspects of the human physical organization.

This is the tragedy of materialism that it believes it can know matter and speaks always of matter and its laws. But in all matter, there lives spirit, but not only in such a form that we can uncover it in the present; it lives in such a way that to discover it we must look back into very different ages and states of experience. What materialism knows the least about is the material human organism. Not until materialism came into being did the complicated material structures of physical earth existence become as

concealed as they now are from the otherwise admirable natural science of the present time. We shall now proceed to discuss other aspects of man's pre-natal existence.

The stage of pre-earthly experience I have just described can also be characterized by saying that man experiences his given environment, which is at the same time his own being, as an existence he has in common with the spiritual universe.

That universe, however, is an association of living spiritual beings, among whom man experiences himself as soul and spirit. This consciousness, alive and luminous in the highest degree, begins to dim, to fade at a definite point in time. It is not that it is then experienced as a weak consciousness but compared to the clarity and intensity it possessed during a certain stage of pre-earthly existence, it dims down. If I should describe by an imagination what a significant and intense experience it is, I would express it like this. At a certain point of pre-natal existence, man begins to say to himself: Along with my own being I have seen other spiritual-divine beings around me. Now it appears to me as if these divine beings are beginning to cease to show their complete form to me. It now seems to me as if they were assuming an external figurativeness in which they envelop themselves. It appears to me as if they were becoming star-like — like the stars I learnt to know through physical sight when I was last on earth. They are not yet stars, but spirit beings which seem to be on their way to star-existence.

It is a feeling as if the real spirit world withdraws a little from the human being, then retreated more and more until only a replica of it stood before him as a cosmic revelation of this spirit world. Instead of the intuitive, active life with the spiritual world, it is as if we were becoming inspired by a cosmic replica of this spiritual world.

Parallel with this vision goes an inner soul experience that man must undergo, as it were, in which the spiritual world in its primal aliveness withdraws and bestows only a revelation of itself to him. This awakens in his soul in pre-earthly existence an experience that, if I may borrow a word from earth life, I could call a sense of privation which expresses itself — again describing it in earthly terminology — as a longing for what he is about to lose. In the first stage something he once possessed is in the process of being lost, but it has not yet been lost. To the extent that man feels that he is losing it, a sense of privation and a desire to have it back arises inwardly. It is at this stage of pre-earthly existence that the human

soul becomes accessible to the spiritual moon forces of the cosmos. The sense of privation and longing just spoken of prepare the soul to be accessible to them.

Earlier, these spiritual moon forces seemingly did not exist for them. Now, as the spiritual cosmos begins to fade away, a connection arises between what vibrates through the universe as moon forces and the forces of desire that the cosmos, which previously appeared to man as inwardly and spiritually alive, changes into a mere revelation to the degree that the earlier active, living intuition becomes an active living inspiration, to this extent the moon forces cause an inner individual being of man to appear. As a consequence, he no longer feels himself to be in an universe where subject and object do not really exist for him and everything is subjective. Hitherto, he has lived within other beings. Now, subject and object once again begin to have some significance for him. He has a feeling that he exists subjectively as an individual soul, something that the moon forces bring about for him. At the same time, he now begins to sense the revelation of the cosmos as an objective outer world.

To make use again of an earthly way of expressing what is actually present in this pre-earthly existence, I could say that in this human soul, gifted with inwardness by the moon forces, something like the following thought springs to life: I must possess it, this physical body, toward which everything has tended, which I myself along with others worked on as on a cosmic, spiritual germ. In this way man becomes ready to descend to earth existence. The sense of privation and longing linked with the moon forces prepare him for desiring earthly existence, to wish he were down on earth. This wish is the after-effect of his earlier work on the universal, cosmic part of the physical body. I said already yesterday that the moon forces always represent the element that prepares man for another earth life. During sleep it is these forces which impel him back into earth life. As I said, in a certain stage of his pre-earthly existence man is unconnected with these moon forces, but then he penetrates them. To the same degree, the tendency arises in him to turn again to the life on earth. Even though the earthly physical body and etheric organism are not yet there, within him are contained the after-effects of what he himself worked on and brought about as the cosmic-spiritual preliminary stage of the earthly body. After the translation I shall proceed at once to discuss the additional processes leading to earth life.

If I am to speak further in the way I have thus far been characterizing the relationships of man's total life as perceived by inspired and intuitive perception, I must say now that what man experiences in full clear consciousness during pre-earthly existence, as I described it at the beginning of today's lecture, is what he experiences later in earth life as his religious disposition. This natural tendency consists of these experiences as they are reflected in his feelings and heart (Gemüt), the feeling of his connection with the divine foundation of the world. If therefore man as a soul being in pre-earthly existence wished to explain to himself how this soul nature places itself here in earthly existence, then, in the moment when he passes from sharing in the living-spiritual cosmos to the experience of mere revelation under the influence of the moon forces, he would have to say: I pass from an existence saturated with divine activity to a cosmic existence. Under the influence of the moon forces, I now begin to draw together that brilliant cosmic consciousness I previously developed out of the whole universe into a more inward consciousness.

I said, the brilliant cosmic consciousness grows dim, but the more it fades the more does a subjective consciousness arise in man's soul to which the cosmic revelations appear as something objective. So we can say that man passes over into an inspiration in which he knows himself as a member of the cosmos. In this second stage of pre-earthly existence he experiences cosmology.

What man bears within him on earth as a striving for cosmological wisdom is an after-effect of these experiences of pre-earthly existence that I have just described, in the same way that the religious consciousness is an after-effect of the earlier stage of divinely permeated consciousness. These things are lived through in pre-earthly existence. They have their after-effects in earthly existence in which they appear as the religious and cosmological endowments of the human soul. Every night, as I described yesterday, they are renewed afresh. They are present as man is born into earthly life; he brings them along as endowments. The sequences of day and night cause them to become dim, but each night man's cosmological inclinations are stimulated again by the experience of the world of planets and stars. In the same way, his God-permeated nature is kindled during the last stage of sleep as I have already indicated. Therefore, one could say that if man desires to come to a religious life founded on knowledge, and to a cosmology grounded in knowledge, he must be able in fully conscious earthly life to call forth pictures of what is experienced in pre-earthly existence, as has been described.

In the stage when man is seized by the moon forces, when the outer universal world, which earlier was the universe of his own physical body, now appears only as a revelation — in that moment there occurs what I may call the loss of his connection with what earlier was his own human universe. Man loses this universal germ of his physical body on which he had worked so long. At a certain stage of pre-earthly life, he no longer possesses it. Instead, he has an inner being, called into existence by the moon forces, shot through and permeated by the desire for earth life, and he is surrounded by images of a spiritual cosmos. If he reaches out spiritually for these pictures he pierces right through them. Their reality is no longer there, at a certain stage of his experience in pre-earthly existence, reality has been lost to his soul. The soul no longer has the reality of this, man's universe, around and within it. Shortly thereafter — after the loss of this universal reality — earthly conception of the physical body takes place. The physical body is now taken over, drawn together out of the spiritual universe and further developed within the course of physical, hereditary evolution. What man worked upon cosmically for a long time in the spiritual world falls away from him and reappears again as conception of the physical human body takes place on earth. The processes that man has undergone spiritually above and in which he collaborated now find their physical continuation on the earth below. For the time being man remains unconscious of this physical continuation in his prenatal spiritual existence, for it takes place below on the earth. His spiritual-physical organism has streamed down to the earth and contracts into the tiny physical human body. The whole majestic universe is drawn together and permeated and penetrated by what physical heredity contributes. What man previously had as reality now surrounds him only in pictures; it is a cosmic recollection of the cosmic reality of work done on the physical organism.

In this prenatal period of his pre-earthly experiences when man is surrounded by the cosmic pictures of his human universe in which reality is no longer contained, he becomes ready to draw the etheric element into these pictures from all directions of the cosmos — for the cosmos also includes an etheric nature and is in this respect an etheric cosmos. Out of the cosmic ether man now draws etheric elements into his cosmic picture world. What is within him only as cosmic memory, he fills with world ether, draws it together and so forms his etheric organism. He does this at the time his Physical organism has fallen away from him, finding its continuation below, through conception, in the stream of physical heredity. Thus, man clothes himself in his etheric organism.

Now everything that lives in the soul as a sense of privation and desires, as longing for earthly life, passes along into the etheric organism, which is accustomed to being united with a physical, bodily organization since it permeates the physical organization of the cosmos. From all this arise the forces that draw man down again into what he was unaware of earlier when he had cosmic consciousness. Now, the soul-spiritual human being, clothed in the etheric body, strives by its own wish down toward what his physical organism has become on earth, which he himself prepared in the first place in its spiritual form. This, then, after the above-described experiences, brings about the union of the soul-spiritual with the physical body. The remaining points that can be mentioned will be added in the last brief consideration.

I believe it has become clear where the boundary exists between that of what the human soul is aware and that of what the human soul is unaware in a pre-earthly sense during the last stage of prenatal experience which directly precedes earthly experience. The human soul is conscious of the subjective element that the moon forces have brought about in the soul; it is conscious of the universal tableau that is now merely present in pictures like a cosmic memory of the work done on man's universe; it is conscious of how the forces draw together out of the world ether to create the human etheric organism. It remains unconscious of everything that happens on the earth below in the physical human organism, which only now has come into form through its physical metamorphosis, and through conception will develop further in the line of physical heredity. But, as I indicated, there is a union of the last cosmic consciousness with what is unconscious; a submerging into this unconsciousness.

With this, the cosmic consciousness is extinguished, and in a tiny infant there appears something like an unconscious memory of what has been experienced in pre-earthly existence. An unconscious but active memory then works intensively upon the baby's development, using the undifferentiated, or little differentiated substance of the human brain and the rest of the organism. Already during the embryonic stage, during which the uniting process mentioned gradually takes place, and also later, after birth, man works like a sculptor on the formation of the brain and the remaining organs. This unconscious but active memory of pre-earthly life works on the organism most intensively in a child's first years. While what is most essential has been previously prepared and then is realized in its after-effects, much is still to be worked into this cosmic-physical, spiritual organism condensed into a physical human body. This is a contradiction but must be understood in the context in which I have described it for you

today. Much is still to be worked into this organism. It is therefore the unconscious but active memory that works in the infant as an inner human, sculpturing element.

If the consciously experienced last stage of pre-earthly life could be brought into earth life, the pure philosophy of ideas would have its supersensible content. For just that cosmic etheric element that plays into the images of the human organism is what yields a truly alive philosophical conception. But, even so, in spite of its lively quality, something in this philosophical conception is lacking. It corresponds, after all, to a stage of pre-earthly experience where man is particularly estranged from his physical organism, when he is unconscious of it. This lends a somewhat otherworldly quality to even the most alive philosophy, for instance the kind that arises out of the dreamlike clairvoyance of primeval times. Because philosophy, if it is alive, corresponds an experience which earth life escapes, it always has a strong desire to comprehend earthly activities but feels itself hovering above earthly existence. Philosophy always has an idealistic quality, which implies that it is based on something not of this earth, particularly when it is inwardly alive. Actually, it is only in the last stage of pre-earthly existence that a man is a philosopher. It would be necessary to recall here in earth life what is spontaneously present in his conscious experience in that last period. There, man is a true philosopher, as earlier he was a true cosmologist when confronting the cosmic revelations, when the cosmic beings had already withdrawn from him; and he was a true perceiver of religion in the first pre-earthly stage I described today. But since an unconscious but active memory appears in the infant, it was also possible for me to say here: If you could include in the philosophy of ideas and bring to full consciousness what appears unconsciously in an infant, philosophy would arise. That is quite natural, because what an infant experiences is the unconscious memory of what the soul experiences in the last stage before its union with the physical body.

Therefore, religious insight, cosmology and philosophy must be gifts out of the supersensible world if they are to be right. Only if they become this again, and are recognized as such by man, will they fully satisfy humanity's spiritual needs.

Today I have sought to describe for you those matters connected with the mystery of birth. In the following days I will have to present the other side, the matters that are connected with the mystery of death, in order gradually to round out the picture that should represent for us how what is of the greatest spiritual value here in earth life must be a reflection, a

replica, an effect of what man can experience, perceive and know in supersensible existence, because he is not only an earthly sense being but a soul-spiritual, supersensible being and therefore belongs also to the world of soul and spirit. And if he is to feel himself fully as man in human life at every stage of sense experience, he must also include knowledge of the supersensible in his life on earth.



7

Christ, Humanity, and the Riddle of Death

12 September 1922, Dornach

Yesterday I tried to explain how man, who as a soul-spiritual being has been living in the spiritual world during pre-earthly existence, makes his transition to the physical earth. If we want to place before our souls the very real intervention of the Christ and the Mystery of Golgotha in the evolution of earth-humanity, it is absolutely necessary to acknowledge the pre-earthly existence of man and thus come to understand the eternal essence of his being. For, in order to comprehend the actual nature of this Mystery, we must be able to follow this Being, the Christ, Who belongs to the spiritual worlds, in His descent from extra-terrestrial regions right down into earth existence. This Being had lived only in those regions where we too spend our pre-natal existence until the time came when in the man Jesus He took on an earthly form and began his earthly activity.

If man wants to arrive at such an understanding of the Christ and the Mystery of Golgotha in relation to the event of human birth, of which I spoke sketchily yesterday, he must bear in mind first of all that man's soul constitution and his inner experience have passed in the course of mankind's evolution on earth through most significant and important transformations. Today, people often assume that the soul constitution, and those states of consciousness in which modern man finds himself in waking and sleeping, have always belonged to humanity, at least essentially, since human history began. At most, the world view arrived at in natural scientific cosmology points back to a primitive half-animal-like form possessed by early humanity, as we shall be discussing presently. Such a being's inner nature would of course have to be pictured as different from the thinking, feeling and willing of today's human being. But the transformations that man's consciousness, his whole inner soul structure, have passed through since the primeval times of earth evolution, are rarely pointed out today; yet in these transformations there lies something immensely important and substantial.

When we go back to ancient times of human evolution — we need not go back to the most primeval but to about the second or third millennium before the Mystery of Golgotha — we find that mankind had a quite

different consciousness, a quite different configuration of soul, than later on. The pronounced difference that exists between waking and sleeping in man today did exist at that time, but it was not the only aspect of the daily change in human consciousness. Today man only knows the states of waking and sleeping, and between them, dreams. While we are aware of a certain content in dreams, we must admit that it is often misleading. In any case, this dream content does not point to any reality that man can control directly with his day consciousness, although he certainly can indirectly. But apart from these three states of consciousness, of which that of dreams is most questionable, at least as far as gaining knowledge is concerned, an intermediate state existed for ancient humanity. It was neither that of dreams, nor of full wakefulness. Nor was it a condition of deep sleep, or half-conscious dreaming as we have it today. Rather, it was a pictorial "waking-dreaming," as one might put it. Pictures flowed within it as thoughts run today through our waking consciousness. These pictures were similar in form to our dream pictures, but what they contained pointed to a pronounced supersensible reality, as our perceptions point to a physical reality. Just as we know, when we see a physical being with colors and shapes, that it is a physical reality, so did ancient man experience pictures which moved freely and lightly in his consciousness as our dream pictures move in ours, except that it was impossible to doubt that their content pointed to a spiritual reality. Just as today, when our eyes perceive something, we know with certainty that something physical is out there, so did a man of the past know that he perceived something spiritually real when such images passed through his consciousness.

Among what ancient man experienced as spiritually real there was also an echo of pre-earthly existence. The human being of that epoch simply had every day in his soul inner experiences that proved to him beyond all doubt that he had lived in a soul-spiritual condition, in a purely spiritual world, before entering earthly life. Men of this ancient time knew of this throughout their lives. They therefore accepted as fully evident the existence of an eternal core of man's being, and of an extra-terrestrial world to which they belonged as much as they belonged to the terrestrial world. Those who, as initiates of the mysteries, were initiated in the more profound aspects of these truths were able to speak to their followers out of their initiation science in such a manner that these faithful could arrive at the conviction that they looked into an after-image of their pre-earthly existence, and at the same time into a spiritual world to which man

belongs with the eternal core of his being. This, they felt, was a gift of grace bestowed by that spiritual being whose physical image is the physical sun we see in the sky.

Thus, someone who accepted the old mystery wisdom could say: I look up to the sun, but this outer, physical sun is only an image of a spiritual sun being. This spiritual sun being permeates the spiritual world from which I myself descended to an earthly existence, and the power of this sun being has endowed my soul with that faculty, which brings it about that among my soul experiences during the sojourn on earth, I also have this, namely, that in looking back upon my pre-earthly existence, I can be sure of the eternal core-being in my soul.

For a man who, in ancient times felt the grace of the Sun Being, human death on earth was no special riddle. He was supported by the power of his initiates and knew of his pre-earthly existence and of his own external nature. He realized that death concerned only the physical human organism. He knew of something within him that had at the beginning of his earthly life descended into his physical organism. For him, death was an event that did not touch his inner being. He knew of it through his outer form of consciousness.

This was the soul condition of human beings in ancient epochs preceding the Mystery of Golgotha. In those epochs, the secret of birth lay open to a vision turned inward that was striving toward the grace of the Sun Being. While they could comprehend this secret of birth, the riddle of death was not yet present in the manner in which it existed for men of a later time. I shall speak in the second part of this lecture about how all this changed in the course of time.

This consciousness of ancient mankind that lived in pictures — and the way it affected the remaining soul constitution — was aware of the soul in such a way that the active, intense ego consciousness, possessed by mankind today, could not yet arise at that time. Man had insight into his own eternal essence but lacked a pronounced inner sensation of his ego-hood. Nor would he ever have achieved it if that ancient picture consciousness had remained with him as his endowment. But in fact, it ceased. Just when the time for the Mystery of Golgotha was drawing near, it gradually dimmed, to be replaced increasingly by the kind of ordinary consciousness we possess today, with its sharp contrast between sleeping and waking, and, in between, the dubious world of dreams. Mankind had lost that part of self-knowledge that looked back in direct vision to pre-

earthly life and with it to the eternal core of man's being. But this was precisely what was necessary if man was to reach gradually his full ego consciousness. Although in that middle period of human evolution, around the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, full ego consciousness had not yet appeared in all mankind, it was being slowly prepared. With it people were confronted in full measure and with great intensity with the riddle of death. For they no longer knew anything through direct vision about the world from which they had descended into earthly existence.

In the age when humanity passed through this stage of its evolution the Christ appeared, descending out of the same world from which the human soul always descends again to birth, and, through the events of Palestine, united Himself with the man, Jesus. At that time the old traditions, namely the old methods of the initiation centers were still preserved. Although they were but a vestige of the ancient initiation, even in their weakened form they could still lead to a knowledge concerning the way the spiritual world looks and the kind of connection man has to it. The initiates of that time could address those willing to receive their words and say: The Sun Being, He who formerly bestowed grace upon men by granting them a vision of an after-image of pre-earthly life, He whose physical reflection is the physical sun, this Sun Being has descended to earth. He lived, or has lived in the man Jesus. He took on a physical body in order not only to remain connected from this time onward with the spiritual world, in which man lives between death and a new birth, but also to live within human evolution on earth itself.

Out of the remnants of the old initiation, the initiates, who were contemporaries of the Mystery of Golgotha, spoke about the secret of the Christ to those who were willing to accept it and had confidence in them. Those who had this trust could learn how the Christ had entered an earthly body, so that not through some kind of teaching but through His deed He could resolve the riddle that only then affected humanity in full intensity — the riddle of death. The initiates pointed out to the people that the Christ had come in order to solve the riddle of death on earth in a way suitable for man. For at the time when the Mystery of Golgotha took place in the earth-realm, those who possessed the vestiges of the ancient methods of initiation spoke above all else about the spiritual being of Christ as He appeared in the spiritual world. The path was described which the Christ, Who never before had descended to earth existence, had taken from the spiritual world down to earth. In all these descriptions given by the initiated contemporaries of the Mystery of Golgotha, the main teaching was about the way the Christ descended into the man Jesus and Himself

became man in him. At that time people did not merely refer to the historical Jesus and ask: What position does this historical Jesus occupy in human evolution? — Ordinary consciousness was, after all, faced with him. Some of his contemporaries were in direct contact with him, while those who came later were aware of him in their physical sense consciousness through historical tradition. But those who knew something about the spiritual worlds because of their knowledge of ancient initiation science could say: That Being Who was once looked upon as the lofty Sun Being, the bestower of the grace we described, has taken the path leading to the earth and to the man Jesus. He has then passed through the Mystery of Golgotha, because man could no longer consciously see into pre-earthly life and so was unable to solve the riddle of death. Indeed, he could no longer be aware of this Being at all — the lofty Sun Being Who, by giving men the vision of the after-image of the world in which they had lived before birth overcame earthly death. This Being Itself descended to earth, took on human form and went through the Mystery of Golgotha in order, through what the event signified, to give back to men on earth — but this time from outside — the after-image of pre-earthly life that in earlier times He had been able to impart to them for their inner soul life in the form of pictures. It was in a manner somewhat like this that the initiated contemporaries of the Mystery of Golgotha expressed themselves.

Formerly, man through grace was blessed with a capacity in his consciousness that enabled him to experience his eternal essence directly when he looked back into his life before birth. But he had to develop further. He had to develop a clear earthly consciousness that could only be kindled and developed by means of the sense world. This is what caused the old consciousness, by means of which man had formerly been able to recognize his eternal nature, to recede. But that Being, Who had earlier enabled man to perceive his own eternal being from the spiritual world, accomplished the Mystery of Golgotha after His descent to earth so that man, by perceiving and understanding this event, might himself experience from outside what earlier he had experienced from within. From the Christ on earth man is to experience further what he had earlier experienced from the spiritual world through Christ.

In the third part of this lecture I shall explain the significance this had for the further course of mankind's evolution.

The vestiges of the old initiation methods through which the initiates at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, and even their successors, were able to speak correctly about the descent of the Christ and the path He took until His embodiment in the man Jesus — these vestiges continued until the fourth century A.D., though weakening increasingly in regard to the effectiveness they had for mankind. By that time, they had ceased to call forth in the human organization the kind of capacities that afforded reliable insights into the spiritual world. Mankind now entered a period of its evolution in which it was chiefly dependent upon the perceptions and views that can be attained only in the sense world and upon a thinking based on impressions and observations in this world. This period of humanity's evolution, lasting several centuries, brought about what I have just indicated as the development, the unfolding of ego consciousness.

One cannot study history correctly unless one is able to see during the period from the fourth to about the fifteenth century A.D. how ego consciousness gradually takes form among civilized peoples. Of course, precursors of this developing ego consciousness also lived in earlier times, but fundamentally there is a great difference between even the most educated, cultured person of the fourth or fifth centuries, and one of the fifteenth or sixteenth. A person who can see — I wouldn't even say, into the soul of Augustine, whose ego consciousness can be studied quite clearly in a psychological way — but let us say someone who can look, for example, into the soul of Scotus Erigena in the ninth century, sees how the ego consciousness, possessed later by the simplest person, was only just beginning to develop and form itself. At the same time, the old kind of vision was ceasing through which it was possible, for instance, to develop alchemy, which represented an innate fusion between what the eyes see and the soul experiences when it contemplates things in the external world. Pure sense observation, as the basis of human knowledge, arose first about the fifteenth century. In this turning of man to mere sense observation — which reached a high point in the age of Copernicus, Galileo and Giordano Bruno — to consciousness of the sense world, there also came into being the ego consciousness.

Ego consciousness, however, caused insight into the spiritual worlds to fall into the depths of darkness. The old perception of the mysteries, the initiation knowledge, had faded away by the fourth century A.D. and scarcely a trace of it continued in the ongoing stream of civilization. For what persisted of this knowledge was well hidden, and remained almost unknown to people in general, even to scholarly Occidental peoples. Initiation science had no real influence on general culture and civilization.

It, therefore, could throw no light on the path taken by the Christ from the spiritual worlds to mankind on earth, as was still possible in the first Christian centuries, even though that had been but a vestige, but nevertheless a vestige of the old initiation science. As a result, it was only the historical Jesus who was recognized by mankind, even by learned men — that Jesus of whom history tells, a history which did not add to this historical Jesus, either by means of direct human vision or by teachings of initiation, the picture of the Christ Who was united with him.

Thus, for these centuries, the Church's development could not do otherwise than refer its believers ever and again to the historical Jesus, bringing the picture of him to life. Concerning everything, however, that those men, who knew something real about the spiritual world, could still speak about in the first Christian centuries, nothing could now be directly known. Only what was preserved by tradition from those times when there still existed human souls who really knew about the spiritual world from initiation science, only what had been preserved by tradition from old Christian knowledge — only this could be established by the Church in the form of dogmas concerning the Christ. No reference was made to those who still retained a view of the spiritual content of these dogmas, which were made the object of mere faith.

During the time when knowledge became increasingly perfected and extensive in regard to the sense world, alongside this knowledge of the sense world a content of dogmatic faith was placed, a dogmatic content that related to the Jesus figure only by means of an outward determination.

This Jesus figure had become established in mankind's ordinary consciousness and had assumed form. This attitude then continued on through the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and finally led to a theology purporting to be Christian but concerned only with the man Jesus, because as a result of historical tradition ordinary consciousness was only aware of him.

Meanwhile, the consciousness that had developed experience of the ego and which had investigated the laws of the sense world had less and less inclination to abide by the established contents of faith. It was especially the leading personalities in whom the new consciousness had developed the most, who became emancipated from inclinations toward faith and thus the Christ. So it happened that in the nineteenth century the supposed Christian theology, which had completely lost all knowledge of

the Christ in favor of Jesus and spoke only about "Jesus of Nazareth," came to a special prominence. It wanted to recognize Jesus as a man only, although perhaps the most eminent one who had appeared in human evolution.

In the first Christian centuries, out of the vestiges of the old initiation wisdom, the attempt had been made to describe the path leading from the perception of the Christ Being to his incorporation in Jesus of Nazareth; in order to understand the Mystery of Golgotha, one started with Christ and later arrived at Jesus. By the nineteenth century, one began with Jesus, who was looked upon at first as a man, and tried to come from Jesus to Christ. But that was the path that as a matter of course led in the end either to the admission (or the refusal to admit) one's inability to rise to the Christ from the historical Jesus of whom ordinary consciousness alone was aware, the "simple man" Jesus who had lived in Palestine.

This situation can be changed only by modern initiation as I have characterized it in its main outlines in the past few days, which can lead to imagination, inspiration and intuition in a new form. By means of this new initiation wisdom it is again possible to go beyond the merely historical image of Jesus to a direct view of man's pre-earthly existence and the world in which this existence is spent. It thereby becomes possible to behold the Christ in His super-earthly spirituality and then, proceeding from Christ, to understand Jesus and thus the nature of the Mystery of Golgotha. The path that modern theology has taken, which, in emphasizing Jesus, has lost the Christ, can be reversed. Out of spiritual perception, men again can recognize the Christ, and through the perception of Christ behold Jesus in whom the Christ became Man. With this Christ perception, gained in the spirit, they can then contemplate the Mystery of Golgotha. Through anthroposophical perception, the Christ, Who for one branch of modern theology has already been lost, must now be recovered. I will explain in the fourth part of today's considerations what this signifies for man's inner development.

It has already been mentioned that through the lighting-up of ego consciousness the riddle of death confronted the human soul. This had to happen because, since the ego had become present in full clarity in the inner soul experience, man's physical organism thereby had become the actual basis for this ordinary human consciousness. This ego-permeated consciousness had its foundation in man's physical organism, and man learned to feel instinctively how only what has its foundation in the physical organism can be experienced by the soul. No longer did he see the eternal

essence of his being through a direct picture consciousness. It was precisely his ego consciousness, his highest faculty in earth life, that drew his attention exclusively to his physical body and showed how this body, because of its constitution, could allow his ego-saturated consciousness to light up. In this state of consciousness we cannot say that there is anything in our soul that we carry through the gate of death.

It was precisely the ability of a retrospective view into pre-earthly life, which had been given to an older humanity by the grace of the lofty Sun Being, that had enabled ordinary consciousness to see forward into what is beyond death. Now, consciousness had become especially clear because, to its full extent, it had become an experience of the physical organism. But because of this man could not help saying to himself: You possess powers to brighten and illuminate your consciousness, but they come from the physical body. This body disintegrates at death. In this, of which you are aware in your ordinary consciousness, you perceive nothing of what can carry you over into another world. Something of this nature may exist — but with your ordinary consciousness you sense and know nothing of it.

This mystery of death had appeared with special intensity in the first Christian centuries when human beings were still more sensitive to these questions. The initiates, however, had drawn the attention of humanity to the Mystery of Golgotha, and in the following centuries, as Christianity evolved, its leaders had likewise directed humanity to that Mystery through their dogmas of faith. What was this Mystery to signify for man?

A person who can attain an inner person-to-person relationship to the Christ on earth, who can acknowledge and accept the Mystery of Golgotha, must take something into his consciousness that no material sense world can supply. It is precisely the person who looks most deeply into the constitution of the sense world who must deny the Mystery of Golgotha, for no understanding of this Mystery is possible to a comprehension derived from the senses. If, however, he can receive it into his heart, if he is then able, by means of a power of understanding rooted in the human soul (*Gemüt*), to grasp that event consummated only once in earth's evolution — an event comprehensible only out of the spirit — then, in his ordinary consciousness, he tears himself away from mere sense comprehension, which in its special clearness and intensity is precisely the essential feature of ego consciousness.

No one who wishes to remain only in the world of the senses can come to an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. By contrast, if one renounces any understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha based on sense perception and acquires instead a relationship to it of faith and acknowledgement, if one looks up to the Mystery of Golgotha in an attitude of pious veneration and attains to an understanding of what Christ became for humanity when He came down from a spiritual existence into earth life, then one rises above the mere understanding of the sense world with the aid of that very power which, though it is itself a part of earthly consciousness, nevertheless constitutes man's highest faculty. Man thus generates and unfolds a force in his ordinary consciousness that does not spring from his own natural development. He must deepen himself inwardly and intensify his consciousness if he wants to go beyond his understanding of the sense world and develop enough strength to allow the spiritual significance of the Mystery of Golgotha to become a truth for his soul.

If we renounce all understanding based on the senses and acknowledge the truth of the Mystery of Golgotha; if we recognize that the Christ really did once live on earth in Jesus, and that in the Mystery of Golgotha a real, heavenly, super-earthly deed of enduring significance was accomplished in the midst of earth existence — then, by recognizing this truth we succeed in replacing that force that was once a part of ordinary consciousness but has now been lost.

In times past, the power to look back into pre-earthly life was present in ordinary consciousness, and out of this vision consciousness gained the strength to carry the soul through the gate of death. This power which now was no longer there was to enter into the soul through the Mystery of Golgotha; it was to enter through the strengthening that could occur in the soul, if, through inward soul experience, a person confessed to the truth of this Mystery. Then, as the saying of Paul, "Not I but the Christ in me," came to life in man himself, the Christ, with the power that streamed out from His deed on Golgotha, could carry man beyond the point where, merely because of the condition of his consciousness, physical death could leave him. By these means, it was possible to regain a power of which man knew that with it he was able to reach beyond the portal of death.

How the mysteries of death, the opposite of the mysteries of birth, of which I spoke yesterday, can be described further in relation to the Christ Being, will be the topic of tomorrow's lecture.

Today, I would like to close my remarks by referring to what an old initiate said to those whose souls — as early as the first Christian centuries — were confronted with this whole riddle of death. He said: "Behold the condition of the human body, now that man has arrived at the use of ego consciousness. In this stage, the physical body conceals man's total entity. Since the unfolding of ego consciousness, man is so constituted that in and through his physical body alone he could never take hold of that element in him that belongs to the spirit. Look," said such an initiate to his followers in the first Christian centuries, "look at the physical human organism just when the stage is reached when it is to offer the highest potentiality for ego consciousness; it turns out to be inadequate. The physical organism is therefore sick; it would be healthy only if it could give to man a consciousness of his spiritual significance. This physical organism developed in such a way that from the beginning there was sickness in it in relation to the life of the spirit. For this reason, the Christ descended and passed through the Mystery of Golgotha, not only as a teacher but as the Physician of the soul, Who, through man's soul, heals him from what has fallen ill in his physical organism." This is how those initiates of the first Christian century — who are no longer acknowledged by today's theology and who have been erased from memory — presented the Christ as the Physician of the soul, the Healer, the Savior of mankind. In presenting Him thus, they gave Him his due place as the true meaning of the whole of earth evolution. They showed how man's evolution took a descending course, descending to the point where his physical organism became completely corrupt and useless for the highest tasks of human consciousness. Then the Divine Savior as the Physician of the soul intervened to heal the relationship between man's soul condition and the divine-spiritual world. Thus, through the initiates of the first Christian centuries, a deeper understanding of the Christ came into being, namely, that of Christ as the Soul Physician of the world, the Healer of mankind, the Savior.

Because of all this one can say that in ancient times, before the Mystery of Golgotha had taken place on earth, the initiates could speak to wider circles of humanity, who were open to their teachings, about a spiritual, a divine existence that permeated and was the foundation of all sense existence. If man brings this teaching to life again in modern consciousness through imaginative insight, then, what otherwise is an abstract, thought-out philosophy is enlivened — not only in the sense I have earlier characterized it here, but by becoming permeated by Christ. By means of the knowledge through which modern imagination leads men

again to an insight into the spiritual world, philosophy is filled with the Christ. What once existed in ancient humanity, namely, the awareness of the Divine-Spiritual Father of all physical existence can awaken in humanity again. It was basically toward this Divine Father-consciousness that the ancient, pre-Christian initiates strove along with the rest of mankind. In the highest grade of initiation in the mysteries, the initiate represented the Divine-Spiritual, Cosmic Father, and was called "The Father."

If man allows this conception to arise in his mind, what may be called a Christian philosophy comes into being. Furthermore, through modern inspiration, he becomes acquainted with what was already prophetically expressed by the initiates of the early Christian centuries, who still possessed vestiges of an ancient inspiration. He learns to perceive how a Divine-Spiritual Being, the Christ, descended out of spiritual worlds, placed Himself into man's earthly development, and thus constitutes in Himself the fulcrum of this evolution. A meaningful content is thus brought into humanity's earthly evolution and its laws when man learns through the Mystery of Golgotha to link this evolution to the cosmos by means of looking up to the cosmic Christ Being. Further, man learns to recognize how earthly evolution has been a concern of heaven, how the cosmos has cared about the affairs of mankind. In this way, the nature of that cosmology, which I have always characterized here as a spiritual cosmology, is extended so as to become a Christian cosmology.

If, then, man achieves a living relationship to the Christ and the Mystery of Golgotha in the sense of the words of Paul, "Not I but the Christ in me," the Christ, by helping him solve the riddle of death, leads him into a renewed life in the spirit. He becomes acquainted with the new spirit, which once again is to make it clear to mankind that beyond the physical world there exists a spiritual world that rules, orders and permeates the physical. He learns to know the mission of the Healing Spirit, Who proceeds from Christ and is sanctified by Christ Himself. He learns to know the mystery of the Holy Spirit as the foundation for a new religious perception.

The Trinity, so long spoken of as a dogma, again comes to live for man. Looking back to the pre-Christian mysteries one can say that in these lived God the Father, Who also has a cosmic meaning for us. Through the Mystery of Golgotha, God the Son, in Christ, drew near mankind, and through what God the Son has brought to humanity, the connection was established with the Healing, the Holy Spirit. The Trinity is again a living conception; no dogma.

Through the vitalizing of the Father consciousness there arises a Christ-permeated philosophy. Through the vitalizing of the Son consciousness comes a Christ-permeated cosmology. In accordance with what the Christ referred to and has called the Healing Spirit and has mercifully poured over mankind, a new basis arises for a Christian religion, founded in knowledge.

Starting from such a Christian philosophy, a Christian cosmology and a Christian religious insight, we shall speak further tomorrow about the mystery of death in relation to the Christ Being and the course of humanity's evolution.



8

Ordinary Consciousness and Higher Consciousness

13 September 1922, Dornach

Since I plan to describe the problem of human death and the soul's immortality in relation to the Christ and Christianity's development, it will be necessary today for me to throw light once again from a different viewpoint on some of the topics I have already presented here.

When we look at the two conditions of waking and sleeping that alternate in daily human life, we find that during sleep, in regard to ordinary consciousness, man's sense perception is suspended and that what he experiences in his soul life as thinking, feeling and willing is also extinguished. Everything that we as human beings sum up as our "self" when we are awake is actually extinguished.

All that is here extinguished will now be rekindled bit by bit through imagination, inspiration and intuition. Meditation must first deal with ordinary thinking in order to produce imaginative thinking. I have described how thoughts are employed so that through meditating imaginative perception is attained. Particularly concerning the problem of death, it is necessary to clarify still further what is experienced on the path of initiation knowledge, for only then does it become clear what kind of a relationship man acquires in regard to his physical body and his soul-spiritual being when death occurs.

When thinking is used in meditation in the manner I have described it, the first experience of a person is that he actually cannot think for a while as he feels himself with his whole soul to be outside the physical organization. To a degree, thinking is, as it were, for a short time forgotten. It takes a certain amount of courage, inner energy, and also a certain presence of mind to experience this moment with full awareness. But then, as he awakens to renewed awareness, he notices that he experiences a much stronger activity of thought in his soul than he has had earlier. Thinking begins again.

Man progresses in the following way. To start he has his ordinary consciousness — I emphasize that ordinary consciousness is retained during genuine imagination — , then he must find his way into the other form of consciousness, and back again. While the ordinary, earthly view of things is naturally preserved as far as ordinary consciousness is concerned, in this other state of mind that man can enter he loses the capacity, so to speak, to produce thoughts. A stronger activity of thought sets in, however, as meditation is continued, a more pronounced, inner thought experience is acquired. In ordinary consciousness the thoughts that are experienced have to do mostly with the outer sense world and memories. Also, there are dim thoughts that arise out of any number of emotional experiences. Now, in this higher state of consciousness, man possesses a thinking with which he can call up into awareness in active thoughts the course of his own life from birth to the present moment in the manner I have described. This, however, has to do with a deeper layer of the course of man's life. I have already mentioned that they are not the memories a person also has in ordinary consciousness, these are on a deeper level. Man actually sees into an etheric process that builds up, saturates and penetrates, indeed, has always penetrated the physical organization. Everything that has occurred since birth in the physical body as growth was produced in it — how the separate organs were plastically formed, how our capacities of thinking, feeling and willing were drawn out of the depths of the bodily organization, everything connected with organic life that is otherwise hidden from consciousness — all of this shoots up in the form of active, inwardly experienced, substantial thoughts. In a certain sense man passes from ordinary thinking across an abyss to a thinking that experiences its own etheric body.

In developing imaginative thinking in this way, strict attention must be paid to what escapes you during the moments when you are within this imaginative thinking. The first thing you actually lose are your memories. You have the memories in ordinary consciousness, but alongside this ordinary consciousness, the other imaginative consciousness develops. In it, no memories exist. I ask you to clarify this to yourselves through the following explanation. When you recall anything as in all experiences of ordinary consciousness, you actually live in the present. You perceive what confronts you at the present moment and you think thoughts about it, and if you remember something of the past you nevertheless have before you in your mind a picture in the present moment that merely points to the past. Hence, ordinary consciousness experiences the present. Imaginative consciousness experiences its own life's course in such a way that the

individual stages are surveyed all at once as if the things existing in time were spread out in space. Just as you experience one thing alongside another simultaneously in sense perception, so you now experience your own past on earth, all at once. Time becomes like space. The events you have lived through in your thirtieth, eighteenth, tenth, seventh or fifth year stand before the soul side by side.

In this way the experiences of imaginative consciousness differ from those of ordinary consciousness. Ordinary consciousness lives in the present, for the past it only has its memories. Imaginative consciousness experiences different times but in such a way that these time periods appear simultaneously before the soul. I said that recollections, the memory thoughts, slip away first. This is really the case. In imaginative consciousness man does not possess a memory or recollections, faculties that in his ordinary consciousness are a great help to him in life. It goes without saying that the capacity of memory in his normal human nature remains as it was because the ordinary human being remains unchanged alongside the new faculty. But man cannot remember his newly acquired imaginative experience of the ordinary course of his life. Let us assume that at a given moment a person experiences his life's course in imaginative consciousness. If in three days he wants to relive it again, he will not be able to recall what he has experienced today. He must repeat the same efforts that led him to experience the course of his life. Again, he must do the exercises that lead to this experience. Just as a real, physical object cannot actually be present in your memory — you have to walk over again to where it is located — so what you now experience, namely your etheric body, cannot simply be called up by memory for it is a living reality. It has to be summoned anew again and again.

This is something that disappoints many people who do such soul exercises. They set about doing them and achieve and see something. They assume that they can retain this view, that they can call it up again any time in memory. They are unable to do this and are disillusioned. The efforts have to be renewed each time in order to produce the experiences inwardly again. Let me give an example. Assume that a person gives a lecture, basing his talk on the new science of meditation. He lectures in such a way that he has not turned everything into abstract ideas but rather speaks out of living perception. He therefore cannot prepare himself by memorizing what he has in mind. Matters pertaining to the physical world can be memorized but not those relating to imaginative consciousness, for they always have to be produced anew. A person can indeed prepare himself, but this preparation is a kind of exercise. It is like acquiring a skill

through practice. Earnest, constant meditation and practice help you to bring forth what you want from the supersensible world. But it must be produced in the present moment, it must arise instantly, if it is to come out of the spiritual world in truly alive form. It then contains the immediate echo of the spiritual in its formulation, its expression. Forgive me if I mention something personal here. I have perhaps spoken already thirty or forty times about one subject. It makes it no easier for me to speak on it for the thirtieth time. It is just as hard as it was the first time, for it is always the same process again. As a basis for producing such material a person needs composure and quiet so that the subject can arise out of a calm soul. Perhaps it is unnecessary, but to make myself clear I might add that in this regard an audience that expects a person to lecture on some aspect of the spiritual world is often really cruel to him — naturally the present audience is always excepted. It may be acceptable in a professorial lecture but not in a spiritual one that any number of persons come up prior to a lecture and ask all kinds of questions without considering at all that in the next moment facts from the spiritual world are to be brought forth.

In this way I have sought to describe to you the subjective experience of one who has imaginative consciousness. Because a person knows within his own mind how this active, living thinking comes to the surface, which now has as its content his own life's course, he also understands the nature of ordinary thinking. From the vantage point of imaginative consciousness he can now look back on ordinary thinking and arrive at the realization that in itself it has no reality at all. Actually, everyone lives in imagination. He does so unconsciously, carrying this substantial thinking within himself. But because he has not strengthened his soul forces sufficiently, his soul is too weak to lift into consciousness what is within him. When he wants to think, therefore, he always takes hold of his physical body. That becomes for him the basis of ordinary consciousness. But what actually happens there?

Because this inner activity — which even in ordinary consciousness is unconscious imagination — turns to the physical organism, it slips right into it. This unconscious imagination of which man knows nothing, which remains unconscious until it lights up in imaginative knowledge as active thinking, slips in ordinary consciousness into the physical organism and makes use of it. Then, as imaginative consciousness, which does not know what it is since it remains unconscious, it is reflected in the form of inner mirror-reflections. These, then, are the ordinary thoughts. They have as little reality as mirrored reflections have in relation to the objects standing before a mirror. Something is reflected back to us from our physical body,

and these are the thoughts that arise in ordinary consciousness, merely mirror images. He who experiences these thoughts, therefore, experiences nothing substantial. There is no strength, no life in these thoughts of ordinary consciousness. At the moment, however, when active thinking sets in through imagination there is substance in thinking. In every imaginative thought there is substance and energy. You know that with this imaginative thinking you live within a force like the one that brought you from the state of childhood to that of a grown human being.

When a person works his way through to imaginative thinking, he actually passes to begin with from ordinary, physical reality to etheric reality. But in doing so he now receives the first insight into the physical body. He sees it as a reflecting apparatus that throws the thoughts back to the human being. Along with this, man begins to approach the problem of death, for it is not until his physical body becomes for him an external object that he can consider the problem of death. If man actually still exists as a being after death, he is quite certainly not present in his physical body. If, therefore, he wants to solve the problem of death while he is alive, he must have his physical body outside himself and view it as objectively as is the case, relatively speaking, when the body is beside or outside the human entity in death.

This characterizes the first step toward solving the problem of death. In the second part of today's lecture we shall discuss what else is required.

On the basis of a perception such as I have described to you, man is really in a position to judge how the soul-spiritual in the human being relates to the corporeal-physical. Not until he can objectively survey the physical organization, the etheric body and the soul-spiritual by means of the imaginative as well as the subsequent methods of super-sensible cognition, can he perceive how the two parts conduct themselves in the various stages of life. It is therefore of immense importance to bear in mind that in the super-sensible perception of which I am speaking here man retains the ordinary consciousness he possesses in everyday, waking life alongside all the other perceptual experiences. Already in imaginative consciousness, when he confronts something of his past life — for instance, the manner in which certain traits appeared in connection with the processes of growth when he was still a child of nine or ten, how moral tendencies, etc., arose — he perceives all this because he has before him

the unity of the physical and soul nature at age nine or ten. He observes what took place then in the organism. But at the same time, he must retain his everyday consciousness. This means that he must now have this view of the ninth or tenth year of his life which reveals something that otherwise remains entirely unconscious; on the other hand, at his own discretion, he must be able to bring to mind instantaneously the memories that he has in ordinary consciousness, which carry him back in the normal way to his ninth or tenth year. Man must always be able to compare the one with the other, the higher with the ordinary consciousness. In the same way that he usually passes from one thought to another he must pass back and forth between an experience in imaginative consciousness and one in ordinary consciousness.

This characteristic of the higher consciousness referred to here is especially important. Those people who judge anthroposophical research only from the outside frequently believe that what appears as imagination can be dismissed like the hallucinations of some visionary. But you must become aware of the radical distinction that exists between true imagination and a vision. A vision certainly conveys a pictorial content also, but man is completely bound up in his vision. While the vision goes on, his consciousness has transformed itself into it and he cannot go back and forth at will from the vision to his ordinary consciousness. In contrast, a person who experiences imaginative consciousness has not transformed his ordinary consciousness into a vision, he has enriched it with imagination. He has added what he already possesses in ordinary consciousness to what he has attained in imagination. A person with imaginative consciousness therefore firmly rejects the common visionary experience, but he can also discern the visionary's predicament in life. For, whoever has achieved the heights of perception indicated here can observe in detail how a soul is inwardly active, in what way it employs the physical organism so that the body can reflect the thoughts back to it.

The person experiencing imagination and inspiration is familiar with the soul's relationship to the physical body in normal consciousness. He therefore can also form a judgement about a visionary. In the case of a visionary the soul has not become free of the body. The person who possesses imaginative consciousness knows what it means for the soul to be free of the physical body, for he has actually lifted the soul out of the body and has driven it into activity. When he observes a visionary, however, he sees that such a person's soul is submerged more within the physical body than is the case when it perceives the outer world with ordinary consciousness.

This is the difference between a person who has imaginative consciousness and the visionary. The visionary immerses himself more deeply into his body's functions than one does in ordinary life, while in imagination man actually emerges out of the physical organization. But at the same time, the ordinary soul content in the physical organism is consciously retained. If the vital significance of this difference is not recognized, if imagination is not kept under rigorous control by ordinary thinking which is retained side by side with imagination, the latter will always be confused with visionary activity that has no accompanying control, for there a man simply descends further into his physical body, and what appears to him as his vision is perhaps only a passing indisposition of his liver or stomach which was already present in ordinary life, but into which he has now submerged himself.

On the other hand, the imaginations of a person with imaginative consciousness have nothing to do with his bodily organs. He consciously looks into a part of his soul of which he was previously unaware. Imaginative consciousness therefore does not lead away from ordinary consciousness to something visionary, as some people believe. Rather, the schooling, the exercises for cultivating imaginative consciousness are a precise antidote for all uncontrollable, visionary elements. You do not develop in the direction of visions but in the opposite direction. The goal is to become free of the physical organization, and, in addition, to be able to utilize the soul in imagination, to start with the etheric organism, in order to arrive at a substantial, real thinking. In ordinary life, the physical body represents substantiality and what you possess in addition to it are mirror images in thinking that have no substance, no real, inner activity. It is precisely the contrast between the supersensible insights referred to here, and the visionary life, that makes it abundantly clear what is meant here by imagination, inspiration, and intuition in the higher consciousness.

Again, you see how you can gradually learn to comprehend the relationship of the soul-spiritual to the physical bodily nature by means of such perception. You realize that visionary activity can arise when someone's soul descends more deeply into the physical body during earthly life. But you can also understand what it implies to be outside your physical body, and what the soul experience is like at a time when you are outside your body. By means of this psychic-spiritual experience outside the body you sense and experience in advance how you must live when you no longer have a physical body. This means that the problem of death is solved within physical earth existence, for you must be able to live in a condition in which you will find yourself one day when you no longer

possess your physical body. I ask you to understand that it is my aim to show how the problem of death can be approached and characterized with the greatest discernment, for this problem is nowadays dealt with so often in an amateurish fashion. But I want to make it clear that, above all in anthroposophical research, all the circumspection in thinking that could be demanded is indeed used to consider this problem. For this reason, I have not hesitated to formulate today's lecture in a more exact way so as to have a good basis for comprehending the problem of death. More concerning this will follow in the third part of today's considerations.

If we acquire a view of man's soul-spiritual constitution on the one side and his physical-bodily organization on the other then when we rise to imaginative, inspirational perception, and so on, we can survey the relationship that exists between the two — as I said earlier — in any given situation of man's life. Several days ago, I described how, in descending from the soul-spiritual world, man works on the creation of his own physical organization, how it then falls away from him and how he finds it again in another way through conception and birth. I described furthermore how the problem of birth appears when it is viewed from the standpoint of pre-earthly existence. Now, let us look more into earthly existence, as it is placed between the events of birth and death, for if we want to arrive gradually at an understanding of death, we must be able to link death to birth or conception by means of earthly life.

Particularly, when we observe the way the soul-spiritual in pre-earthly existence relates to what a man bears as physical body in earthly life, we can arrive at the realization that one part of the soul-spiritual — a part that man also possesses in pre-earthly existence — is completely transformed due to conception and birth. While it is still present in pre-earthly life, it now actually disappears; it is the part out of which thinking has developed. It is there in pre-earthly life but disappears as a soul-spiritual element the moment man arrives on the earth. Traces of it remain in the infant, but gradually this part of soul-spiritual life disappears entirely. What has happened to it?

The part that here disappears has been transformed into the life and form of the human head organization. Now understand this correctly: It is entirely wrong to believe that the whole soul-spiritual configuration of man exists as such in pre-earthly life and then, on earth, it receives a kind of house by means of the body into which it enters and lives. It is quite wrong to think in this way about that part of the soul I now referred to above. That part fades and disappears; it is transformed into a really

physical material thing, namely our head organization. The life and form of our head organization is a physical metamorphosis of a soul-spiritual element of our pre-earthly existence. Look at your head organization. I do not mean now merely the head that falls off when one is beheaded, but the head with its whole inner content, with all the nerves running into it, and the blood circulation insofar as it is cerebral blood circulation. All this is a result of the transformation of a part of man's pre-earthly sojourn. This part of pre-earthly soul life disappears into the head organization. As a result of the fact that our head organization represents a real metamorphosis of what we possess in our pre-earthly life, and because we behold in the human head a true physical replica of our pre-earthly existence, this head is a real mirror for reflecting thoughts. This has come about because the head has formed and enlivened itself as a physical organism out of the experienced thoughts of the pre-earthly life. This way it is a mirror for the thoughts we form by means of all the sense perceptions.

By contrast — I might say, on the other side of the soul's life — another part of the soul emerges that passes in man through conception and birth and does not transform itself into the physical corporeality but comes only into loose contact with man's metabolic and limb systems. It is that part of the soul life that is ordinarily experienced in its reflections, as will. Compare the will with the conceptual life, with thinking. As human beings we are always fully conscious in the life of thoughts when we are awake. Indeed, "awake" actually means "living in thoughts." It is not so with the will. Take the simplest act of will, the raising of an arm or hand. How much of this are you fully conscious of? In waking consciousness, you first have the idea: I will raise my hand. — Then something happens that runs its course in the depths of your bodily organization. You may experience all kinds of undefined feelings, shreds of emotions and the like, but what you next experience clearly and in full wakefulness is the result: The arm is raised — you can see it. Ordinary consciousness is as unaware of what takes place in the depths of the organism in the actual sphere of the will between the resolve to do something and the accomplished action as it remains unconscious of events during sleep. We are awake in our thought life; in our actual life of will we sleep even when we are awake.

This partial life of sleep that becomes evident in our will is therefore a sleep that also permeates our waking condition. We are always asleep in one part of our soul even when we are awake, namely, in that part where the will is rooted. Now this is the part of the soul that is not transformed into the physical organization at the time it undergoes human conception

and birth. One part of the soul reappears in the physical world after birth as man's head organization. The metabolic- and limb-system, on the other hand, is not a direct replica of that other part of the soul; it is born out of the physical world. The will-segment of the soul has linked itself with it in a loose way; for this reason, the metabolic-and limb-system does not mirror what the soul experiences. This is why man is asleep in his will and also in relation to his metabolic- and limb-system even when he is awake. When this part of the soul is observed by supersensible perception in its relationship to the physical organization, it bears a strong similarity to the relationship of the ego and astral body, the whole soul, to the entire physical organization during sleep. Indeed, man is a much more complicated being than is usually believed. There are certain descriptions of the supersensible which simply state: When a person is awake, his soul-spiritual nature is within his physical-etheric organization, when he sleeps it is outside. But the matter is not as simple as this; at most, one can speak in this way of the head organization, but not of the rest of man's corporeality. For in regard to this remaining organization, a part of the soul sleeps even when the human being is awake.

This part of the soul's life that is asleep and arises from the dark depths of man's organization only in certain mental images is brought into view the moment a person attains to intuition, for, as I have shown, intuition is a result of will exercises. In that way man learns to see into what is otherwise always concealed in waking life; he learns to look into the mysteries of the human will. The human will is a mystery even for waking life; it is revealed partly by inspiration, but only intuition finally unveils it. Paradoxical as it may sound, once man has succeeded in perceiving the true nature of his own will he also has insight into the divine spiritual world. In the head organization the spiritual world is contained only in physical metamorphosis, not much of the spiritual world as such can be discovered there. The human head is actually the least spiritual part of man. But the remaining physical organization contains the unchanged soul life the way it was when man dwelt in pre-earthly life without physical and etheric bodies. In this soul life that lives concealed in the will, man is wholly spirit even between birth and death. Through intuition one can now discern the nature of this spirit.

The spirit that is unveiled to intuition as the element that underlies the will appears to this perception as the reservoir for everything a person has undergone during earth life in the form of intellectual activities of the mind and soul-initiatives, as moral inclinations and impulses in the soul. As I have already indicated from another standpoint, this is revealed as the

younger part of the soul, the part that remains in an embryonic state in our present earth life and is at the beginning of its development. If we look at this part of the soul, we behold something in man's inner being that heads toward death in order to be actually born only at death, just as the soul in pre-earthly existence approaches earth life in order to be born into it through conception and birth. Beneath our will lives the soul embryo which reveals its embryonic life when intuitive perception beholds its true nature. We can tell by its nature how it is born to a new spiritual life at death, just as we can tell by the appearance of the human soul in pre-earthly life that it enters earthly existence through birth.

In order to gain insight into physical existence, it is therefore our concern to become acquainted — to begin with in supersensible existence — with the soul being that underlies the will. I shall conclude these observations in the last, the fourth part, and they will lead us tomorrow to a summation of the problem of death in relation with the questions concerning the Christ.

Through higher perception man gains a view of the evolution of his eternal being through pre-earthly existence, earth life and the life after death. Now, however, to unprejudiced observation a mighty riddle arises. It arises when we see how ego consciousness is acquired. From yesterday's lecture you may have surmised that ego consciousness is dependent upon the physical organization, for it originates only at that point in the course of human earth development when man in ordinary consciousness can utilize nothing else besides his physical organism. Particularly here, imaginative, inspired and intuitive knowledge make it abundantly clear that we as human beings attain our ego consciousness initially in the physical world between birth and death and that the attainment of this ego consciousness is linked to the use of the physical body. The body, however, is taken from us at death.

To a higher perception such as I described again today, the eternal nature of the soul life that was experienced by earth humanity prior to the development of ego consciousness can only appear as a soul life that passes from pre-earthly through earthly to post-earthly existence — in other words, through repeated earth lives. Concerning what man acquires as ego consciousness, however, we can say with absolute certainty: You attained it through the use of your physical body; indeed, only in the course of humanity's evolution — at the time when the Mystery of Golgotha entered human evolution — did you learn to make use of your physical body in such a way that ego consciousness lit up within you.

It is therefore equally certain that inasmuch as we gain ego consciousness by means of the physical body we must fear that we shall lose it at death. This is one of the problems of death. Even if the eternal part of our being in thought, feeling and will has revealed itself to us and we behold it in its metamorphosis as the element appearing only as a mirror image in thinking — actually it is the vanished soul life that has been transformed into the head organization — even if we see in the will the shadow of what leads an embryonic soul life in the rest of the physical organization and will only come to birth at death, even if we are able to look clearly into the soul life in this regard, we are still bound to become fearful. Indeed, we do not become afraid because of an insignificant emotional attitude, but because of our insight when we face the question: What do we manage to retain of the physical organism beyond death, for the physical body decays after death? If we have gained our ego consciousness by means of the body, then the scientifically justified fear arises: How do we carry our ego consciousness through death?

Only the Mystery of Golgotha can answer this question. Man could never carry his ego consciousness beyond death unless this ego consciousness, having developed in the physical body, unites with the Christ Who holds and supports it when it would otherwise melt away from the human soul along with the physical body. Ego consciousness has been attained by means of the physical body. In death, along with the physical body, it would leave the soul, if it were not bound up with the Christ Being in the sense of Paul's words, "Not I but the Christ in me," — for the Christ takes our ego and carries it through death.

In the following lecture I will describe in detail how this takes place and I will show how the Christ is that Being Who makes it possible for us to preserve our ego consciousness and carry it through the portal of death.

Only anthroposophical research as meant here reveals the whole significance that the Christ event has for human life. After all, the significance of such insight already begins in the case of ordinary philosophy! Ordinary philosophy is only awakened to an inner life and gains a perception concerning itself when it can be nourished by imaginative knowledge. Think of what I said at the beginning of my lecture. When we advance through meditation to imaginative perception we cross over an abyss, as it were. Our thinking ceases, a state of non-thinking exists between ordinary thinking and the active, life-filled thinking of imagination. Several philosophers have experienced this non-thinking — for instance, Augustine and Descartes — but they were unable to interpret it correctly.

They spoke of the doubt that arises at the start of philosophical thinking. This doubt that Augustine and Descartes spoke about is only the reflection, brought into ordinary consciousness, of this condition of non-thinking that man finds himself in between ordinary thinking and imaginative thinking. Since neither Augustine nor Descartes had submerged their souls into this actual non-thinking, they did not come to the true experience, only the reflection, of what a person experiences when his thinking, particularly the thoughts of memory, ceases between ordinary and imaginative thinking. The doubt of Augustine and Descartes is only the reflected image in ordinary consciousness of this experience that does not appear until the transition into imaginative consciousness. Thus, when we observe it in the light of imaginative philosophy, we can correctly interpret what appears vaguely in the mere philosophy of ideas.

Likewise, we have seen how a person confronts the course of his life as a unity and how, to a perception that enables him to be consciously alive in his ether body, events that run their course in time are seen to stand side by side. Through this insight, events that ordinarily occur one after the other are seen side by side like you normally see the objects in space. Bergson, for example, felt this when he formulated his idea of "duration." This idea of duration plays a prominent role in his philosophy, but because of the manner in which he conceived it, it is only an inkling of the truth. The truth is the imaginative view of time as simultaneity. Bergson only arrived at the abstract feeling that if he entered more deeply into the matter, he could now, in the present, reach beyond this world and experience duration as such. But since Bergson would not approach a form of anthroposophical perception, he again arrived only at a reflected image of what a person experiences with imaginative perception in regard to time as simultaneity. He called this elusive element, experienced as a reflected image, duration, *durée*. It plays a prominent role in Bergson's philosophy.

Regardless of which aspect of philosophy you focus upon, it becomes evident that philosophy will only attain substance and life when this substance is grasped in the way it was done today. I have already indicated that cosmology and religious knowledge also gain substance in this way, and I will elaborate on the matter further in regard to the questions about the Christ in the next few days. I will show that for man today all higher perception leads basically to an appeal by his own being to the Mystery of Golgotha. And when man's will aspires to reach the Mystery of Golgotha and, once again, the Christ Being enters man's consciousness in His

complete, supersensible reality, then modern supersensible perception will lead by means of a spiritual philosophy and cosmology to a firm foundation not only of supersensible life in general but of a spiritual Christianity.



9

The Event of Death, and its Relationship with the Christ

14 September 1922, Dornach

The ordinary earthly soul life runs its course in the inwardly experienced manifestations of thinking, feeling and will. In reality, as we have seen in the previous lectures, the reason for this is that when we wake up an etheric and astral organism as well as an ego being are contained in man's physical organization. In a certain respect, man's astral organization and ego being are outside his physical body during sleep, or, more accurately, outside the head organization of the physical body. When man is awake in earthly life, however, the etheric and astral organisms and the ego being are completely united with the physical organism. They are active in the physical corporeality. During sleep, the soul's own system of forces is not strong enough to become conscious of what it experiences in the astral and ego organisms. On the other hand, in the waking condition only that enters clearly into ordinary consciousness which the physical body reflects as thoughts from the activity of the etheric and astral organism and the ego being.

If, in his waking state, man were fully capable of experiencing the activity of his own entire soul being, he would experience first of all the course of his own life, namely, what underlies the memories as the reality of the course of life. He would be equally aware of the cosmic experience in the higher worlds that we have learned about and which, during sleep, remains unperceived and beyond consciousness. For if man were fully capable of using his astral body, there would descend into his waking consciousness what he experiences each night as a replica of the planetary movements. He would feel how the after-images of these planetary movements stream through his breathing and circulatory system. As paradoxical as it sounds to ordinary consciousness, he could say: Through my veins streams the power of the Sun, intensified by the force of Mars, permeated by the substantial force of Jupiter, etc. Man would be able to say that he was feeling an after-effect in his own being of the planetary movements. And if he could experience his complete ego being during waking consciousness, he would also feel how the spiritual essence of the fixed stars in the sky permeates his own self.

All this is suppressed during ordinary waking consciousness. Man experiences nothing in waking consciousness of the ether body's activity, which, after all, comprises the actual foundation that underlies the course of his life. He knows nothing of the impulses that come from the movements of the planets and live as stimuli in his breathing, and pulse through his blood circulation. Nothing comes to experience in ordinary waking consciousness of the many activities of the astral organization. He also experiences nothing of what is expressed in the constellations of the fixed stars and is reproduced in the eternal core of his ego being, and which, if he could experience it, would lead him to say, "I am permeated by God." This too does not come into awareness in ordinary consciousness because the activities that are carried out in the everyday condition of wakefulness by the etheric and astral bodies and the ego relate to the physical organization in the same manner in which man clothes himself with it anew each morning. Although unaware of them, he actively permeates his physical organism with the forces that he has gathered during sleep out of the starry world and has acquired from the planetary movements. Because man actively penetrates his physical body, because his three soul elements — etheric and astral organizations and the ego being — affect the physical organism with their activity from the moment of waking up until the moment of falling asleep, the bodily organization is worked upon in a specific way. For the purely physical activity which then arises in the body itself causes and enables the whole soul life to express itself in concepts, in thoughts that are reflected images thrown by the physical body back into the soul.

Man has no awareness of the vitality that courses through him, he is not conscious of the planetary movements and the world of the fixed stars, because all the activity of his inner being is reflected during waking life onto the physical body. Through its senses, the physical body carries the effects of the outer world into the physical inner being; the phenomena of light stream in through the eyes and through the ear, the world of sounds; the realities of heat and cold enter through the sense of warmth. By means of the activity put forth by the soul all this is reflected as thoughts in the physical organism, and the soul experiences these reflected thoughts in its clear, ordinary consciousness.

These are the facts surrounding the soul's experience in ordinary wakefulness, and this poses the question to us: What does the soul actually do to the physical organism so that thoughts appear as reflections? — But first, let us keep firmly in mind that the physical organism really

prevents the soul from having a consciousness of the cosmic facts, which actually reverberate and produce after-effects in it. We shall next occupy ourselves with the details of how the waking consciousness unfolds.

Let us examine to begin with what it is that this triad — the etheric and astral bodies and the ego being — produces as it works in the physical head organization of man. It turns out that the activity that is exercised on the human head organization by this triad has a degenerative effect. If the human etheric body alone were to penetrate the physical organization, a continuous revitalizing activity would be present in the physical head system. In a manner of speaking, the head's activities would be completely filled with life. But in that case no physical consciousness would arise. Physical consciousness only arises because the astral organism intervenes in the head organization. This astral organism is adapted and attuned to man's pre-earthly life, something that we have already become familiar with. The astral organism must consider it its task, if I may put it like this, not to work upon this densely material, physical corporeality but to fill with its own astral activity the body's cosmic spirit form as it did in pre-earthly existence. This astral organism of man is, after all, an after-image of what the soul brought forth out of the secrets of the planetary movements and the constellations of the fixed stars in order to form what I have called earlier the cosmic germ of the physical organization. The activity of the astral organism is therefore not directed to the earthly metamorphosis of the physical body, but toward the cosmic spirit-metamorphosis of the physical organism. This means that while the astral organism is active in the physical organism, it continually wants to spiritualize the physical insofar as the brain or head organization is concerned. Indeed, our astral organism works constantly to transform our head organization into something spiritual. An actual, outwardly visible transformation is not achieved, only the tendency toward transformation is always there.

This tendency, then, is present continually. Degenerative forces are constantly added by the head organization of the astral body to the regenerative forces of the human head organization that would otherwise produce fresh, sparkling, but unconscious life in the human head. To the extent that it is head organization, these degenerative forces try to destroy the physical organism, making it feasible for a spirit organization to shine forth from it, for that is what the astral organism is accustomed to from pre-earthly life. The physical head configuration, however, offers resistance, it cannot be broken down. This resistance is expressed in the fact that each time sleep must intervene at the moment when the physical

configuration of the head would otherwise disintegrate due to the astral body's activity. Then, in sleep, the forces of the etheric body alone are active once again in the head.

The alternating states of waking and sleeping may also be characterized by saying that during the waking state the astral forces continually expose the human head organization to death. The instant their destructive activity is on the verge of changing from a latent to an active state, if I may put it that way, sleep intervenes. The imaginative consciousness of modern initiation knowledge can observe these facts in the appearance of man's etheric body during the periods of waking and sleeping.

In regard to the head organization, the etheric body, which permeates the physical body as spiritual activity, becomes increasingly undifferentiated during the waking hours. In a man who is awake you find an etheric organism that is markedly differentiated inwardly and possesses complicated forms in those parts of the physical body where the lungs, the liver, the stomach, and limbs are located. The etheric organism has an abundance of shapes in these areas during waking hours. By contrast, the longer wakefulness lasts, the more undifferentiated the ether body in the head organization becomes. Finally, it turns into something comparable to a uniform cloud in the head, for the characteristic regenerative forces that are otherwise present in this etheric organism lose their impact as the degenerative forces of the astral organism in the waking state exercise their deadening effect upon the head system.

It is quite different during the state of sleep. You see with imaginative consciousness how this element of differentiation, of manifoldness of the etheric organism penetrates the etheric head system. In sleep, the head's etheric organization acquires the same kind of forms as possessed by the rest of the etheric organism during the waking state. In sleep, the life forces, the formative forces of the etheric body wake up in the head. Then, the head becomes an unconscious but most alive organization.

So you can see that in earth existence, due to waking consciousness, man bears potential death continually in his head organization. The tendency to die is present in the head all the time. The astral organism wants to transform the head system continually into spirit. It wants to make the head into an organ of planetary motion, into an image of the starry constellations. The astral organization is an ever-present destroyer of the physical head configuration.

If present-day science knew about these facts, it would find it utterly impossible to succumb to materialism. For what is it that those people say who want to interpret the whole human organization in a materialistic way? They say that the organic processes of life take place in the head just as they do in the liver or in the stomach, only in the brain they are expressed as thoughts, as soul activity. Compared to the facts, however, this is sheer nonsense. We do not think and experience the soul in ordinary consciousness due to constructive life processes that go on in the head, but because our nervous system is continually on the verge of being destroyed as a result of the presence of death in us. To be awake in the life of soul in ordinary consciousness signifies that organic processes are not developed but rather made to die down. They must first die down within themselves and make room for the soul, if they are to unfold in ordinary consciousness. If this were correctly understood, people would have to say that quite certainly soul life cannot originate from organic processes, because these processes have to come first to the point of dying down. They must first withdraw from the head organization if the soul is to be active there.

These are the true facts in regard to the way man's soul and his physical body function together. This also shows how, through being born, man at once bears within his head system the predisposition for death. Through supersensible knowledge we learn to understand that death has the tendency to occur continually in us and is constantly kept in check only by sleep. The once-in-a-lifetime event of dying, death in the physical sense, is indeed only a summing up, a more pronounced process in comparison to the continuous, if I may say so, atomistically minute death processes that take place all the time in waking consciousness. As long as we possess a physical organism, it defends itself against the destruction wrought by the astral organism. This is how matters stand with the head organization.

Man's astral organization, however, does not merely have this effect in waking life, only a part of it does. Another part finds its way into earthly life more in the form in which it is active in pre-earthly existence. This part of man's astral body is not active in the head organization but in everything that constitutes the rhythmic system, that is to say, those organs of the physical body in which breathing, blood circulation and the other rhythmic processes take place. Although this part of the astral body, to which I refer now, lives in man's rhythmic system, it does not unite itself as closely with the rhythmic system as does the other part that is active in the head. That part takes hold of the head organization so strongly that it continually makes it incline toward death by breaking it up, whereas the part of the

astral body that enters the human rhythmic system permeates this organization. It lives in the breathing and in the blood circulation, but because it does not take hold of this organization in such an intense manner, it leaves it in some respects undisturbed. It does not lay hold of this system for the purpose of destroying it. But for this reason, no thought life comes into being through this union of the astral organization of man and the rhythmic system. The expressions of the soul life are reflected in the physical head organism which has the constant tendency to die. This produces fully conscious thinking. On the other hand, what is continually taking place in the streaming together of the astral and the rhythmic organizations is not reflected in the same manner as in the life of thoughts so that a clear consciousness could result. It is expressed in the more vague form of soul life: man's emotional life, his feelings. Emotions arise, because, in waking life, the astral organism pulses through the breathing and blood circulation but does not destroy these processes and does not immerse itself so deeply into them. Instead, through its interplay with the rhythmic system, man's life of feeling is roused.

While an element of what the human being has experienced in his pre-earthly, cosmic sojourn lives in the rhythmic-organic system, it does not reach clear consciousness. This has a quite definite consequence. Through this interplay between the astral and the physical-rhythmic organisms which I have described, something continually takes place below in the unconscious that enters ordinary daytime consciousness only as a weak reflection. Let us study this in detail. Say that a person carries out his activities, his deeds in physical life. These actions of his do not express themselves in him as do mere natural phenomena. Out of a certain impulse that arises from his subconscious, he feels impelled to judge whether these activities are moral or immoral, valuable or worthless, wise or unwise. Moral evaluation, moral judgement joins in with the otherwise amoral, not anti-moral life of thinking.

Now, what is it that flashes up from the depth of soul experience and tells us: This action is good, that one is bad, this deed is wise, that one is foolish? It is a soul activity which has remained as it was in pre-earthly existence, which penetrates man's rhythmic organism of breathing and blood circulation but cannot fully stream up into the life of thoughts. It only colors it. This way, we also have reflections of this inner experience in our conscious life of thoughts, which are valuable for the activities we carry on in the physical world. We do not bear within us only what we express in our actions as the conscious judgement of thinking. No, in the rhythmic system of man there lives and pulses an astral-spiritual element that is

similar in form to what it was already in pre-earthly life and which — distinctly for itself but indistinctly for ordinary consciousness — says Yes or No to his actions. Here, within us, lives a judge who judges the worthiness of our soul, and this soul-judge is as real as is our soul that lives as thinking-soul within our head organization.

In ancient times of humanity's evolution, those who wanted to attain higher perception in the old manner sought, therefore, to bring the rhythmic system into consciousness, the breathing and also the blood circulation. Now observe what resulted from their efforts to use an older method of entering into the spiritual world, a method no longer to be employed today. It turned out that those people were able to discern their own human value from what the cosmos inscribed into their breathing, considering it good or bad, wise or foolish. In the old Indian Yogi, judgement as to what was morally natural and naturally moral in him was carried up into the brain by the breath from the rhythmic system. During his Yoga perception, he made his brain into a breathing organ for a while and experienced what the cosmos said about his activity.

This judgement by the cosmos concerning our deeds is very real in the astral human organization. When man's physical body is laid aside at death, the obstacle is removed which prevents what lives in man's breathing and blood circulation from entering his consciousness. The physical organism is like a non-transparent cover for what takes place in the astral organism in the way that I have just described. Therefore, the astral experiences that live in the breathing and blood circulation between birth and death continue to live on in man's being beyond death. We shall comprehend how this works when, directly after the translation of this part, I shall describe what the human soul undergoes when it actually passes through the portal of death.

When, at death, man's physical organism falls away from the human entity and disintegrates, man remains at the outset in the etheric and astral organisms and his ego being. Inasmuch as the physical organism is no longer an obstacle to the soul's unfolding into the cosmic element and ceases to hold the soul back in its own sphere, the possibility of cosmic consciousness arises at once for the human soul. The human soul is now clothed in the etheric organism that is no longer bound to a physical body. While this etheric organism represents the course of man's life on the one hand, it is at the same time the vehicle for the continuous in-streaming of cosmic forces of life. As the soul gradually passes through death along with the ether body, it experiences the cosmic world-ether in the etheric

organism. The activities that take place in this world-ether now stream into the etheric organism, for only the physical body had prevented this earlier. Now this obstacle is gone. In its inner activities, the etheric organism is not as separated from the outer cosmic events and realities as is the physical organism. The occurrences outside in the cosmic world-ether stream actively into man's etheric organism, and what occurs in the human etheric organism pulsates out into the world-ether. After death, man not only lives directly in his own etheric organism, but, inasmuch as he has liberated it from the physical organization he finds his way into the cosmic-etheric element, which continually streams in and out of him.

Since the human soul is a unity, however, man's astral and ego being are drawn along into the cosmic-etheric realm. Increasingly, cosmic-etheric awareness lights up in the human soul as its own inner being. But in comparison to this great, mighty cosmic consciousness, man's own ether body represents only a very small etheric element; and the cosmic ether actually lives within this minute etheric element. For this reason, man's own etheric experiences, which were held together again and again by his physical organization, no longer have any significance in the great cosmic ocean of ether with its cosmic consciousness. This, however, means nothing less than the fact that man's etheric organism dissolves quite soon after death. Then, along with the cosmic consciousness that he has attained, man retains his astral organization and his ego being.

In this astral organism, however, the after-effects are contained of what it experienced on earth while within the physical body. I have characterized how a part of the astral organism retains its cosmic nature, as it were, since it is only loosely connected with the breathing and circulatory rhythms. Now that the physical organs of breathing and circulation are cast off, man's inner nature, which developed along with the physical processes of breathing and circulation during earthly life, lives on with its content of moral qualities and evaluation. Permeated by cosmic consciousness, this lives on and is experienced after death. The element that found its reflection during earth life in physical breathing and the blood circulation comes to expression in a cosmic rhythm after death. A rhythm is present again, but it is one in which man feels that the moral quality-valuation holds sway which he brought along from earthly life. He experiences his astral content as moral qualities; how they came to be good or bad, wise or foolish during life on earth. This is a kind of inner pulse beat.

The cosmic process that is not yet permeated by the moral element but represents a purely cosmic element streams continually into this inner pulse-beat from outside. It represents an amoral, not an anti-moral process that is reflected on earth in the processes of nature. We do not distinguish between "good" or "bad" in nature, everything proceeds according to neutral natural laws. All that goes on in nature is a reflection of a cosmic process, and that cosmic process pulses rhythmically into the after-effect of the rhythmic-moral valuation. After death, man thus experiences himself as existing in a cosmic rhythm, he inhales the cosmos in its moral innocence and exhales into the cosmos the moral judgements he has accumulated. A cosmic rhythm has taken the place of the physical rhythm, and the human soul experiences in this cosmic rhythm how a moral element arises in the cosmos — which is designed to reflect itself amorally in outer nature — an element which, because of human experiences on earth, is carried out through the gate of death into this cosmos. The moral evaluations of its deeds that the human soul bears through the portal of death into the cosmos is incorporated into the cosmic amorality. The moral results of man's life that have been carried through death are now imbedded into the depths of the cosmos. By means of his consciousness that is no longer impeded by anything, man becomes a witness of how a moral element develops for a future world in the depths of the amoral cosmos. Our world is morally neutral inasmuch as nature is a reflection of the cosmos. A future world will arise out of ours whose nature in its reflection (of the cosmos) will not be morally neutral; instead, everything moral will be natural and everything natural will be moral. The seed for this is carried by man into the cosmos through his moral deeds. During this experience, the human soul consciously faces the great question: As my existence continues, do the moral qualities that I have acquired make me worthy to take part in the future cosmos that no longer will have a merely neutral image in nature but a moral one?

This experience of the soul after death in the cosmic rhythm, described above as sensations and feelings — we can use these terms even though they do not quite represent the supersensible experience — is proof of the impact of morality upon the physical world. This lends a nuance of its own to the soul's experiences for a certain length of time following death. I once described these experiences, which are now pictured from another side, in my book, *Theosophy*, and there I called them the "soul world."

But if, after death, man had to remain only within these experiences, he could not reach the point where he could properly prepare the spiritual archetype of his future physical organism that I have described earlier, and

which he must bear within him in a new earth life. It could not be developed in a proper, healthy way out of a soul life filled with moral imperfections from the preceding earth life. Consequently, at a certain point after death, the soul must enter a world where it lives only in the purified cosmos, where the experiences of the cosmic rhythm that I have describe abate. This is because all moral valuation of the soul's activities affects this cosmic rhythm, and this would only produce a decadent spiritual archetype for the future physical organism. A healthy physical body can only be created when the soul is allowed to enter a world where it is no longer influenced by the after-effects of the earthly soul experiences of its past incarnation, where, instead, the nonhuman spiritual impulses of the cosmos are active, as I have pictured it. These experiences that have to be undergone by the human soul in the purified cosmos of the spirit were also characterized by me in my book, *Theosophy*, from another side than is done here. There I have called them "spirit land." Man has to enter this spirit land of the soul, for it is only then that he will be able to collaborate in the universal, all-embracing creation of the spiritual organism that in future time metamorphoses into the physical organism. Man must be relieved for a while of the imperfections stemming from an earlier life, otherwise he would have to reincarnate in a misshapen physical organism in his next earth-life.

We thus arrive through inner perception at a description of what man experiences by means of his soul forces in the spiritual cosmos after death. Along with his astral body, he naturally also carries into the cosmic spirit world what lives in his ego being. This ego being, however, must be worked on in still another way. That can be the subject of tomorrow's lecture. Today, I will have to describe in the last portion of my lecture how the form assumed by man after death relates to Christian evolution and the Mystery of Golgotha.

You will understand that a true cosmology can only come into being when we include in it what inspiration can know concerning the incorporation of such a moral, cosmic germ, as I have described. Any cosmology would remain incomplete if it did not know that the present cosmos, which finds a neutral, amoral reflection in physical nature, will through the lives of men become a cosmos one day in which the natural is at the same time moral, and the moral is natural. For this reason, a true cosmology can only arise when ordinary knowledge is enriched by inspiration, just as a true philosophy can only receive a living content when it includes the results of imagination, as I brought out yesterday. Such a cosmology, however, also requires Christianity.

In the age that preceded the Mystery of Golgotha there were initiates who employed methods other than those that must be used in initiation of the present day. Those ancient initiates, who lived prior to this Mystery of Golgotha and who knew what happens in the spiritual worlds that man encounters after death, were already able to say to their followers: "After death, you enter a soul world in which you have to experience the consequences of your moral qualities and qualities similar to them. But you cannot enter the spirit land with the same soul forces that unfolded in the soul world, for even if you were to enter there the after-effect, present in your consciousness, of the moral evaluation present in the astral organism would dull and extinguish your ego consciousness, the consciousness of your self that you would otherwise attain in spirit land after death."

As I said, ego consciousness has developed here in the physical world on the basis of the physical organism. But precisely for the cultivation of man's spirit germ, an ego consciousness had to be present for the sojourn in spirit land even in ancient times of human evolution.

"Man cannot possess this ego consciousness by means of his own forces," said the old initiates to those of their followers who wanted to listen. "He can only have it, if, at a certain moment after he has passed through the soul world, the lofty Spiritual Being, Whose physical reflection is the physical sun, comes and stands beside him, and leads him from the soul world into the spirit land, being his Guide from then on. As man here in the physical world experiences his best physical forces under the influence of the physical sun," thus spoke the initiates of old, "so he must be taken by the hand, pictorially speaking, when he passes out of the soul world into spirit land in order to receive his best forces from the impulses of that Sun Being, whose physical reflection here is the physical sun. " In this way, the ancient initiates presented the spiritual Sun Being as the lofty Companion of the human soul through spirit land.

The initiates, who lived at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha and three to four centuries later, said to those who wished to be their followers and wanted to hear what they said: Because of the direction taken by the physical development of man's organization, the inner human being, after his passage through the soul world, is so obsessed by what he has perceived of the moral consequences that if he were to remain dependent upon his own powers, his consciousness would darken there and he would not be able to receive the influence of that Sun Being. For this reason, the

Sun Being Itself descended to earth, assumed a human nature in the body of Jesus of Nazareth, and accomplished the deed of the Mystery of Golgotha.

If man, in addition to what he can attain here on earth by means of his sense perception and the development of his ego consciousness, can also become aware of the Christ Being in his feelings, if he acquires an insight into the Mystery of Golgotha in his feelings — which are tied to the astral body — then, the after-effect of the relationship between earth events and Christ and the Mystery of Golgotha also exercises its effect upon the astral being of man which lives on after death in the manner that I have described. By means of this after-effect, man's consciousness, which would otherwise remain cloudy and dark, is given strength when he passes from the soul world into spirit land after death. It is made capable of perception in the spiritual world, which in turn enables the soul to prepare the spiritual archetype of the next physical organization between death and a new birth.

Therefore, the initiates, who were contemporaries of the Mystery of Golgotha, or lived a few centuries afterwards, said to their followers: Although man has developed in such a way that he does not carry the forces through death that can lead him from the soul world into the spirit land, Christ did descend to the earth and accomplished the Deed of Golgotha. Through the effects of this Deed of Golgotha on the human soul, the forces of the soul can be strengthened in such a manner that after death, in the transition from the soul world into the spirit land, man has such rich experiences in the cosmic world that out of its impulses he is able to cooperate in working out the physical organism for his next earthly life. Through the Deed of Christ, the human soul is purified during the transition from the soul world into the spirit land. Thus spoke the initiated contemporaries of the Mystery of Golgotha, as had the initiates of antiquity: Through the guidance of the sublime Sun Being, the human soul is purified during its transition from the soul world into the spirit land.

From this you see that what has to be summed up as the mystery of death is connected with the Christian evolution of earthly humanity. After the fourth century, however, as I have set forth already, the initiation knowledge that could have spoken to men who wished to become its followers in the way mentioned above faded away. Now, however, the time has come when a new initiation science is once again able to reveal the connection between men and Christ Jesus. This new initiation science must again say: Whosoever accepts the secret of the Mystery of Golgotha into

his life of feelings during earthly life thereby so strengthens and invigorates his inner soul being in the transition from the soul world to the spirit land that it can become strong enough to avoid forming the kind of physical organization it would form if there were no such impulse from a renewed Christianity. For, without this impulse, physical organizations would inevitably arise in future earth evolution that would be pathological. Through a renewed Christianity, we can unite ourselves with the impulse that makes possible physical organizations that will be healthy and vigorous throughout the rest of earth existence.

Thus, there is a profound connection between man's development after death and the Christ Being. In a true cosmology, Christ stands as a World Power, a Cosmic Force. His Power can be perceived in man's transition after death from the soul world to spirit land.

In the next lecture we will consider how the element that lives in the human soul and is expressed in impulses of the will in ordinary consciousness passes through death. We shall see how between death and rebirth it can become the germinal basis for certain forces that will only come to expression in the next life, and how man's destiny — formerly called karma — continues from one earth life to another. Tomorrow's lecture will add a contemplation of the sphere of the human will to today's considerations of the spheres of human thinking and feeling. That will once again show how the significant relationship between man and the Christ Being, the Mystery of Golgotha and the whole of Christian evolution, must be developed in regard to the human will. Today we have placed Christ into cosmological evolution, into true cosmological insight; it will be our task in tomorrow's lecture to place Christ into a renewed Christian perception of religion.



10

The Action of the Will beyond Death

15 September 1922, Dornach

The human soul's experiences in ordinary consciousness during its existence on earth come to expression in thinking, feeling and willing. Their actual background, however, must be sought in what I have described here as man's astral organism and ego being. I have shown how the part of the soul that does the thinking relates in a specific way to the head organization; how the part of the soul that produces the feelings has a somewhat different connection to the rhythmic system, to the breathing, the circulation and other rhythmic processes. In a much looser way, the will nature of the soul is connected with the physical and etheric organisms.

When we examine how the nature of the thinking-soul is connected with the head system, we find that it is devoted entirely to it, it is transformed, as it were, into the head organization. The head organization forms a physical and etheric replica of the part of the soul involved in thinking: therefore, when man really thinks in waking everyday life, he cannot actually observe the process of thinking in himself but must seek it in its replica in the physical and etheric processes of the brain and the rest of the nervous system. This is why the anatomy and physiology of the brain are the real domain for the physical part of a science of the soul, because the replicas of what goes on in thinking can really be observed in the structure of the brain, and thereby also in its processes.

The part of the soul expressed in feeling is not devoted in the same way to the physical and etheric organisms, neither has it become a part of them. We can say of it that at times it is devoted entirely to the breathing and the blood circulation, streaming into them so that it becomes as if invisible to imaginative and inspired vision; we focus on it and see that it slips into the breathing and circulatory processes. At times, the feeling-soul tears itself away from these processes, it becomes independent and exhibits within itself a formative activity of its own. Thus, the feeling-soul slips, so to speak, into the circulatory system and then withdraws, slips in again, and so on.

The part of the soul that is the basis for the human will behaves quite differently. It is neither devoted continually to the physical and etheric organisms, nor does it become involved in an alternation of permeating the two organisms and withdrawing from them; rather, by its own powers, it holds itself aloof from the physical and etheric parts of man's organism. It has an independent existence of its own by means of its own capacities. By virtue of these forces, it actually remains within the soul and spirit realm, and would stay there if nothing else intervened. We can therefore say that in this willing-soul, the soul's nature always remains soul-spiritual, even during life on earth. When, through intuition, you receive insight into the actual reality that exists behind the willing-soul, you are able to study the lasting soul-spiritual being of man in this will element. There is, nevertheless, a kind of surrendering of the willing-soul to the physical organism, an out-pouring into it, but it is neither continuous as is the case with the thinking-soul, nor is it a rhythmical alternation as with the feeling-soul. Instead, it is like this: When, for example, our thinking-soul takes hold of a thought by means of the head organization, which, because of its content, is in itself an impulse for willing something, then, the process that takes place in mere contemplation does not occur. Only the head organization is involved when a person ponders the affairs of the world without arriving at an act of the will. Through the thinking activity, the head organization is worn down, or is at least brought toward a tendency to a breakdown, to dissolution and death, as I described yesterday. But if we formulate the thought, "I will this or that," then the activity that belongs to the thinking-soul spreads out from the head organization into the metabolic and limb organism. When a man has a thought that represents an intention of the will, intuition perceives how an astral activity pulses into some part of the metabolic or even the limb system. Then, through such a thought that arouses the will, a degenerative process takes place not only in the head system but also the metabolic organs and the limbs. Destructive processes arise through such thoughts. These destructive processes in turn cause the willing-soul that underlies the human will as reality to pour into the metabolic or limb system and to restore a balance by rebuilding what has been worn down by the thought.

If I want to illustrate this clearly, this is what happens: I have the thought: I will lift my arm. This thought then shoots out of the head organization into the arm, there it induces a degenerative process of destruction. It can be called a form of combustion. Something in the configuration of my arm is destroyed. The part of the astral organism that corresponds to the willing-soul follows in the wake of the degenerative

process, enters the arm and repairs the damage. The lifting of my arm takes place during this regeneration, — what was burned up is restored and the actual act of the will occurs during this restoration.

Now the true ego being is contained in that part of the astral organism that underlies the soul's will impulses; so, whenever the will is stirred into action, the ego is aroused. When we observe how man unfolds his will, we gain insight into how the human astral organism and the ego being stream into the physical and etheric bodies in response to a certain stimulus. This also happens when an expression of the will occurs that does not require that I set my limbs in motion, but that is perhaps a supplementary impulse or maybe a fairly vivid wish. There, something similar also takes place, only much more inward parts of the human organism are permeated by the actual will nature of the soul.

You can see that the unfolding of the will can be studied in all its details, but in order to do so you require a knowledge of man's actual soul and spirit being. Without this insight, you cannot study the willing-soul, nor arrive at the ego being, for the latter expresses itself only in a weak replica in thinking, it appears on as an impulse in feeling, and has its true reality in earthly life only in the will. Aside from this unfolding of the will that follows a certain inducement, an element that corresponds to the human will as a reality is the continuous desire in the whole human organization for the physical body. Subconsciously, in the will nature of the soul, man longs, as it were, to be enclothed in the metabolic and limb systems of his body. If we go further into this part of the human soul, we see through this will nature into depths, into substrata of the human soul life, into processes of the soul that are completely hidden from ordinary consciousness.

I have already shown that ordinary consciousness remains completely unaware of the processes of degeneration and regeneration which take place in the human body. But aside from these activities that the human soul unfolds and that come into consideration in regard to the ordinary impulses of the will, there exist other processes, subconscious processes in man's being which are very real, but do not project their effects up into ordinary consciousness at all during earthly life. They are described below.

We saw yesterday how a continuous evaluation of the moral and moral-spiritual nature of man takes place in the feeling-soul. The process that only lights up as a weak reflection in consciousness as stirrings of conscience, as evaluations of one's own actions, is a very significant, incisive activity in the subconscious sphere. Everything that a person does,

he also evaluates in his subconscious soul organization; on this level, it only comes to an assessment. But something additional and quite different occurs in the part of the soul that corresponds to the will. In the course of earthly life, we see how the astral body and ego, which are linked to this will nature, actually build up an inner entity of man — it is only dully alive — by means of the astral and ego forces in the cosmos. Indeed, it is like this: By inwardly evaluating our own capabilities, we bring to birth an astral being that exists within us and grows increasingly larger. This being contains these evaluations as facts, whereas the feeling-soul only causes the evaluations to arise, as it were, like a thought process, or — after it has happened — like a subconscious memory-thought. After the deed has been done, something additional arises in the willing-soul. The judgement, "I have perpetrated an evil deed," turns into a being in us. With this being, we possess something within us that is the actualized evaluation of man's deeds.

Now, as you have just seen from this description, something lasting is contained in this will nature of the soul, something that was also present before man descended from the soul-spiritual world into a physical-etheric organism. In this spirit-part of the soul, this willing-soul, the after-effect of the soul-spiritual existence is at work to build up a human organism once again, for that was its activity in pre-earthly life. It is hindered now only by the presence of the physical organism; its activity cannot unfold since it bumps against all the protrusions and walls, so to speak, of the physical organization, but the tendency remains. Now, the reality that I have just described, the being that represents the actualized evaluation of the moral and moral-spiritual nature of man, unites with this tendency. Thus, we bear within us an entity in which flow together the impulses to form a new organism and the realized moral evaluation. We bear this being through the portal of death when our earthly life has come to an end.

From my descriptions you have seen that regenerative and degenerative forces are constantly present in the human organism, forces that cause dying and revitalizing, forces that dampen and arouse life. We find numbing forces in the thinking-soul, revitalizing ones in the willing-soul. This battle between death and life accompanies us throughout our sojourn on earth. When we bring it to a close we carry the unconsciously developed result of our moral qualities into the spiritual world.

You have seen from the descriptions that I gave in the past few days that in the moment when man passes through the gate of death his consciousness, until now only an earthly one, expands into a cosmic

consciousness. Just as man becomes accustomed on earth to live in a physical organization and feels himself enclosed within the skin of his body, he finds his way after death into the expanses of the cosmos. His former surroundings now become his inner content. His consciousness becomes a cosmic consciousness. The question then arises: What happens to the evaluation of the moral qualities of man, when, having passed through the portal of death, the human being receives this cosmic consciousness and has the desire to form a new physical and etheric organism? The answer to this will be given in the second part of today's considerations.

Before I can answer the question that I have just posed, I have to characterize several points concerning the course of man's earthly life in the light of the above described conditions. You have seen that continuous degeneration and regeneration go on in the human organism. This destruction and revitalization take place throughout life between birth and death. Inasmuch as we are thinking soul beings we must deteriorate, as beings of will we must restore what has been worn down. As feeling beings, we bring about an interplay between degeneration and regeneration. Therefore, the soul elements represented inwardly as thinking, feeling and willing are expressed as processes of destruction, recreation and an interplay between the two. These processes in the human organization, which are extremely complicated, are different for each period of life. They come to expression in a child in one way, in another way in an adult. It is especially important for anyone who raises and teaches children to see by means of a spiritual knowledge of man into this continuous interplay of degenerative and regenerative processes of man. It is important to be aware of this in-streaming of constructive processes into the destructive ones, of destructive ones into the constructive ones; to see how they constantly intermingle in certain parts of the human organization and to discern their effects on it. For you can only educate and teach correctly when you can discern how these forces work in a child and what effect can be brought to bear on them through upbringing and education.

I shall cite just one example of this. There is a big difference between making a child memorize only so much as is good for it, or making it memorize too much so that its memory is over-burdened. Because of the opinion prevailing today concerning the interplay of constructive and destructive processes, one could easily believe that they exert an influence only on the soul organism of the young person. That is not the case. When we make a child memorize too much, it forms thoughts that pertain to memory in an irregular fashion. They find their way into the head system.

There, they cause irregularities by continuing on into thoughts of the will, even reaching into the metabolic and limb organism. We can discover that if we have raised and educated a child wrongly in regard to its memory, this error manifests itself, perhaps as late as the age of thirty, forty, or forty-five, in poor digestion and metabolic disturbances.

I only mention this as an example that is close at hand. These matters are most complicated. It is a fact that out of a spiritual insight into man a true teacher can estimate and survey the extent of what he undertakes with a child in respect to both body and soul. Genuine, true pedagogy can therefore only be established on the basis of a knowledge of man that views the physical corporeality and the soul and spirit, and also comprehends the interplay between these three members of man's total being. Such a pedagogy has been created within our anthroposophical movement. It becomes a reality in the Waldorf School, also in certain attempts at continuing education here at Dornach. But it must be stated once and for all that the mere sense-derived science that is generally accepted today can never establish a true pedagogy. This becomes possible only through an anthroposophical deepening of scientific life. Some of the details of what has now been touched upon will be further elaborated upon in the lectures tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. Steiner gave eight lectures on the 16th and 17th of September 1922. They are currently unavailable in English, see table at the end of this lecture.

Furthermore, clairvoyant sight beholds a certain interplay of destructive and constructive activities, an intermingling in one way or another of the two in the whole human body and in the individual organs depending on the state of a man's health. We can only learn to understand illnesses and their various symptoms by tracing the manner in which degenerative processes gain the upper hand over the whole organism, over one organ or a group of organs, causing the organism to become unyielding and hard; or how regenerative processes gain control, leading to unrestrained life and growth. We also learn to recognize how the destructive processes penetrate the constructive ones in erratic ways and permeate them with undigested products of the metabolism. In short, just as it is important for the teacher to be able to judge the normal course of these processes in a child, so it is important for one dealing with the sick to have insight into the abnormal processes of degeneration and regeneration.

Now, if we gain insight into the various kingdoms of nature around us in the physical world — the mineral, plant, and in part the animal kingdom — we find everything permeated by hidden soul-spiritual elements. In a

particular kind of plant, for example, we find regenerative forces, which, when prepared in a certain way and introduced into the human organism, are effective against such destructive, pathologically abnormal processes. In short, we find medications for the abnormal processes in outer nature. The connection between medicines and an illness can only be perceived by looking into man's organism in the way just characterized. In everything that can be undertaken in some way for an ailing organism — be it the application of external medications, or that the ailing organism is treated in a manner one does not treat the healthy organism, or that supplements are found for what the body itself cannot do — whether it is such correctly employed measures or what I have put forward as Curative Eurythmy, one always seeks by such means to bring into balance again in the organism the rampant processes of regeneration or the destructive processes that exceed the norm.

You see that medicine that is based merely on a sense-oriented science must be supplemented and expanded by what can result from spiritual insight, from a knowledge of the total human being. Since, in physiology and anatomy, physical science is able to judge only the outer aspects of man's organization, it is able to find the relationship of a medication to an illness only through external experimentation. Inspiration, imagination and intuition make it possible to view simultaneously the inner connection of a medication or a healing process with the nature of the sickness. In place of a merely experimental, empirical therapy, it is possible to attain to a rational therapy that has insight into the human being and the healing processes. I can only refer to this in passing today, but from this you can see that a starting point for an extension of pathology as well as therapy along the lines described above is contained in what is being established as anthroposophical knowledge. These matters have already assumed practical form within our movement. We do not practice in a spirit of medical dilettantism in our therapeutic institutes in Stuttgart and here in Arlesheim. Present-day medicine is fully acknowledged and applied, but our methods of treatment are permeated by what spiritual perception and a spiritual point of view can add to them.

Critics who rely merely on physical science today still claim that what this spiritual science, working out of anthroposophy, has to say about illness and processes of healing is childish. This is quite understandable, coming from people who choose to base their ideas and their work on physical science alone. But I must say that when such people call our methods "childish," they have no idea of the true facts. Indeed, what physical science produces as anatomy, pathology and therapy is only a substructure

for what results for medicine from spiritual observation. I would like to say — not in a derogatory sense, only in reference to certain critics — that if anything is childlike in some respects it is medicine that tries to rely only on physical phenomena. I do not deride what is childlike with this remark, I only want to point out how it is supplemented by what arises out of a spiritual perception regarding man's total being. If you consider all this, you will realize how one must go into details if insight is to be attained into the activities of man's etheric, astral and ego organisms during physical life.

Now, at death, man lays aside his physical organism; it is lost to him. A condition then commences in which man is no longer clothed in a physical body, but in which his ego being and astral organism are still ensheathed in the etheric organism. I have already outlined that what constitutes man's etheric organism is not strictly separated by clear-cut boundaries from the general organization of the etheric cosmos. Streams from this etheric cosmos flow continually in and out of the human etheric organism. This is why, in the moment when man passes through the gate of death, but still carries his etheric organism within him, his consciousness expands into the etheric expanses yet he still feels that the etheric body which has just been drawn out of the physical corporeality is his own. During this state, man is wholly devoted to the etheric experiences of the cosmos, which, for his consciousness, contract now and then into the mere etheric experience of his own organism. After having passed through death, man is, as it were, overpowered by what this cosmic consciousness represents for him. As yet, there arises no conscious contemplation for what I have described as an entity which develops in us and represents the actualized valuations of man's moral qualities. This moral-spiritual being, which has incorporated itself in the astral body, is carried by us through death, but we do not perceive much of it in the very first period after death. Instead, passing in and out of the cosmic element, we are absorbed in beholding the course of our life just completed on earth, for that is the content of the etheric body. For a while, we look back on this earthly life that we have just completed. The course of our life appears directly after death in its inner nature in the same way that it represents itself to imaginative consciousness, as I described it already during the past several days. This condition, however, lasts only a few days, about as long as a person's daytime experiences stimulate the shaping of dreams, which is something that varies with each individual.

As to the form that dreams take, they always correspond directly to the experiences of the day before or the second or third one before that. Just as we dream about something from the day just past, which is linked, however, in an association of thoughts with other, earlier experiences of ours, in the same manner these other experiences also arise in a dream. We dream, for example, about having spoken to someone yesterday about one thing or another; this experience of the past day still enters directly into the life of dreams. We perhaps talked to him in an animated way about someone we met maybe ten years ago and have not seen since. Because this experience has woven itself into the conversation, we dream up all kinds of things about that person. Dreams are not studied correctly. If they were one would recognize these experiences of dream-life for what they are. Now dreaming does vary with different people. One person dreams only about what happened yesterday, another dreams about what he experienced the day before, still another dreams about what happened three or four days earlier. Insofar as this possibility exists for each individual person, this determines the length of the condition after death that a man still remains in the etheric body. I could also characterize it differently and say: The length of this time coincides with the length of time that a man does not require sleep, the time lasting through as many days and nights as he can remain awake without falling asleep. One person falls asleep when he goes only one night without sleeping. Another can stand to be awake for two, three or four nights. Just as long does the experience last during which the human being still remains in his ether body after death.

Then, however, it comes about that we are increasingly caught up by our consciousness which has lived its way into the cosmic-etheric world. Since our etheric organism is now not strictly separated from the cosmic-etheric world, it flows out into it, so to speak. We feel ourselves to be in this cosmic-etheric world, and when we look back upon our etheric body, it already appears larger to us. This continues until at last we no longer possess the etheric body. Then, clad in our astral organism, we find our way into the cosmos and into our new consciousness. It is then that there emerges in man what I have characterized as a being which represents the actualized valuation of man's moral-spiritual qualities. Man feels himself burdened with this being. His nature is then composed of what flows out of him into the cosmos, and the being to which he must return again and again in his experiences after death, namely the being that actually represents the sum total of his moral qualities.

Now, because, in a manner of speaking, the compensatory forces work continually out of the cosmic consciousness in a very real way, an extraordinarily strong tendency arises to say: You must now confront the wrong, foolish things you have done with the right action! Therefore, in the further course of the life that I have characterized yesterday as the soul world, man finds his way into the rhythm that alternates between his moral-spiritual qualities and the cosmic qualities. In this rhythm, a sum of tendencies develops in him to experience again the possibility of creating compensations for what he finds to be morally inferior, and so on. If, for instance, he has done something that affected another person in one way or another, the tendency develops to make amends for it in an action in the next earth life. In short, the seed of destiny which passes through repeated earth lives is created in this manner. But at the same time, the purely cosmic consciousness grows quite dark and dim because we carry this element within us. During the whole passage through the soul world, the human soul must remain in a dull — at least a duller — state of consciousness, until it becomes necessary for it to enter spirit land and to cast off the being that I have described. Then we can live for a while in the amoral cosmos into which we cannot bring what we have experienced in the soul world as the sum total of our moral or immoral spirit being.

If I wish to describe this transition from the soul experience to the spiritual experience after death, I can present it from the standpoint of human earth life in this way by saying: As long as man passes through the soul world, where he experiences a cosmic rhythm and the moral-spiritual being contained within him from the past earthly life, namely the interacting pulse beat of these two manifest realities, so long does he remain in a kind of affinity, as if spellbound to his last earth life. The being that he has brought with him, which represents his moral-spiritual qualities, has, after all, flowed out of his last earth life. He clings to it with all the inclinations of his soul. He can pass on into the pure experience of the cosmos only after he has freed himself inwardly from these inclinations. Spiritual beings can live together there with the human being in such a way that he gains for himself from their powers the forces that can develop the universal cosmic-spiritual part of a physical human organism for his future incarnation.

This is spoken from the standpoint of human earth experience. But the same relationship can be characterized from the standpoint of the cosmic consciousness and experience. Then one must say: After man has laid aside his etheric body, and while the inclination toward earth life continues to live on in his ego being and astral organism as I have described it, he is

inwardly penetrated by the spiritual moon forces that pervade the cosmos. I already had to mention the moon forces when I characterized the condition of sleep.

Now they confront us again in man's existence after death. These moon forces are the element that brings or wishes to bring man into a certain connection with earth existence. Here, after death, they express themselves by trying to prevent man from leaving earth existence. He has laid aside his physical body, but he is anxious to return again to earth. This happens because the moon forces of the cosmos permeate him. Ordinary earthly thinking has ceased after death, for it is bound to the head organism of the physical body. Pre-earthly man flowed into this head system. Upon laying aside the physical body, everything that was brought about merely in a material way ceases to function. Man is therefore no longer an earth-bound being in a direct sense, though he is indirectly because the moon forces continue to affect him. For a long while after death, they still produce, as it were, a tendency in him to turn back to earth because it was there that he prepared the being now enclosed within him.

After death, however, it is necessary for man to struggle free of the moon forces and to reach beyond them, to become free inwardly from their influences that flow into him and affect him. They always preserve in him a kind of cosmic memory of the rhythmic forces, that is, in inspirations and imaginations they continually confront him with what is happening in the movements of the planets and their relationships to the fixed stars. But they hold man back from experiencing those spiritual beings who have their physical replica in the constellations of the fixed stars. Yet, he now faces the necessity of entering the pure, spiritual world. As long as the moon forces influence him, they prevent him from entering. He is, however, not supposed to view the cosmos he experiences merely from the side turned to him in physical existence; it is his task to view it from the other side. Man actually arrives at this condition if he develops a purely spiritual cosmic consciousness. Then, he reaches a position where he is, so to speak, at the periphery of the cosmos. Just as we stand here at the center and look out everywhere into the cosmos, so, in this spiritual perception, we look from the periphery inward into the cosmos. But now we do not see the physical replicas of the spiritual beings in question, we behold the beings themselves. We do not look into the cosmos from the periphery in a spatial manner. Just as we look out into the cosmos from the focal point of our two eyes here on earth, there, we look in from a

spherical surface. Yet, it is in a way after all a spatial experience. We behold it qualitatively. We look out into the realm of the fixed stars and observe this universe from the outside.

Between death and a new birth, we must become independent of the physical world where we spent our earthly existence. In the period of humanity's development prior to the Mystery of Golgotha, man entered the spirit world in a manner that was quite different from that of the time that followed this event. During the course of human evolution on earth, a tremendous metamorphosis has taken place in man's inner life. The Christ event represents a turning point in the development of earthly humanity. Therefore, in the fourth part of my considerations and as a culmination of this evening, I would still like to describe how this entrance of man's soul-spiritual being into spirit land appears since the beginning of Christian evolution.

Before man enters the actual spiritual world where he engages in a life in common with other human souls who are not incarnated and are in a condition similar to his own — as it happens, he lives together with these souls even earlier — that is to say, before he can enter into a common life with those spiritual beings of the highest rank, whose physical replica is expressed in the starry constellations, he must leave behind in the moon sphere the being that constitutes his moral evaluation. Without it, he must enter the region of the stars where the moon forces no longer prevail. There, through the companionship with spiritual beings of the highest kind, the forces are born in his soul that enable him now really to prepare and work at the spirit germ of the future human physical organization.

Prior to the Mystery of Golgotha, when the old initiates wished to characterize the manner in which this transition into spirit land took place for the humanity of that time, they had to say to those who were willing to listen: "When, after death, you are to pass out of the soul world into the spirit land, you must leave behind you in the moon sphere the destiny-forming part of your good and bad deeds. But the forces of your own human organization are not enough to give you the power to bring about the transition from the moon sphere to that of the stars. Therefore, the Sun Being intercedes for you; He, Whose physical reflection is the physical sun. Just as your outer life proceeds under the influence of the physical sun's light and warmth, so, after death, the lofty Sun Being claims you, sets you free from your burden of destiny and bears you into the sphere of the stars. There, with the help of your Sun Guide, you can work out the spirit germ of your future physical organization. Then, after having worked

sufficiently under the guidance of your Sun Leader on the formation of your physical organism in the spiritual realm, you can return again to life on earth. On this return to earth, you are again received by the moon sphere. In it you find the destiny being which you carried out of your earlier life on earth through the gate of death. You unite with it again and now, after having prepared the spirit germ of your future physical organism together with the great Sun Being, you can control it quite differently. You can unite this destiny being with the forces in you that are drawn toward your physical organism. You stride again through the moon sphere. " Then follows the entrance into earth life as I have described it already earlier.

The initiates who were contemporaries of the Mystery of Golgotha, or who lived in the following centuries up until the third and fourth century, could say to their followers: The form which the human physical organism assumes in earth life increasingly shapes and develops the ego. But man loses the power to enter that region where the high Sun Being could be his guide above in the spiritual realms of the stars. Therefore, the Christ descended to earth and accomplished the Mystery of Golgotha. The power that the human soul gains by having in its feelings a bond with the Mystery of Golgotha works on after death. It tears the soul free of the germinal being of destiny and the moon sphere. Under the after-effect of the earthly Christ Event, the soul shapes its future physical organism with the other beings of the starry worlds and finds in turn the seed of its destiny, into which is placed the tendency for the destiny that will develop in the earth lives to come. The force that the human soul has received from the Christ Impulse enables it to pass through the spiritual realm in the right way and to take up the seed of destiny correctly.

A person who speaks out of initiation science today must add the following to this: "Indeed, it is the Christ Impulse Whose effects continue on beyond death. Under Its influence man wrenches himself away from the moon sphere and penetrates into the sphere of stars and the sun. There, out of the impulses given to man by the beings of the stars, he is able to work at molding the physical organism for his next earth life. But he frees himself from the moon sphere by means of the forces that he has accumulated in his ego by having turned on earth to the Christ Being and the Mystery of Golgotha. He struggles free of the moon sphere in such a way that he can in turn work in the starry sphere in a specific manner so that, when he returns again to the moon sphere and the core of his destiny confronts him, he can incorporate into himself as a free spiritual deed this seed of destiny. For he must tell himself: World evolution can only proceed

in the right way if I incorporate into myself the seed of my own destiny and adjust what I have thus prepared as my destiny as compensation in future earth lives."

This is the main element of the new experience in the life after death in the moon sphere. There comes a moment in cosmic existence when man in a self-reliant manner brings his destiny, his karma, into relation with his own advancing being. In the following earth life, the earthly reflection of this deed, which is accomplished in the supersensible realm, is human freedom, the feeling of freedom during earthly life. A true understanding of the idea of destiny, which traces this idea right into the spiritual worlds, does not establish a philosophy of determination but an actual philosophy of freedom, as I set forth in the nineties of the last century in my book, *The Philosophy of Freedom*.

Thus, when man finds his way into the spiritual regions after death in the right way, he brings back with him to earth — incorporated into his organism and linked with his universal destiny — the after-effects of having been permeated with the spiritual worlds, something he has experienced in the spirit land. Inasmuch as he experiences the Christ within him, modern man can experience freedom; and in connection with freedom he can also have the feeling of being pervaded by God, the permeation with the divine on earth which can be a recollection of what he has undergone in passing through the world of the stars to the moon sphere, and through the moon sphere itself.

Spiritual science strives towards a knowledge of all these relationships, inasmuch as intuition is brought about through soul exercises of the will. In ancient times, this intuition was produced according to instructions by those who were then initiates. These instructions directed man to mortify his outer physical organism through asceticism. By mortifying and subduing his physical body, man's independent will, which otherwise only expresses a craving for the physical organism, emerged with all the more intensity. Through asceticism, the physical organism becomes so mortified that it is difficult for the will to enter into the body and there to express itself. The will is driven back, as it were. The more difficult it becomes for the will to submerge and live in the physical organism, the more it finds its way into the spiritual world and develops intuitions. This is what was brought about by asceticism. It is wrong, however, to continue with this old asceticism in modern times. Since the Mystery of Golgotha, the human physical body has assumed a form that is no longer able to tolerate a successful practice of asceticism. By means of such asceticism, modern man would at the

same time deaden his physical organism to the point where the ego consciousness that must develop could not properly do so. Man would then never attain a consciousness of freedom. He would also be unable to unite himself in a proper, free manner with the Christ Impulse.

Therefore, the will exercises must be undertaken in such a way that the physical body is not subdued as was the case in ancient times; instead, by means of these exercises, man's pure soul-spiritual capacities are strengthened so much that the body does not withdraw from the soul, but the soul can find its way into and live in the spiritual worlds. Not only has what the old initiates told their followers about experiences between death and rebirth changed, but also what has to be said about the exercises that men have to take up in order to acquire knowledge leading into the higher worlds. These exercises also have changed in accordance with humanity's progressive development. The ascetic of ancient times could not attain the royal consciousness of freedom which modern man must reach through his present organization. Nor could the old ascetic between death and rebirth encounter the Sun Being, Who at that time had to accomplish for him after death what now, ever since the Christ passed through the Mystery of Golgotha, the human being can find within himself the strength to accomplish.

With the entrance of Christianity into human evolution, religious consciousness has therefore changed, for this consciousness is the earthly after-image of what man must experience as permeation with God in the spiritual world between death and a new birth. In all respects we are led by modern initiation science to a deeper comprehension of Christology. Therefore, we can speak of a renewal of religious consciousness by means of anthroposophic insight, just as we have spoken in the past few days of a renewal of philosophy, which turns into a living philosophical science; likewise, we spoke of a deepening of cosmology through the inclusion of the insight into the higher worlds that can only be attained by means of intuition and inspiration. Through enhancement by anthroposophy, a renewal of religious consciousness, which only then will become a fully conscious Christian awareness, can be attained for the whole of mankind. Anthroposophy would like to contribute to the further rightful development of Christianity; this is meant in the sense that it does not want to become a new religion but wants to help in the development of the Christian religion that came into the world through the Mystery of Golgotha. This Christian religion has in itself the power to develop further, and anthroposophy wishes to understand this in the right way and be a true aid in this further development.

So, in these lectures I have sought to describe for you how philosophy, cosmology and religious knowledge are to be fructified by anthroposophy. Naturally, knowledge of religion is not religion. Religion can also be experienced if you devote yourself with your heart (Gemüt) in an open-minded way to what intuitive knowledge communicates, for the heart (Gemüt) can understand it. Therefore, the renewal of religious knowledge can bring about a new deepening of religious life.

I could describe all this only in a sketchy way during these days. Naturally, these matters can only be penetrated completely if one becomes acquainted with the details. Then, much that had to remain sketchy here could appear in its full coloring and with all the possible nuances. That alone would present a complete picture.

Most esteemed ladies and gentlemen! In concluding these lectures, I am deeply gratified when I think of the fact that you actually came from a foreign country to attend these lectures. This feeling leads me to express my heartiest thanks for your attention. I would like to express heartfelt thanks especially to Dr. Sauerwein for the trouble he took to present a faithful translation, and to ask him to fulfill one more wish of mine, namely to translate my thanks to him also, just as he translated everything else. I would be especially happy if you took home with you the feeling that the time spent here was not a waste of time for you.



Notes

1. [△](#) Dr. Jules Sauerwein, born in 1880; one of the most prominent French journalists between World War I and World War II; he met Rudolf Steiner in Vienna in 1906 and translated a number of his works into French.
2. [△](#) Emile Boutroux, 1845-1921; especially in his *De la Contingence des Lois de la Nature* (Concerning the Contingency of Natural Laws).
3. [△](#) For this concept see especially the cycle given in the Hague in November 1923 translated under the title of *Supersensible Man*, in the fourth lecture of which Rudolf Steiner explains how the spirit-germ of each organ is created in the different spheres of the cosmos during the life between death and rebirth.



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