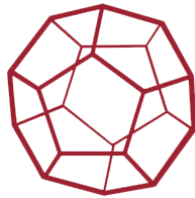


# The Secret Brotherhoods

and the Mystery of the Human Double

GA 178



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GA 178

by

*Rudolf Steiner*

November 1917

Sources:

Geographic Medicine

Behind the Scenes of External Events

and

Individual Spirit Beings and the Constant Foundation of the Universe

# Table of Contents

Preface

Introduction

1. Knowledge of the Supersensible and Riddles of the Human Soul
2. The Mystery of the Double; Geographic Medicine
3. Behind the Scenes of External Events, I
4. Behind the Scenes of External Events, II
5. Individual Spirit Beings and the Constant Foundation of the Universe, I
6. Individual Spirit Beings and the Constant Foundation of the Universe, II
7. Individual Spirit Beings and the Constant Foundation of the Universe, III

Appendix: Book Review by Bobby Matherne

# Preface

**7 lectures (of 9), St. Gallen, Zurich, and Dornach, Nov. 6–25, 1917 (CW 178)**

In the age of the internet and the proliferation of 'conspiracy theories', ideas that secret groups are trying to gain control of humanity are no longer rare. But this was not true in 1917 when Rudolf Steiner spoke of such matters in the extraordinary lectures contained in this book. His unique contribution to this controversial topic is not based on abstract theories; it arose from exact research methods that use advanced forms of perception and cognition.

Using the firsthand knowledge available to him, Steiner takes us behind the scenes of events in outer history and contemporary culture to reveal a dark world of secret elitist brotherhoods that are attempting to control the masses through the forces of economics, technology, and political assassinations. These hidden groups, he explains, seek power through the use of ritual magic and suggestion.

Never before available in English as a complete volume, the text of this book has been freshly translated\* for this edition.

*Secret Brotherhoods* is a translation of 7 lectures from German of *Individuelle Geistwesen und ihr Wirken in der Seele des Menschen. Geistige Wesen und Ihre Wirkung Band II* (GA 178).

\* The translations in this digital edition are earlier than the 2004 edition from which this preface was taken.



# Introduction

by Terry Boardman

This is a stark and extremely challenging group of lectures, given at a decisive time of tremendous crisis for humanity and dealing with themes that stretch from 1917 back into the distant past as well as into the far future. Johanna Collis' new translation is eminently readable and lucid, making the reader's task of getting into grips with the challenging nature of the content that much easier.\*

This publication of these lectures, originally given by Rudolf Steiner in Dornach, Zurich, and St. Gallen in November 1917, is timely indeed, for so many of the topics are of direct relevance to numerous difficult aspects of life in our own time. Steiner deals with: the drive towards a world government by elitist forces that seek to control the masses through the forces of economics, technology and political assassinations; the goals of secret brotherhoods in the West that work through these forces and other such brotherhoods in the East with their own aims and methods; the ways in which both these groups work against the Christ; the nature of the American continent and the forces that proceed from it; the relations between Russia, Europe and America; the meaning of Ireland for world development; the spiritual origin of electromagnetism; the relation between the life after death and life on the physical plane; the abuse of inoculations and vaccinations; the nature of the double, or doppelgänger, and the dangers of psychoanalysis; the confusion of angels with higher beings and the divinity; the difference between thinking and brain activity, and above all, the need for clear insight into world events that is based on spiritual knowledge. These are just some of the main themes in this remarkably illuminating collection of lectures, which, in a way, complement the lectures given in December 1916 and January 1917 (published in English as *The Karma of Untruthfulness* Vols I and II). While in that earlier series of lectures at the beginning of the year 1917 Steiner went into very great detail about the specifics of world events related to the coming of the First World War (an effort to illuminate the past cause of the war), in these November lectures he paints on a much broader canvas and is looking more to the future in the light of what the war has revealed, especially in

view of the dramatic events of the year 1917 itself. In these lectures he was giving his listeners important *strategic* keys with which the developments in the twentieth century and beyond could be illuminated.

Much has been said in recent years about the epoch-making significance of the events of 2001, notably that of 11 September, but historians in the future may well look back and judge that 1917 was a far more significant year for humanity — the year in which, arguably, the twentieth century really began. The year 1917 was indeed a crucial one for the modern world and for Rudolf Steiner, as these lectures make clear.

He began the year by continuing the series of lectures he had commenced in Dornach in December 1916 on 'The Occult Background of the War', published under the title *The Karma of Untruthfulness* Vols I and II. Given at a critical point in the war when at Christmas 1916 there was the best hope for peace negotiations following formal peace proposals put forward by the German and American governments, those remarkable lectures were akin to a crash course in applied media studies and world events for an anthroposophical membership who, he felt, had been too interested in hearing only about the spiritual world and not so much about the relations between the spiritual and material worlds that had resulted in the catastrophe of the war. The peace moves of December 1916 offered perhaps the last real hope for sanity and peace. The month proved to be the hinge on which the war turned. The Western Allies rejected the vague German peace offers of Christmas 1916 out of hand, and on 6 April President Woodrow Wilson took the United States into the First World War. On 11 March the British captured Baghdad from the Turks and on the following day, the Russian Revolution ended the 300-year-old rule of the Romanovs. The first American troops arrived in Europe in June. From May to October 'visions' of the Virgin Mary were seen at Fatima, one of which on 13 July spoke about the need for the conversion of Russia. On 1 August at the same time as a lecture course Rudolf Steiner gave in Berlin on the Karma of Materialism, Pope Benedict XV, in a vain attempt to wield the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, issued his seven-point peace plan to the belligerents, which was ignored by all except Austria-Hungary. During the summer the revolutionary republican government led by Alexander Kerensky in Russia crumbled, and at the very time Rudolf Steiner was giving the lectures in the present collection, the Bolsheviks seized power on 7 November. Two days later the British Government's Balfour Declaration to Lord Rothschild was published, which promised a national home in Palestine for the Jewish people. On the Western Front, the appalling slaughter and macabre horrors of the Third Battle of Ypres

(Passchendaele) had just dragged to its end on the day Steiner gave the first of these lectures. It had begun, back on 18 July, with a British artillery bombardment from 3000 guns firing four and a quarter million shells that lasted for ten days. British and German casualties numbered some 600,000 after the three months of the 'battle' — such was the karma of European materialism, the direct result, as Rudolf Steiner puts it, of too many people having been asleep both to world events prior to 1914 and to the ways in which spiritual realities play into those events.

After the lectures in the present collection, Rudolf Steiner gave in Dornach a course of seven lectures in December of this fateful year 1917 that concerned themselves with historical necessity and free will. During that course, on 11 December, the first 'Christian' army for 673 years entered Jerusalem under the British General Allenby, a direct descendant of Oliver Cromwell. On 23 December in Basel, Rudolf Steiner gave a lecture, later published under the title *Et Incarnatus Est, The Time-Cycle in Historical Events*, in which he presented the vital key for historical understanding of the 33-year periodicity in historical events that is based on the life of Jesus Christ.

Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Vatican — all the old European powers proved themselves in 1917 to be utterly bankrupt of new and fruitful ideas that could lead the Continent out of the morass of the war and into some kind of healing process. The karma of European materialism, especially since 1841–79, had led to the result that Europe's 300-year period of global domination was about to be overwhelmed by the massive forces of the peripheral superpowers of America and Russia, whose mutual enmity would overshadow the rest of the twentieth century and threaten to extinguish European culture altogether.

Any good public speaker is always very aware of the time and space in which a lecture is being given. A good public speaker who also happens to be clairvoyant can go further and be aware of the individuals in the audience who will — as a result of their special interests and destiny — be especially receptive to the content of the lecture. It is never an easy matter to determine why Rudolf Steiner gave a particular lecture on a particular date at a particular place or why he chose to insert a particular section or even a particular sentence in a lecture that might, on a superficial reading of it, seem odd or out of place. One of the points he makes in this collection of lectures is that those who communicate spiritual ideas to the wider public must be prepared for many disappointments. They must realize that out of an audience of scores or hundreds, only one or two may

be really open for what is being given. Only one or two lives may be changed by it, if any. Nevertheless one must press on with the work regardless, with iron determination, understanding that the spiritual reality is mirrored in natural reality; just as nature is amazingly fecund and only a few seeds in a season may actually survive to become fully grown plants, so the speaker on spiritual realities must be aware that in the audience in the specific location where the lecture is being given there may be just the right individual(s) who will really be able to make something of what is being said.

As a clairvoyant researcher, Rudolf Steiner was in a position to know these things, so that when he gave some of the lectures in this collection, those in St. Gallen and Zurich, for example, he was aware that in St. Gallen he was speaking in a location where the early Celtic Christian monks of Ireland with their strong impulse for healing had been active during the Dark Ages. He was aware that some of those Celtic Christian missionaries to the Continent knew of the existence of America and the need to keep Europe 'walled off' spiritually from America until Europe was ready to deal with the powerful spiritual forces related to the American continent. These forces had a purely geographic nature connected to subterranean magnetism and the north-south axis of mountain ranges such as the Rockies and the Andes. Spiritual knowledge of this fact by Europeans with insight led to visits to the American continent to do special research into medicines that could only be done on the American continent. Was it merely coincidence that one who carried the same name as the Irish Celtic missionary Columbanus and who hailed from Italy, the land where Columbanus died, found the way to America 1100 years after Columbanus and the Celtic Christians had, according to Rudolf Steiner in these lectures, been responsible for assisting Rome in cutting Europe off from America?

Steiner was also aware, as he says in lecture 4 of this collection, that in his own day Zurich was a strong centre for the modern practice of psychoanalysis, a practice he describes as extremely 'dangerous' because it was attempting to deal with powerful spiritual forces operative in the subconscious without understanding the very real nature of those forces. Later in the twentieth century, Zurich, with its infamous 'gnomes', and Basel, home of the central banker's bank (the Bank of International Settlements), would become centres of global financial control closely linked to London and New York.



This relates to another in the trio of main themes in these lectures: the clandestine efforts of secretive oligarchical brotherhoods to exercise a control over the masses of humanity that is historically illegitimate in the post-Renaissance, post-Reformation modern epoch — a control that is based on influencing the subconscious by means of instilling fear, for example, the kind of economic fear that proceeds today mainly from the Western world. The activities of these secretive elitist groups that work through modern capitalism and technology create juggernaut-like forces that produce a counteraction of fear in others, who may be members of traditional non-Western societies that feel their cultures threatened. They may be idealistic people in Western societies whose feelings and instincts are in the right direction for the modern age but whose thinking and insight are unable to cope with events. Both of these two different types of groups can then lash out in forms of terrorism at what they feel to be oppression.

Whereas normal development in the modern age ought to take place in accordance with the conscious understanding of the autonomous individual, Steiner shows in these lectures how esoteric groups seek to perpetuate the methods of past epochs when societies were led, flocklike, by the initiates of the mystery centres. Furthermore, actions that were once justified in the right historical context have become evil, he says, in that these power-hungry elite groups are now serving spiritual beings who have been particularly active within human thinking (in what can well up from the subconscious) since the last third of the nineteenth century and which seek to extinguish all spiritual life and replace it with a thoroughgoing materialism, aiming to cut off the possibility of human contact with the Christ. One of the ways in which they do this, Rudolf Steiner reveals, is by making use of the dead in ritualistic fashion; those who cross the threshold of death through murder or assassination can thereby learn things which those who cross over in normal ways do not, and the secret brotherhoods can acquire this knowledge from the dead by means of mediums and rituals. Steiner's research here opens up an avenue for how to reconsider events of mass killing such as the Tokyo underground gas attacks or the deaths of nearly 3000 people in the attacks on the Twin Towers. What happens to the dead when they go over the threshold in such a way as the result of willed murderous action that emanates from groups with specific political or cultural aims? Indeed, the topic of relations between the living and the dead, especially in terms of manipulation of the dead and the thoughts of the dead, is a main theme of these lectures, which were given between 6 and 25 November, traditionally

the season for remembrance of the dead. It is noteworthy that in the first lecture in the collection Steiner starkly points out that spiritual science must take its starting-point from the fact of death and the limits it appears to impose. Death and its role in the scheme of things must be understood. Without understanding of the relation between death and life, without going beyond the limits that death appears to present, says Rudolf Steiner, we will be at a loss to comprehend the real nature of many events in the world.

In these lectures Rudolf Steiner shows the relation of 1917 to the Fall of the Spirits of Darkness, the dark angels who were cast out of the spiritual world in 1879 following the long 'War in Heaven' that began in 1841. He draws attention to the actions of power groups serving these beings in east and west in 1917. 'Awareness alone ... clear recognition and understanding' of spiritual realities together with willingness to recognize the objective evil forces at work in the world *and their purpose in the scheme of things* — these are the only means that can be of real help in modern humanity's predicament, says Steiner. These capacities of awareness, recognition and understanding of spiritual realities lead to what in modern parlance has come to be called 'consciousness raising', and that is a real power, because, as Rudolf Steiner points out in these lectures of nearly 90 years ago, the idea that 'you are what you eat' is a lie. *The fact is that both in life and after death we actually become what we think*: if we choose to think that we are animals, entirely materialistic beings concerned essentially with survival, as many of today's neo-Darwinist evolutionary biologists and sociobiologists would have us believe, then that is what we will become. It should be obvious to anyone that this is actually taking place before our eyes today, as some people actually attempt to turn themselves into lizards or cyborgs, seeking to turn parts of their bodies into animal forms or to incorporate various technological devices into them, from robot limbs to brain implants and infra-red vision.

Again and again, when confronted by the many serious problems with which humanity has been struggling since the First World War and is still facing, the almost despairing question is often asked, even in anthroposophical circles: 'What can I do? What can the individual do about the machination of these secret groups, if indeed they exist? It's all too much for individuals.' Rudolf Steiner's answer in these lectures is bold and clear:

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*The only defense against these things is knowing about them.  
If you know about them, you are protected... But you must  
not be idle about acquiring real knowledge of these things.*

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The old word of the New Testament, 'Repent!' — *metanoia* — change your thinking and raise your consciousness and that of your fellows — such is the challenging call of these lectures given at the birth crisis of the twentieth century.

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# 1 Knowledge of the Supersensible and Riddles of the Human Soul

Translator unknown

*St. Gallen, 15th November, 1917*

Anyone who follows the evolution of the human spirit over the course of centuries, or perhaps millenia, will come to feel that this human spirit moves on to ever new achievements in the realm of knowing and in the realm of doing. There is no need to place too much emphasis on the word progress, for in the dismal time that has now befallen humanity this might call forth bitter doubt in many. If we observe this evolution of the human spirit, however, something else makes a clear impression on us, namely, that the forms and configurations taken by man's striving spirit vary essentially from century to century. And since today in our studies we are chiefly concerned with a striving for knowledge that wishes to penetrate humanity's evolution in a new way, we need only bear in mind, by way of example, how such conceptions, which are to some extent in conflict with the old ones, have difficulty gaining access to evolving humanity.

We should continually recall, for example, how difficult it was to bring the Copernican world view into people's habits of thought, habits of feeling — indeed, in certain realms this took centuries. This Copernican world view had broken with what people for a long time believed necessary to maintain as the truth about the structure of the universe on the basis of their sense perception. Then came the time when a person could no longer rely on what the eye saw as the rising and setting of the sun, as the sun's movement. He had to accept that, contrary to the visual appearance, the sun in a certain way, at least in its relation to the earth, stands still. Human habits of thought and feeling did not easily accommodate themselves to such sudden reversals of knowledge.

In the anthroposophically oriented spiritual science to which our considerations this evening are devoted, we have to do with an even greater reversal of this kind. Those who believe themselves convinced on firm scientific grounds of the content of this spiritual science also believe it

necessary for it to have a decisive influence now and in the further evolution of human thinking, sensing, and feeling. It could also be said, if *you* will allow me these few introductory words, that the introduction of something like the Copernican world view was a matter of dealing with countless prejudices, with traditional opinions. People believed that if anything else were to supersede these it would upset all kinds of religious conceptions and things of that kind.

Many other objections concerning what we are to discuss this evening get in the way. Here the problem is not simply the prejudices such as those that confronted the Copernican theory, for example. In this case there is also the problem that in our time many people, indeed the majority of those considering themselves enlightened and cultured, not only bring with them their prejudices and preconceptions; they are actually ashamed of having to take seriously the realm about which anthroposophy has to speak. Such an individual feels he has to apologize not only to the world in general but to himself if he admits that it is possible to know about the things that are to be spoken of today in as thoroughly scientific a way as about the outer structure of nature. He believes that he has to regard himself as foolish or childish.

These things must be considered if we are to speak today about an anthroposophically oriented spiritual science. Anyone speaking out of knowledge of this science knows the objections that must arise today by the hundreds and thousands. He already knows these objections, because doubt is felt today not only concerning the specific truths and results of this spiritual science; there is also doubt that knowledge of any kind can be acquired concerning the realm with which anthroposophy occupies itself. The possibility of developing conceptual beliefs in the soul, general conceptual beliefs about the realm of the eternal, is certainly still acknowledged as justified by many today; but it is generally considered something dreamy or sentimental to believe that a really factual knowledge can be developed about the facts that can be drawn from the sense world concerning the immortal and eternal in the nature of the human being. This is particularly the case among those who believe themselves to be forming their judgments out of the presently recognized mode of scientific conception.

This evening we will have nothing to do with the dreamy and sentimental. We will rather be dealing with a realm in which you could say that the student, particularly the scientific student, shrinks from its first conditions. I would like to touch very briefly on the fact that this

anthroposophically oriented spiritual science has no wish to be sectarian. It is completely misunderstood by anyone who believes that it wishes to arise in the way some new kind of religious faith is founded. It has no such wish. It wishes to arise today as a necessary result of the world view brought by natural scientific development, a general, publicly accepted conception among the widest circles of humanity. This natural scientific development today supplies so many concepts, which are in their turn the source of feelings and sensations. It provides the concepts for the most widely held world view. This natural scientific mode of observation sets itself the task of examining and explaining what is yielded to the outer senses, of examining what is accessible to human understanding by way of the natural laws about facts given to the outer senses.

If only one takes a quick look at what is living, it is possible to see how everywhere today natural science must consider origins, going back to what the construction of the seed reveals concerning growing, becoming, flourishing. (Though this is more prevalent in other realms, it is most clearly apparent in the realm of the living.) If the natural scientist wishes to explain animal life or human life in this sense, he goes back to birth, he studies embryology, he studies that from which growing and becoming evolve. The natural scientist returns to birth, to the beginning of what unfolds before the senses. And when natural science seeks an explanation for the world, it goes back with various hypotheses — with the foundations laid by geology, paleontology, with what the individual branches of natural science can reveal — forming conceptions out of this about the birth of the universe's structure, you could say. Even if one or another may have doubts about the justification for such a way of thinking, it is always being striven for.

The thoughts are well known that people have presented in order to fathom, if not the beginning of earthly evolution, at least far distant epochs (those epochs, for example, before the human being walked the earth) in order to explain in some way out of what went before, out of what lay in a germinal state, what follows, the consequences that the human being takes in of his surroundings through his senses. The whole Darwinian theory, or, if one wishes to leave that aside, the theory of evolution, is based on the search for origins, looking for the emergence of something out of something else, I would say that everywhere we find this thought of going back to youth and birth for explanations.

Spiritual science in the anthroposophical sense finds itself in another position. And by its point of departure it calls forth a vague opposition. Opposition without people being conscious of it; one could say that it calls forth an unconscious opposition, an instinctive opposition. Such opposition is often much more effective than the opposition that is clearly recognized, clearly thought through. In order to arrive at conceptions at all, an anthroposophically oriented spiritual science must not begin now with general, hazy concepts of spirit; to arrive at spiritual facts, it must make death its starting point. It thereby stands from the outset, you could say, in fundamental opposition to what is preferred today, namely to proceeding from birth, youth, growth, and the progress of development. Death encroaches upon life. And if you keep in touch with contemporary scientific literature, you can find everywhere that the conscientious scientist holds the view that death as such cannot be inserted in the series of natural scientific concepts in the same sense as other concepts.

The spiritual scientist must make death his actual starting point, death, the cessation, actually the opposite of birth. How death and all that is related to it encroaches upon life in the widest sense is the basic question. Death terminates what is perceptible to the senses; death dissolves what is becoming, what is developing before the senses. By the way that death encroaches on life, it can be conceived of as having no part in what is working and flourishing here in the sense world, springing forth and producing life. This is what yields the opinion that nothing can be known about what is concealed by death, as it were, cloaked by death. (Within certain limits this opinion is perfectly comprehensible, though totally unjustifiable.) And it is actually from this corner of human feeling that the objections rear up their heads, objections that obviously can be brought up against things that are the results of a science still in its youth today. For spiritual science is young, and for precisely these reasons just referred to, the spiritual scientist is in quite a different position from that of the natural scientist, even when speaking about things in the sphere of his own research. The spiritual scientist cannot proceed in exactly the same way as the natural scientist, who poses some fact and then proves it on grounds by which everyone is convinced: that it can be seen. The spiritual scientist, however, speaks about what cannot be perceived by the senses. Hence, in speaking about the results of his research, he is always obliged to indicate how such results can be reached.

There is a rich literature concerning the realm about which I will be speaking with you this evening. Believing themselves called upon to do so, critics constantly raise the objection when reading my writings, for



example, that the spiritual scientist maintains such and such a thing but gives no proof, although this actually shows only how superficially things are read! He does offer proof, but in a different way. To begin with, he tells how he arrived at his results; he must first indicate the path into the realm of facts. This path is generally unknown, because it is not the customary one for today's habits of thinking and feeling. It must first be said that the spiritual investigator is forced by his investigation to conclude that with the methods and procedures by which the ordinary scientist comes to his brilliant results (not rejected by the spiritual scientist but admired) we do not arrive at the super-sensible. It is precisely this experience, namely, the very limitations of the methods of natural scientific thinking, from which the spiritual scientist makes his start. This is not done, however, in the way so prevalent today, which is to declare that certain things, beyond which the ordinary scientist does not go, are the limits of human cognition. No, it is done in such a way that an attempt is made to come to definite experiences that can be attained only at these limits. I have spoken about these boundaries to human cognition particularly in my most recent written work, *Riddles of the Soul*. (The English translation was titled *The Case for Anthroposophy* ~A.)

Those people who have not taken knowledge as something that falls into their laps from outside, those who have wrestled with knowledge, wrestled with truth, have always at least certain experiences at these limits of human cognition. Here it must be noted that times change, that the evolution of humanity undergoes changes. Not so very long ago, the most outstanding thinkers and those struggling for knowledge, when they stood before boundaries of this kind, thought that one cannot go beyond these boundaries, that one must remain there. Those of you in the audience who have often heard me speak here know how little it is my habit to touch on personal matters. When the personal has a connection in any way with the question under consideration, however, one may venture to refer to it briefly. I may say that what I have to say about experiences of this sort at the boundaries of cognition is the result of more than thirty years of spiritual research. And it was more than thirty years ago that these very problems, these tasks, these riddles that arise at the boundaries of cognition, made a significant impression on me.

From the many examples that can be cited about such boundaries, I would like to take one that has been referred to by a real wrestler with knowledge, Friedrich Theodor Vischer, the famous aesthetician who was also a philosopher of distinction, though perhaps little known during his lifetime and soon forgotten. A decade or so ago Friedrich Theodor Vischer



wrote a very interesting treatise about a book, also very interesting, written by Volkelt concerning dream fantasies. Friedrich Theodor Vischer, in the course of this treatise, touched on a variety of subjects of no further interest to us here. But I would like to quote one sentence, a sentence that may perhaps be passed over in reading but a sentence that can pierce like lightning into the human heart and soul when these are permeated by a striving for knowledge, a true inner striving for knowledge. It is the sentence that burst upon Vischer when he was reflecting, meditating upon the nature of the human soul. Out of what he had gleaned about the human being from contemporary natural science, he deduced that the human soul cannot be merely in the body; this much is clear; but it is just as clear that it cannot be outside the body.

Here we have a complete contradiction, a contradiction that cannot easily be resolved. It is a contradiction that poses itself with immutable necessity if an individual is wrestling for knowledge in all earnest. Vischer was not yet able for the time was not sufficiently ripe — to press on from what we might call his position in knowledge, at these boundaries of knowledge, to press on from cognition in the ordinary sense of the word to inward experience of a contradiction of this kind. Yet from all directions today, from the most knowledgeable people, we hear a particular conclusion when they come up against such a contradiction. (There are indeed hundreds and hundreds of such contradictions du Bois-Reymond a physiologist of great intelligence, has spoken about only seven world riddles, but these seven can be multiplied by hundreds.) Our contemporary man of knowledge says that from this point on human cognition is able to go no further. He says this for the simple reason that at the boundaries of human cognition he cannot determine to go on from mere thinking, from mere mental activity, to experience.

It is necessary to begin at a place where such a contradiction obstructs the way, a contradiction not ingeniously thought out but one that is revealed by the riddle of the world; we must seek to live with such a contradiction again and again, to wrestle with it in everyday life, to immerse the soul in it entirely. We must have no fear while immersing ourselves in this contradiction (and a certain inner courage of thought is part of this), we must have no fear that this contradiction will be able to split asunder the conceptual powers of the soul, or that the soul will not be able to penetrate through it, and so on. I have described this very struggle at such boundaries in detail in my book, *Riddles of the Soul*.

When an individual comes to such a boundary with his whole soul, instead of with mere mental images, with mere clever thinking and mental strategies, he progresses further. He does not go further on a purely logical path, however, but on the path of living knowledge. I would like to describe what he experiences by means of a comparison, for the paths of the spiritual investigator are really experiences of knowledge, facts of knowledge. Language today has not yet acquired many words for these things, because words have been coined for what is acquired by outer sense perception. Hence what stands clearly before the eye of the spirit can often be expressed only by means of comparison. When we live into such contradictions, we feel as if we were at the border where the spiritual world breaks in; this is not to be found in sense-perceptible reality, where indeed it breaks in but does so from outside, as it were.

Now, whether or not this image is well-founded from a natural scientific point of view is not important here, for it can still be used by way of comparison. It is as if one of the lower forms of life had not yet developed the sense of touch but experienced only inwardly, experienced itself inwardly in constant stirrings of movement, in this way experiencing the borders of the physical world, the surfaces of single objects. A being that has not yet developed the sense of touch and experiences only the surfaces of sense-perceptible objects remains entirely shut within itself, unable as yet to feel, to touch, what is there outside it by way of sense impressions.

In the same way, a person struggling with knowledge feels himself purely soul-spiritually (we should not think here of anything material) when he comes to the kind of place I have just described. In the case of our rudimentary animal, the organism breaks through to the outer, sense-perceptible world by its impact with it, differentiating itself through the sense of touch, by which surfaces are touched and knowledge gained as to their roughness or smoothness, their warmth or cold. In the same way, when what has lived only inwardly opens itself to what is outside, the possibility is acquired to break through, as it were, just at the places we have described and to acquire a spiritual sense of touch. Only when a person has wrestled perhaps for years at these boundaries of cognition, struggling to break through into the spiritual world, can he first acquire real spiritual organs. I am speaking only in an elementary way of how this sense of touch is developed. To use these terms in a more definite way, however, we can say that by ever greater application of inner work, working away from being enclosed within oneself, spiritual eyes, spiritual ears develop. To many people today it still seems absurd to say that at first

the soul is just as undifferentiated an organ as the organism of a lower animal, forming its senses out of its own substance and out of this substance developing soul concepts, spiritual organs differentiated as to their soul qualities, which then bring an individual face to face with the spiritual world.

It may be said that a systematically presented spiritual science, which is fully entitled to be called scientific, is something new in the progress of knowledge in human evolution. It is not new, however, in every respect. The struggle for it, the striving after it, is to be seen in the outstanding individuals of knowledge from the past. I have referred to one of these when I mentioned Friedrich Theodor Vischer. I would like to show from his own comments how he stood at such a border of knowledge, how he remained there, never making the transition from being inwardly stirred to actually breaking through the boundary to the spiritual sense of touch. Here I would simply like to read you a passage from Friedrich Theodor Vischer's works, in which he describes how he came to such a boundary where the spirit breaks through into the human soul in the course of his wrestling with natural scientific knowledge. This was at the time in which materialistically directed natural science posed many riddles for those struggling for knowledge in real earnest. Countless people claimed that the soul cannot be said to be anything but a product of material activity.

Here are his words: "No spirit where there is no nerve center, where there is no brain — so say our opponents. We reply: There would be no nerve center, no brain had they not been prepared for by countless stages from below upward; it is easy to speak mockingly of those who say that there is an echo of the spirit in granite and limestone. This is no harder than it would be for us to ask sarcastically how the protein in the brain rises to the level of ideas. Human knowledge cannot discriminate between stages. It will remain a mystery how it comes about that nature, beneath which the spirit must be slumbering, stands there as such a perfect counter-blow of the spirit that we bruise ourselves against it."

Please take note of how this wrestler for knowledge describes how we bruise ourselves! Here you have the inner experience of bumping against something by one who wrestles for knowledge: "It is a forcible separation with the appearance of such absoluteness that with Hegel's 'differentiation' and 'non-differentiation' (ingenious as this formula is, though it says as good as nothing) the steepness of the apparent dividing wall is concealed. One finds the right appreciation of the cutting edge and the impact of this counter-blow in Fichte, but no explanation for it,"

Here we have a man's description of his struggle for knowledge in the time before there could be a decision, a spiritual scientific decision, not merely to come to this blow and counter-blow but to break through the dividing wall into the spiritual world. I can speak about these things only in principle here; you will find them described in detail in my books. Particularly in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds* and in the second part of my *Occult Science*, you will find all the details concerning what the soul must take upon itself in the way of inner activity and inner exercise (if I may use the expression) in order really to transform what is undifferentiated in the soul into spiritual organs able to behold the spiritual world.

A great deal is necessary, however, if an individual really wishes to make investigations on this path. So much is necessary just because in our age, due to the habits cultivated in the natural scientific sphere, in the sphere of the natural scientific world view, habits that are perfectly justified in their own field, a particular way of thinking has taken root in human life, a way that is opposed to the one leading to the spiritual world. Thus it goes without saying that from the side of natural science things are heard that demonstrate an utter lack of desire to know the actual facts about the spiritual world.

I will give just one example (as I have said, you can find more exact information in the books I have mentioned) of how the human being has to make every effort to acquire a totally different way of conceiving things. In ordinary life people are satisfied with concepts, with mental images of which it may be said that these concepts, these mental images are such that they offer a likeness to some external fact or object. This cannot satisfy the spiritual investigator. Even mental images, concepts, become something totally different in his soul from what they are due to modern habits of thinking. If I may use another comparison, I would like to show how the spiritual investigator stands today in relation to the world. Those who are materialists, spiritualists, pantheists, individualists, or monadists, and so on, all believe that in some way they can penetrate the world riddle. They try with definite mental images, concepts, to reach a picture of world processes. The spiritual investigator is totally unable to look on concepts in this way; his attitude toward them must be such that he is always clearly conscious of how, in a concept, in a mental image, he has nothing beyond what can be had in the outer sense world when, for example, one particular side of a tree or some other object is photographed and then another picture is taken from another side, from a

third side, a fourth side, and so on. The pictures are different from one another. If combined mentally, they together present the tree as a formed mental image. But it can easily be said that one picture contradicts another.

Just consider how completely different an object looks when photographed from one side or another. The spiritual I investigator looks at the conceptions of pantheism, monadism, and so on as if they were simply different ways of looking at reality. Spiritual reality does not actually reveal itself at all to the life of mental images, the life of concepts, in such a way that it is possible to say that any one concept is a faithful image. We must always go all around the matter, forming manifold concepts from various sides. By this means we become capable of developing a much more flexible inner soul life than we are accustomed to when regarding the outer sense world. By doing this it becomes necessary to make our concepts far more alive. They are no longer simply images, but by being experienced they become much more alive than they are in ordinary life and for the things of ordinary life.

Perhaps you will understand me better if I describe it in the following way. Suppose you have a rose cut from the rose bush; you form your mental image of it. You are able to form this mental image yourself. You will often have the feeling about this mental image that it expresses something real for you, that the rose is something real. The spiritual investigator can never make any progress if he is satisfied with the mental image that the rose is something real. Pictured as a blossom on a short stalk, the rose is not real in itself. It can be real only when on the rose bush. The rose bush is something real. And the spiritual investigator must accustom himself to regarding every individual thing, to remaining conscious in what limited sense an issue is something real. People form mental images of these things, believing them to be something real. When the rose is in front of him on its stalk, the spiritual investigator must feel that it is not real; he must have a feeling for, an experience of, the degree of unreality contained in this rose as mere blossom.

By extending this to our observation of the whole world, however, the conceptual life itself is renewed, and we do not thereby get the crippled, dead mental images with which the modern natural scientific world view is satisfied; we get mental images that are living with the objects. It is true that in proceeding from the present habits of thinking, we at first experience a great deal of disappointment, disappointment that arises because what is experienced in this way differs a great deal from present

habits of thinking. When speaking out of knowledge acquired in the spiritual world, much has to be said that seems paradoxical when compared with what is generally said and believed today.

A person today may be very learned in the sphere of physics, let us say; he may be an exceptionally learned person who quite rightly excites admiration by his erudition; but such an individual may work with clear concepts that have not been produced nor worked upon in accordance with what I have described, that is, without endowing the conceptual world with life. I have said something quite elementary, but this elementary statement must in the case of the spiritual investigator be extended over the whole observation of the world. I will offer an example. At the beginning of the century, Professor Dewar delivered a very important lecture in London. This lecture could be said to show in every sentence the great modern scholar who was as well acquainted with the conceptions of physics as a modern physicist can be. From his modern conceptions of physics, this scholar seeks to speak about the final condition of the Earth and about some future condition in which much of what is present with us today will have died away. He describes this correctly, because he bases his lecture on really well-founded hypotheses: he describes how one day after millions of years a condition of the earth will have to arise in which a great drop in temperature will occur; this can be well calculated, and this drop in temperature will bring about changes in certain substances. This can be calculated, and he describes how milk, for example, will not be able to maintain its fluid condition but will become solid; how the white of an egg smeared on a wall will become so luminous that people will be able to read a newspaper by its light alone, since so much light will come from the white of an egg; and many other such details are described. The consistency of things that can sustain hardly any weight today will be materially strengthened so that hundreds of pounds will be able to be supported by them. In short, Professor Dewar gives an imposing picture of the future condition of the earth. From the standpoint of physics there is nothing at all to be said against it, but for anyone who has taken living thinking into his soul, the matter has another aspect. When he turns to the conceptual forms of the kind given by the Professor, an example enters his mind that in its methods and manner of approach is very similar to the Professor's deductions and way of thinking.

Suppose, for example, we were to take a man of twenty-five and observe exactly how certain organs, the stomach for example, change from year to year in the course of two, three, four, five years (today such an observation can be managed; I need only remind you of X-rays). They take on different



configurations. We can describe this in the same way that the physicist does when he compares successive conditions of the earth and then calculates what the earth will look like after millions of years. This can also be done in the case of the human being. The changes in the stomach or heart, for example, are observed, and a calculation then made of how this man will look after perhaps 200 years according to these alterations. We get just as well-founded a result if it is calculated what this man will look like after 200 years by taking into account all the individual perceptions. The only thing is that the man will have died long before this! He will no longer be there.

You see what I mean. What is important here is that in a particular case we know from direct experience that calculations of this kind do not correspond with reality, because, when 200 years have passed, the human body with its transformations will no longer be there; yet this same kind of calculation is made in connection with the earth. No heed is paid to the fact that after two million years the earth as a physical being will have been dead for a long time, will no longer be there. Thus the whole learned calculation about this condition has no value at all as a reality, because the reality it is applied to will no longer be there.

These matters are very far-reaching. In the case of the human being you can just as well calculate backward as forward; you might, in accordance with the small changes taking place in two years, calculate how a man looked 200 years ago, but he was not there then either! With this same method, however, the Kant-LaPlace theory was formulated. This theory assumes that there was once a condition of fog, a calculation that was based on our present condition. The calculation is entirely correct, the perceptions are good enough; it is just that the spiritual investigator becomes aware that at the time this primeval fog was supposed to be there, the earth was not yet born. The entire solar system did not yet exist.

I wanted to bring these calculations to your notice to show you how the entire inner life of soul must be raised out of abstractions, how it must immerse itself in a living reality, how mental images themselves must be living. In my book, *The Riddle of Human Being*, I have made a distinction between conceptions corresponding to reality and those corresponding to unreality. To put the matter briefly, the spiritual investigator must point out that his path is such that the means of knowledge that he uses must first be awakened, that he must transform his soul before being able to look into the spiritual world. Then the results take on a form enabling one to see that the spiritual investigator is not speculating as to the immortality of

the soul or whether the soul goes through birth and death. His path of investigation leads him to the eternal in the human soul, to what goes through birth and death; the path shows him what lives as the eternal in the human being. He therefore seeks out the object, the thing, the being itself. If we reach the *being*, we can recognize its characteristics just as we recognize the color of a rose.

Hence it often appears as if the spiritual investigator were asserting that such-and-such is so. For when he presents evidence he must always indicate by what path he arrived at these things. He has to begin where the other science ends. Then, however, a real penetration is possible into spheres that may be said to take death as their starting point, just as natural scientific spheres take their start from birth and youth. We must simply be clear that this death is in no way merely the final event, as it is ordinarily regarded from the viewpoint of outer sense perception. It is rather something that has its part in existence in the same way that the forces called into life with birth have their part in existence. We do not meet death only through its taking hold of us as a one-time event; we carry the forces of death in us — destructive forces, forces that are continually destroying — just as we carry in us the forces of birth, the constructive forces that are given to us at birth.

To have real insight into this we have to be able to pursue research at a boundary between natural science and spiritual science. Today I am only able to cite the results of such research, of course; I only wish to arouse your interest. Were I to go into all the details of what I am suggesting, I would have to offer many lectures. If an individual is to pursue what has been suggested here, he must approach a boundary between natural science and spiritual science. It is widely believed today, and has been believed for some time, that the human nervous system, the human nerve apparatus, is simply an instrument of thinking, feeling, and willing, in short, an instrument for soul experiences, (Science today has for the most part gone beyond this belief, but the world view of the general public usually remains at the standpoint abandoned by science some decades before.) An individual who develops the soul organs — the eyes of the spirit, the ears of the spirit — as I have described at least in principle, comes to recognize the life of the soul.

Whoever really discovers this soul life knows that to call the brain an instrument of our thinking is much the same as to maintain the following. Let us say that I am walking over ground that has become sodden, and in it I leave my footprints. These footprints are found by someone else, who



then wishes to explain them. How does he do this? He assumes that underneath in the earth all kinds of forces are surging up and down, and because they surge in this way they produce these footprints. Of course the forces in the earth have nothing to do with the fact that these footprints have been produced, for I myself left them there, but the traces I left can now be reflected upon. This is the way that physiologists today explain what goes on in the brain, what originates in the brain, because all thinking, all mental activity and feeling correspond to something in the nervous system. Just as my tracks correspond with my footsteps, so something actually in the brain corresponds with the impressions of the soul; but the soul has first to leave its imprint there. The earth is just as little an organ for my walking or footprints as the brain is the organ for processes of thinking or mental activity. And just as I cannot walk around without firm ground (I cannot walk on air, I need ground if I want to walk) so the brain is necessary; this is not, however, because it calls forth the soul element but because the soul element needs ground and footing upon which it expresses itself during the time that the human being is living in the body between birth and death. It therefore has nothing to do with all that.

The brilliantly intellectual natural science of today will come to full clarity when this revolution in thinking comes about to which I have referred here. This revolution is more radical than the transition to the Copernican world view from the world view held previously. In face of the real world view, however, it is as justifiable as the Copernican world view was in relation to what preceded it. When we have pressed forward on the path of investigation of the soul, we will find that the processes in the brain, in the nervous system, that correspond to the soul life are not constructive. They are not there so that the productive, growing, flourishing activity is present in the nervous system as it is in the rest of the organism. No! What the soul brings about in the nervous system is a destructive activity. During our waking consciousness outside sleep it is a destructive activity.

Only by virtue of the fact that our nervous system is inserted within us in such a way that it receives constant refreshment from the rest of the organism can there be constant compensation for the destructive, dissolving, disintegrating activity introduced into our nervous system by thinking. Destructive activity is there, activity qualitatively of the same nature as what the human being goes through when he dies, when the organism is completely dissolved. In our mental activity death is living in us continually. You might say that death lives in us continually, distributed atomistically, and that the one-time death that lays hold of us at the end of

life is only the summation of what is continually working in us destructively. It is true that this is compensated for, but the compensation is such that in the end spontaneous death is evoked.

We must understand death as a force working in the organism, just as we understand the life forces. Look today at natural science, so thoroughly justified in its own sphere, and you will find that it looks only for the constructive forces; what is destructive eludes it. Hence external natural science is unable to observe what arises anew out of the destruction, not in this case of the body, for the bodily nature is destroyed, but of a soul and spiritual nature, now constructive. This aspect is always lost to observation, being accessible only to the kind of observation I have previously described. Then it becomes evident that, having meanwhile brought our life to this point, the whole activity of our soul does not work only in conjunction with the ground on which it has to develop and which, indeed, it acts upon destructively (in so far as the soul forms mental images, in so far as it is active); instead, the whole of our soul activity is attuned to a spiritual world always around us, in which we stand with our soul-spiritual element just as we stand in the physical, sense-perceptible world with our physical body. Spiritual science is thus striving for a real connection of the human being to the spiritual world that permeates everything physical to the actual, concrete, real spiritual world.

Then the possibility truly arises for a more far-reaching observation of how what is working and weaving within us as soul, working destructively within the limits I described, is a homogeneous whole. What I have called the development of the soul presses on from ordinary consciousness to clairvoyant consciousness. I have spoken about this in my book, *The Riddle of Human Being*. This clairvoyant consciousness creates the possibility of possessing Imaginative knowledge. This Imaginative knowledge does not yield what belongs to the outwardly perceptible; it yields to the human being himself (I would like to look away from the other world for the moment) what is not perceptible to his senses. To avoid misunderstanding I recently called what can be perceived at first by an awakened knowledge of this kind the *body of formative forces*. This is the super-sensible body of the human being, which is active throughout the whole course of our life, from birth, or let us say, conception, until our physical death. It also bears our memories, yet it stands in connection with a super-sensible entity, with a super-sensible outer world.

Thus, our sense life with the rest of its consciousness is there as a mere island, but around this island and even permeating it we have the relationship of the human body of formative forces to the super-sensible outer world. Here, it is true, we reach the point of bringing the whole conceptual world (not any different now from the way I have described it) into connection with the physical brain that provides the ground for all this; but we arrive at the insight that the body of formative forces is the carrier of human thoughts, that thoughts develop in this body of formative forces and that in thinking the human being lives in this body of formative forces.

It is different if we go on to another experience of the soul, namely to feeling. Our feeling, our emotions, our passions, stand in a different relationship to our life of soul from that of our thinking. The spiritual investigator finds that the thoughts we usually have are bound up with the body of formative forces. This does not apply, however, to our feelings, our emotions. Feelings and emotions live in us in a much more subconscious way. Thus they are connected with something far more all-encompassing than our life between birth and death. It is not as though the human being is without thoughts in the part of his life about which I am now speaking; all feelings are permeated by thoughts. But the thoughts by which feelings are permeated do not, as a rule, enter man's ordinary consciousness. They remain beneath the threshold of this consciousness. What surges up as feeling is penetrated by thoughts, but these thoughts are more far-reaching, for they are found only when an individual progresses in clairvoyant cognition, when he progresses to what I call the Inspired consciousness (I am not thinking of superstitious conceptions here). You may study the particulars of this in my books.

If we go deeply into what is actually sleeping in regard to ordinary Consciousness (in the same way that from going to sleep to awaking a person sleeps in regard to the ordinary images of the senses) we see that it surges up just as dreams surge up into our sleep. Feelings actually surge up from the innermost depths of the soul; it sounds strange, but it is so. But this deeper region of the soul that is accessible to Inspired knowledge is what lives between death and a new birth. It is what enters into connection with the physical through our being conceived or born, what goes through the portal of death and has a spiritual existence among other conditions until the human being is reborn. Whoever really looks into what is living in the world of feeling with Inspired knowledge sees the human being not only between birth and death but also during the time the soul undergoes between death and a new birth.

The matter is not quite so simple as this, however; it is indeed like this, but it is also shown how forces arise in the soul that make it possible to look upon the feelings, emotions, passions, that make it possible to live in them. Just as in the plant we see what has arisen through the forces of the seed, so we see something that has not arisen with our birth or conception but that has emerged from a spiritual world.

I know very well how many objections can be made to a conception of this kind by those who accept the natural scientific world view. Those who are familiar with this world view will find it easy to say, "Here he comes and like a dilettante describes how the aspects of the soul he wishes to encompass come from a spiritual world; he even describes their special configurations, the colors of the feelings and so on, as if, on the one hand, there were hints in these feelings concerning our life before birth and, on the other hand, something in these feelings that is like the seed of the plant, which will become the plant of the next year. Doesn't this man know," people will say, "about the wonderful laws of heredity presented by natural science? Is he ignorant of everything that those who created the science of hereditary characteristics have brought about?"

Even if the facts indicated by natural science are entirely correct, it is nevertheless the case that concealed in the emergence of heredity are the forces through which we have been preparing ourselves for centuries and which we ourselves send down. From grandparents and parents, constellations are built up that finally lead to the material result with which we then sheathe ourselves when we leave the spiritual world to descend into the physical. Whoever really keeps in mind the wonderful results of modern research into heredity will find that what spiritual science finds out about the soul (yet in a quite different way, it might be said, in the entirely opposite way) will be fully confirmed by natural science, whereas what natural science itself says is definitely not confirmed in the least by natural science. I can only suggest this here. When we then enter the sphere referred to as that of the will, this totally eludes the contents of man's ordinary consciousness. What does a person know about the processes going on in him when the thought, I want something, shapes itself into a movement of the hand? The actual process of willing is asleep in the human being. Regarding the feelings and emotions it could at least be said that the human being dreams within the human being. This is the reason that the question of freedom is so difficult, because the will is sleeping in relation to the higher consciousness. We come to knowledge about what is going on in the will in clairvoyant consciousness only by reaching the stage of actual Intuitive consciousness. By this I do not mean the vague,

everyday consciousness called intuitive, but rather what I refer to in my writings as one of the three stages: Imaginative, Inspired, and Intuitive cognition.

Here we come into the sphere of the will, into the realm that is supposed to live and work within us. This must first be drawn out of the deep regions of the soul. Then we find, however, that this element of the will is also permeated by thoughts, by the spiritual (in addition, the ordinary thought stands by itself). But in bearing the will within us, there works into this will something in addition to what we have experienced in the spiritual world in our feelings, working between death and a new birth. Something is active there that we have experienced in the preceding life on earth. The impulses of earlier earthly lives work into the will nature of the human being. In what we develop or what we cultivate in our present willing live the impulses for our lives on earth to come. For real spiritual science, then, the whole of human life separates into the lives lying between birth and death and those which, because all physical existence has to be built up out of the world, are experienced in far longer periods in the spiritual world. Out of such lives, out of repeated earthly lives, repeated spiritual lives, the complete human life is composed. This is not some fantasy, it is not a capricious thought, but rather something we find when we learn to turn the eye of the spirit to the eternal, the imperishable, in the human soul.

These things do not preclude human freedom. If I build a house this year in which I will live for the next two years, I will be a free man in this house despite having built it for myself. Human freedom is not precluded by this. One earthly life determines the other that follows. Only through a lack of understanding could this be represented as an infringement on the idea of human freedom.

Thus, in spiritual investigation by making death our point of departure, we gradually arrive at the spiritual facts. If in spiritual investigation one makes death the foundation, just as physical investigation is based on birth and embryonic life, this observation reveals the most varied things in individual detail. I will point to something specific here, because I would not like to remain with the indefinite but rather to quote concrete results of anthroposophical research. In the ordinary life of the spirit we are able to differentiate between the forcible entry of death due to an external cause and death that comes from within through illness or by reason of old age. We are therefore able to distinguish two different kinds of death.

Spiritual investigation that goes concretely into the nature of death discovers the following. Let us take as an example the entrance into life of violent death, be it through accident or some other cause. The entrance of such an event brings about an end to life in this earthly existence. The development of spirit consciousness for the spiritual world after death depends on this one-time entrance of death, just as the consciousness we are able to develop in life depends on the forces given us at birth (in the way that I have described). The Consciousness we develop after death is of a different kind. The consciousness developed here on earth stands on the ground of the nervous system, just as when I walk around on the ground my foundation is the ground. In the spiritual world the consciousness after death has different foundations, but it is definitely a consciousness. If a man dies a violent death this is not something that merely lays hold of his mental images. The mental activity of ordinary consciousness ceases with death, and another Consciousness begins, but this lays hold of his will which, as we have seen, passes over into the next earthly life. The spiritual investigator possesses the means to investigate what can arise in an earthly life if, in a previous earthly life, there has been a violent death.

Now when we speak of such things today, people will obviously condemn this way of speaking as foolish, childish, fantastic. Yet the results are attained just as scientifically (and it is only such results that I present) as the results of natural science. If a violent death intervenes in a life, it shows itself in the following life on earth, where its effect produces some kind of change of direction at a definite period in that life. Research is now being done concerning the soul life, but as a rule only the most external things are taken into consideration. In many human lives, at a particular moment, something enters that changes a person's whole destiny, bringing him into a different path in life in response to inner demands. In America they call these things "conversions," wanting to have a name for such events, but we do not always need to think in terms of religion. A person on another path of life may be forced into a permanent change of the direction of his will. Such a radical change of the direction of his will has its origin in the violent death of his previous life. Concrete investigation reveals the tremendous importance of what happens at death for the middle of the next life. If death comes spontaneously from within through illness or old age, then it has more significance for the life between death and a new birth than for the next earthly life.



I would like to offer the following example so that you may see that I am not speaking about anything vague here. In fact, I am speaking about details arising in life's conditions that can be gained by definite perceptions. Spiritual investigation, which is something new even for those convinced of the immortality of the human soul, makes us aware that we must not speak in merely a general way about immortality. Instead, by grasping the eternal in the human soul, human life as such becomes comprehensible. All the strange processes that are observable if we have a sense for the course taken by the soul life, for the course of the soul life in the human being, all the wonderful events find their place if we know we are dealing with repeated earthly lives and repeated spiritual lives. In the spiritual world (I say this merely parenthetically) the human being lives with spiritual beings — not only other human beings who are closely connected with him by destiny and have also passed through the portal of death, but with other spiritual beings to whom he is related in the same way that on earth the human being is related to three kingdoms: the mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms. The spiritual investigator speaks of particular individual spirits, particular individual spiritual beings, belonging to a concrete, individualized spiritual world, just as here we speak of individualized plant beings, animal beings, and human beings, in so far as they are physical beings between birth and death. It can be shattering to people when knowledge itself approaches the human soul in a totally different way. It is difficult to speak about these things so that they arise out of the dim depths of the spirit in a new way.

From what I have said you will have seen that knowledge about the spiritual world can be acquired. This knowledge has profound significance for the human soul; it makes the soul something different, as it were. It lays hold of the life of the soul, regardless of whether one is a spiritual investigator or has merely heard and understood the results of spiritual investigation and has absorbed them. It is of no importance whether or not one does the research oneself; the result can be comprehensible just the same. Everything can be understood if we penetrate it with sufficient depth. We only need to have absorbed it. Then, however, when we have grasped it in its full essence, it enters the human soul life in such a way that one day it becomes more significant than all the other events of life.

A person may have difficulties, sorrows, that have shattered him, or joy that has elevated him, or some truly sublime experience. It is not necessary to be indifferent to such experiences to be a spiritual investigator, someone who knows the spirit; one can participate as fully with the feelings as other people do who are not investigators of the spirit.

But when someone penetrates with his essential being into what is given the soul by spirit knowledge, and when he becomes capable of answering the question, "What are the effects upon the soul of these spiritual results?" — when a full answer is given to the question of what the soul has become through this spiritual knowledge, then this event becomes more important than anything else in destiny, more important than any of the other experiences of destiny that approach the human being. Not that the others become less significant, but this one becomes greater than the others. Knowledge itself then enters through the human soul life in accordance with destiny. If knowledge thus enters through the human soul life, he begins to understand human destiny as such. From this knowledge comes the light that illumines human destiny.

From this moment on, an individual can say this: that if one has this experience of destiny so purely in the spiritual in this way, it becomes clear how one is placed into life in accordance with destiny, how our destiny hangs on threads spun out of previous lives, previous earthly lives and lives between death and a new birth, which again spin themselves out of this life and into a following life. Such an individual goes on to say that ordinary consciousness only dreams through its destiny; ordinary consciousness endures its destiny without understanding it, just as one endures a dream. Clairvoyant consciousness to which one awakes, just as we awake from a dream to ordinary consciousness, acquires a new relationship to destiny. Destiny is recognized as taking part in all that our life embraces, in the life that goes through all our births and deaths.

This matter should not be grasped in a trivial way, as if the spiritual investigator were to say, "You yourself are the cause of your own misfortune." That would simply betray a misunderstanding and would even be a slander of spiritual investigation. A misfortune may not have its source at all in the previous life. It may arise spontaneously and have its consequences only in the life to follow and also in the life between earthly lives. We can see again and again that out of misfortune, out of pain and suffering, emerges a consciousness of a very different form in the spiritual world, Meaning enters the whole of our life, however, when we learn to understand our destiny, which otherwise we only dream our way through.

One thing particularly stands out when we bear in mind this knowledge of the spirit. We can no longer say, "If, after death, the soul enters another life, we can wait until this happens. Here we take life as it is offered us in the physical body; we can wait for what comes after death." The matter is a question of consciousness. We may be sure that what happens after



death is connected with the life we undergo in the body. Just as in a certain sense we have the Consciousness of our ordinary waking condition by means of our body, so after death we have a Consciousness that is no longer spatial, no longer built up out of the nervous system, but built up out of what has to do with time, built up out of looking backward.

Just as our nervous system in a way is the buttress and counterpart to our ordinary consciousness between birth and death, so our consciousness in the spiritual world between death and a new birth is founded on what takes place here in our consciousness. Just as here we have the world around us, so when we are dead we have before us our life as the significant organ. Hence, a great deal depends upon our consciousness in the physical body, which is able to extend into the consciousness we have after death. An individual may be occupied exclusively with physical conceptions grasped by the senses, as often happens in the habitual thinking of the present time; he may take into his consciousness and also in his capacity of memory, in everything playing itself out in his soul, concerns exclusively having to do with ordinary life. Such an individual, however, is also building up a world for himself after death! The environment there is built out of what a person is inwardly. A person born physically in Europe cannot see America around him, and just as he receives what he is born into physically as his environment, so to a certain extent he determines the environment, the place of his existence, through what he has built up in his body.

Let us take an extreme case, though one unlikely to happen. Let us take the case of someone who fights against all super-sensible conceptions, who has become an atheist, someone who doesn't even have any inclination to occupy himself with religion. Now I know that I am saying something paradoxical here, but it is based on good foundations anthroposophically: such an individual condemns himself to remaining in the earthly sphere with his consciousness, whereas another individual who has absorbed spiritual conceptions is transposed to a spiritual environment. The one who has absorbed only sense-perceptible conceptions condemns himself to remaining in the sense-perceptible environment.

Now we can work properly in the physical body because our physical body is, as it were, a sheath protecting us against the environment. And though we can thus work properly in the physical body when we are present in the physical world, we cannot do so if we hold to the physical world after death. We become destructive if we have physical conceptions in our consciousness after death. In speaking of the problem of heredity, I

intimated how, when the human being is in the spiritual world, his forces lay hold of the physical world. Whoever condemns himself, by reason of his merely physical consciousness, to hold to the physical world becomes the center of destructive forces that lay hold of what is happening in human life and in the rest of universal life. As long as we are in the body, we are only able to have thoughts based on the sense-perceptible, we are able to have only materialistic thoughts: the body is a defense.

But how much greater a defense than we imagine! It seems strange, but to anyone who perceives the spiritual world in all its connections, one thing is clear: if an individual were not shut off from the surrounding world by his senses, if the senses were not curbed so that in ordinary consciousness he is incapable of taking up living concepts but takes up only those that are lifeless and designed to prevent him from penetrating into the spiritual environment, if an individual were able to make his conceptions active directly and did not have them merely within him after things have already passed through the senses, then even here in the physical world, if he were to develop his conceptual life, his conceptions would have crippling, deadening effects. For these conceptions are in a certain way destructive of everything they lay hold of. Only because they are held back in us are those conceptions kept from being destructive. They destroy only when they come to expression in machines, in tools, which are also something dead taken from living nature. This indeed is only a picture, but one corresponding with a reality. If an individual enters the spiritual world with merely physical conceptions, he becomes a center of destruction.

Thus I have to bring a conception to your attention as an example of many others: we should not say that we can wait until after death, because it depends on a person's nature whether he develops conceptions of the sense world or of the super-sensible world, whether he prepares for his next life in this way or that. The next life is indeed a very different one, but it is evolved from our life here. This is the essential thing that has to be comprehended. In spiritual science, we encounter something different from what is surmised. For this reason I must still make a few remarks in closing.

The belief might easily arise that anyone now entering the spiritual world must unconditionally become a spiritual investigator himself. This is not necessarily so, although in my book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*, I have described much of how the soul must transform itself in order really to be able to enter. And to a certain degree, everyone is able to do this today, but it need not be everyone. What a person develops regarding the

soul element is a purely intimate concern; what arises from it, however, is the formation of concepts of the investigated truths. What the spiritual investigator can give is clothed in conceptions such as I have developed today. Then it can be shared. For what a person needs, it is quite immaterial whether things are investigated by himself or whether he accepts them from some other credible source. I am speaking here from a law of spiritual investigation. It is not important to investigate the things oneself. What is important is for us to have them within us, for us to have developed them within. Hence, we are in error if we believe that everyone has to become a spiritual investigator.

Today, however, the spiritual investigator has the obligation (as I myself have had the obligation) to render an account, as it were, of his path of research. This is due not only to the fact that everyone today can, to a certain extent, follow the path I have described without harm, but it is also because everyone is justified in asking, "How have you arrived at these results?" This is why I have described these things. I believe that even those who have no wish to become spiritual investigators will at least want to be convinced of how spiritual investigators arrive at the results that everyone needs today, the results of those who wish to lay the foundation for the life which must develop in human souls for human evolution today.

The time is now over during which, in ancient times, so much was held back regarding spiritual research that brought about the evolution of the soul. In those ancient times, to impart what was hidden was strictly forbidden. Even today, those who know of these mysteries of life (of which there are not just a few) still hold these things back. Whoever has learned about these things merely as a student from another teacher does not under any circumstances do well to pass them on. Today it is advisable to pass on only what an individual himself has discovered, the results only of his own investigations. These, however, can and must be put at the service of the rest of humanity.

Already from the few brief indications I was able to give today it can become evident what spiritual investigation can mean for the individual human being, but it is not only significant for the individual. And in order to address this other aspect in closing with at least a few words I would like to point to something that is taken into consideration only a little today. There is a curious phenomenon to which I would like to direct your attention in the following way. In the second half of the nineteenth century we have seen the rise of a certain natural scientific orientation: the explanation of living beings connected with the name Darwin. Enthusiastic

scholarly investigators, enthusiastic students have carried these things through the second half of the nineteenth century. Maybe I have already remarked upon the occurrence of a curious fact. Already in the 1860's, under the guidance of Haeckel, there developed a powerful movement based on a world view. This movement wanted to overthrow everything old and to restructure the entire world view in accordance with Darwinistic concepts. Today there are still numerous people who emphasize how great and significant it would be if there were no longer a wisdom-filled world-guidance but instead if the evolution of everything could be explained out of mechanical forces in the sense of Darwinism.

In 1867 Eduard von Hartmann published his *Philosophy of the Unconscious (Philosophie des Unbewussten)* and turned against the purely external view of the world represented by Darwinism. He pointed to the necessity of inner forces, although he did so in an inadequate way, in a philosophical way (he did not yet have spiritual science). Naturally those who were enthusiastic about the rise of Darwinism were ready to say, "That philosopher is simply a dilettante; we don't need to pay any attention to him." Counterattacks appeared in which the "dilettante" Eduard von Hartmann was ridiculed and which asserted that the true, educated natural scientist need not pay any attention to such things.

Then there appeared a publication by Anonymous, which brilliantly argued against the publication of Eduard von Hartmann. The natural scientists who all thought as they did were in full agreement with this publication because Eduard von Hartmann was completely contradicted in it. Everything that could possibly be gathered from the basis of natural science was there used by the anonymous author against Eduard von Hartmann just as today so much is brought up against spiritual science. This publication was received very favorably. Haeckel said, "For once a real natural scientist has written against this dilettante, Eduard von Hartmann; here one can see what a natural scientist is able to do. I myself could write no better. Let him identify himself and we will consider him as one of us." To state it briefly, the natural scientists spread a lot of propaganda in relation to this publication, which they welcomed highly because it solidified their position. The publication was very soon sold out, and a second edition became necessary. There the author revealed himself: it was Eduard von Hartmann!

In that instance someone taught the world a necessary lesson. Whoever writes about spiritual science today and reads what is written against it could without much effort invent everything that is brought against

spiritual science. Eduard von Hartmann was able himself to make all the objections that the natural scientists made against him — and he did so.

But I mention this only in introduction to my main point. Oskar Hertwig is one of the most important students of Haeckel who entered upon the industrious, reliable, and great path of natural scientific investigation. Last year Hertwig published a very beautiful book, *The Evolution of the Organism. A Rebuttal to Darwin's Theory of Chance (Das Werden der Organismen. Eine Widerlegung von Darwins Zufallstheorie)*. In this book he points to issues that were already raised by Eduard von Hartmann. Such a matter is pretty much without precedent: already the generation immediately following, which still grew up under the master, had to get away from something that had been believed could build a whole world view; it had even been believed that it could provide elucidation of the spiritual world. A good Darwinist contradicts Darwinism! But he does still more, and that is what is actually important to me.

Oskar Hertwig writes at the conclusion of his superb and beautiful book that the kind of world view that Darwinism represented does not stand there merely as a theoretical edifice; rather it intervenes in the totality of life, encompassing also what people do, will, feel, and think. He says, "The interpretation of Darwin's teaching, which because of its vagueness can have such varied meanings, permitted also a very varied application to other realms of economic, social, and political life. It was possible, just as it was from the Delphic Oracles, to use what was said as desired for specific applications to social, political, health-related, medical, and other questions and to support one's own assertions by basing them on the Darwinistically restructured biology with its immutable natural laws. If these supposed laws are not actually laws, however, could there not exist social dangers — because of their many-sided application in other realms? We had better not believe that human society can for centuries use expressions like, 'a struggle for existence,' 'survival of the fittest,' 'the most suitable,' 'the most useful,' 'perfection by selection,' etc., applying them to the most varied realms of life, using these expressions like daily bread, without influencing in a deep and lasting way the entire direction of idea formation! The proof for this assertion could easily be demonstrated in many contemporary phenomena. For this very reason the decision concerning the truth or error of Darwinism reaches far beyond the confines of the biological sciences."

What arises in such a theory shows itself everywhere in life. Then a question arises from the realm of spiritual science that also intervenes in life. We live today in a sad time, in a tragic time for humanity. It is a time



that has developed out of human conceptions, out of human ideas. Whoever studies interrelationships with the help of spiritual science knows about the connection of what we encounter externally today with what humanity is now tragically experiencing. A great deal is being experienced; people believe that they can encompass reality with their concepts, but they do not encompass it. And because they do not encompass it, because with natural scientific concepts reality can never be encompassed, reality grows over their head and shows them that human beings can take part in such events but that the result is the chaos by which we are surrounded today.

Spiritual science does not arise only through an inner necessity, though this is also true. It would have arisen through this inner necessity even if the outer events did not stand there as a mighty, powerful sign. Such signs are there, however, from the other side: that the old world views are great in the natural sciences but can never intervene formatively in the social, legislative, political spheres in the world, that reality grows beyond human beings, if that is what they want. These mighty signs point to the need for spiritual science, which seeks concepts that correspond with reality, concepts derived from reality and that are therefore also capable of carrying the world in the social and political realms. No matter how much one believes that the concepts customary outside spiritual science today will enable us to emerge out of the chaos, it will not happen; for within the reality the spirit prevails. And because the human being himself intervenes with his actions in this reality, in the social, in the political life, he requires the conceptions, the feelings, the will impulses that are drawn from the spirit in order to come to fruitful concepts in these realms. In the future politics and social science will need something for which only spiritual science can provide the foundation. This is what is particularly important for contemporary history.

In this lecture, which has already been long enough, I can only hope to offer a few impulses. I only wish to point out that what appears today as spiritual science in a systematic order is wanted by the best. If it were only up to me, I would not give a special name to this spiritual science. For more than thirty years I have been working on the greater and greater elaboration of the conceptions regarding reality that Goethe acquired in his magnificent theory of metamorphosis, in which he had already attempted to make the concept living as opposed to dead. At that time this was only possible in an elementary way. If one does not consider Goethe simply as a historical figure, however, if one considers him still as a contemporary, then today the Goethean teaching of metamorphosis transforms itself into what

I call living concepts, which then find their way into spiritual science. Goetheanism is the term I would most like to use for what I mean by spiritual scientific investigation, because it is based on sound foundations of a grasp of reality as Goethe wanted it.

And the building in Dornach that is to be dedicated to this spiritual investigation, and through which this spiritual investigation has become more well known than it would have without the building, I would like most to call the Goetheanum, so that one would see that what arises as spiritual investigation today stands fully in the midst of the healthy process of the evolution of humanity. Certainly many today who wish to acknowledge the Goethean way of looking at the world will still say that Goethe was one who recognized nature as the highest above all and who also permitted the spirit to emerge out of nature. Already as a very young man, Goethe said, "Gedacht hat sie und sinnt bestaendig" ("She did think and ponders incessantly"), ponders incessantly although not as man but as nature. Even if one is a spiritual investigator one can agree with the kind of naturalism that, like Goethe, thinks of nature as permeated by spirit. And those who always believe that one must stop at the boundaries of knowledge, that one can't get any further there, can be repudiated with Goethe's words. Permit me, therefore, as I conclude here, to add the words that Goethe used concerning another accomplished investigator who represented the later Kantian view:

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*Into the inner being of nature —  
No created spirit penetrates.  
Blissful those to whom she only  
Reveals the outer shell!*

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Next to these words Goethe placed others that show how well Goethe knew that when the human being awakes the spirit within himself, he also finds the spirit in the world and himself as spirit:

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*Into the inner being of nature —  
No created spirit penetrates.  
Blissful those to whom she only  
Reveals the outer shell!  
This I hear repeated for sixty years*

*And damn it but secretly —  
Nature has neither core nor shell,  
She is everything at once.  
Above all simply examine yourself  
To see whether you yourself are core or shell!*

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Spiritual science wishes to work toward the human being learning to examine himself as to whether he is core or shell. And he is core if he grasps himself in his full reality. If he grasps himself as core, then he also penetrates to the spirit of nature. Then in the evolution of humanity in relation to spiritual science something occurs that is similar to when Copernicus pointed from the visible to the invisible, even of this visible itself.

For the super-sensible, however, humanity will have to stir itself to grasp this super-sensible within itself. To do this one does not need to become a spiritual investigator. One needs, however, to remove all prejudices that place themselves before the soul if one wishes to understand what spiritual science intends to say out of such a Goethean attitude.

I wished to offer today only a few impulses to stimulate you further. From this point of view it is always possible at least to stimulate something, but if one wanted to go into all the details, many lectures would be needed. But I believe these few comments will have sufficed to show that something needs to be drawn out of the evolutionary process of humanity, something that will first awaken the soul to full life. No one needs to believe that this will shrivel the soul, that it will kill off anything, not even the religious life. As Goethe said:

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*Whoever possesses Science and Art,  
Has also Religion,  
Whoever possesses neither of the two,  
Had better have Religion!*

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So one can say, as the modern way of thinking is evolving, whoever finds spiritual scientific paths will also find the way to true religious life; whoever does not find the spiritual scientific path will be in danger of losing also the religious path so necessary for the future of humanity!





## 2

# The Mystery of the Double; Geographic Medicine

Translator unknown

*St. Gallen, 16th November, 1917*

In yesterday's public lecture, you will have noticed that something was said that is very significant concerning how spiritual knowledge is comprehended in human life. I have indicated that some of our contemporaries here on the physical plane take up conceptions coming primarily from the sense world, or gained with the intellect bound to the sense world. Such individuals want to know of nothing but the sense world, and I have indicated how such persons after death are in a certain sense bound to an environment that still reaches very much into the earthly, into the physical region in which the human being resides in the time between birth and death. Thus destructive forces are created within this physical world by those persons who, through their life in the physical body, confined themselves to the earthly-physical world long after their death.

Such an issue touches on deeply significant mysteries of human life, mysteries that for hundreds and thousands of years were carefully guarded by certain occult societies. They maintained that the human being was not yet mature enough to receive such truths, such mysteries (we will not look at the justification for this view today), and that becoming acquainted with them would result in great confusion. We will not say much today about the justification for keeping back from human beings these deeply incisive truths that are so significant for life, instead nurturing them only in the narrower circles of occult schools. It must be said, however, that the time has approached in which wider circles of humanity cannot and should not be without the communications of certain mysteries concerning the super-sensible world, of the kind that were mentioned yesterday. Indeed, more and more must be accomplished in communicating such matters to the public.

In earlier times, when humanity lived under different conditions, it was justifiable to hold back such mysteries within certain limits, but now this is no longer the case. Now, in what we know as the fifth post-Atlantean

epoch, the conditions of human life are such that the human being will invariably pass through the portal of death as a destroyer unless in life here on earth he increasingly seeks for mental images, concepts, and ideas that are concerned with super-sensible matters. It is incorrect, therefore, to claim that one may just as well wait and see what happens after death. No, we must know between birth and death about certain matters concerning the spiritual world, in the way that I suggested yesterday, in order to step through the portal of death with these mental images, with these ideas.

In earlier times of humanity's evolution it was different. You know that until the sixteenth century, until the emergence of the Copernican view of the world, human beings believed something entirely different concerning the structure of the world. Obviously it has been necessary for human progress, and also for the penetration of human freedom into the evolution of humanity, that the Copernican world view appeared, just as now spiritual science must appear. A different physical view of the world prevailed in pre-Copernican times, a view that may be called erroneous today. This view believed that the physical structure of the world, that the earth, stands still, the sun moving around the earth, the stars moving around the earth, and that beyond the starry heavens there is a spiritual sphere inhabited by spiritual beings. With this view of the structure of the world the human being could still pass through the portal of death without being held back after death in the earthly sphere. This world view did not yet result in human beings becoming destructive in the earthly sphere after passing through the portal of death.

Only with the abrupt entry of Copernicanism, with its picture that the whole world spread out in space is also subject to the laws of space, with its picture that the earth circles around the sun, only with such pictures arising in the Copernican view is the human being chained to physical-sensible existence and prevented from rising appropriately into the spiritual world after death.

Today one must also know the other side of the coin of this Copernican world view, now that centuries have passed during which the human soul has been confronted again and again with the magnificent advance of this view. One side is as justifiable as the other. The Copernican world view is still valued today as a mark of sophistication. It has really become a philistine sophistication to regard the Copernican world view as the only teaching that can save souls. People still consider the other view to be foolish today, the view that through the Copernican world view the human

being is chained to the earth after death unless he makes for himself a spiritual conception, as can be offered by spiritual science today. Nevertheless it is true. You already know from the Bible that many a thing that is foolishness to man is wisdom for the gods.

When the human being passes through the portal of death, his consciousness alters. It would be erroneous to believe that the human being loses consciousness after death. This curious idea is even spread around in some circles that call themselves "theosophical." It is nonsense. On the contrary, consciousness becomes much more powerful, more intensive, but it is of a different kind. Even regarding the ordinary conceptions of the physical world it must be said that the conscious conceptions after death are something different.

First of all, after death the human being meets those persons with whom he is karmically connected in his life. The departed one may meet many human souls in the spiritual world between death and a new birth. Since there interpenetrability is the rule, not impenetrability, he passes through them and by them, if I may use the expression; for him they are not there. Those to whom he has some kind of karmic connection are there. Through life here on earth we must attain increasing growth into a general world connection, even after death. The founding of societies based purely on the spiritual is already a task of the present and of the future.

Why does one try to found a society such as the Anthroposophical Society? Why does one seek to unite human beings in a certain sense under such ideas? Because thereby a karmic bond is created between people who should find each other in the spiritual world, who should belong together in the spiritual world, something they would be unable to do if they carried on their lives in an isolated way here. Precisely by virtue of the possibility of sharing spiritual knowledge and wisdom with one another, a great deal is done for the life in the spiritual world. This then works back onto the physical-sensible world, which is continually under the influence of the spiritual world. What takes place here are actually only effects; the causes occur beyond in the spiritual world, even when we are here on the physical plane.

If we concern ourselves with a great deal that is accomplished with propaganda, we could say that it is possible to establish all kinds of unions, but regardless of the initial great enthusiasm from which they derive they are usually dedicated minimally to spiritual concerns. Many associations have as their goal to transform the earth gradually into an earthly paradise.

Even before these past three years there were numerous such associations in which people worked toward gradually transforming Europe into a social paradise! What is taking place now doesn't especially support the hope that things will go as these people intended.

On the other hand, however, the working together of the physical world with the spiritual is extremely complicated. Nevertheless, it must be said that when associations are formed under the light of spiritual science, people work together not only on the world of effects but on the world of causes that lie behind the sense-perceptible effects. One must permeate oneself with this feeling if one wishes to understand properly the infinitely deep significance for humanity of living together in spiritual work both in the present and in the future.

This cannot result from any sort of merely casual association; it is a holy mission laid upon humanity of the present and the future by the divine-spiritual beings who guide the world. There are certain conceptions about the super-sensible world that human beings will have to take up, because fewer and fewer super-sensible conceptions will come from the sense world. You could say that super-sensible concepts are more and more driven out of the sense world by the advance of natural science. Thus human beings would gradually be entirely shut off from the spiritual world if they received no super-sensible, spiritual concepts. They would condemn themselves after death to being completely united with the mere physical earth, to being united also with what the physical earth will become.

The physical earth will become a corpse in the future, however, and the human being will face the terrible prospect of condemning himself, as soul, to inhabit a corpse unless he resolves to learn about the spiritual world, to take root in the spiritual world. Spiritual science's undertaking is thus a serious, significant task. We must call this task before our souls as a holy thought every day so that we never lose our fervour for this justified concern of spiritual science.

Such conceptions can be enlarged upon more and more when we work with what has already come into our spiritual stream in the many concepts about this spiritual world. Everything that comes to us in such concepts enables us to become free from bondage to the earthly, to what is destructive in the earthly, in order to work in other directions. We will still continue to be united with the souls we have left behind on the earth to whom we are karmically connected, and we will also be united with the earth, but united from different places. Indeed, we are more intensively

bound to the souls we have left behind on earth if we are connected with them from higher spiritual regions, if we are not condemned by a purely materialistic life to haunt the earth, as it were, when that is the case, we cannot be joined in love with anything on earth but are really only centers of destruction.

You see, my dear friends, if we gradually develop our consciousness here from childhood on — well, we know how this consciousness grows and develops, we don't need to describe it. After death totally different processes prevail so that we gradually acquire the consciousness that we must acquire for the life between death and a new birth. Here on earth we walk around and do things, we have experiences, but it is not the same after death, when this is no longer necessary. What is necessary, however, is that we disengage ourselves from the powerful intensive element that is united with us when we have relinquished the physical body. When we have passed through the portal of death, we have grown together with the spiritual world described here by spiritual science. We describe it as the world of higher hierarchies: Angels, Archangels, Archai, Exusiai, Dynamis, Kyriotetes, and so on; we describe it as the world of the higher hierarchies and the deeds and experiences of these hierarchies. Here the world is outside us, we are surrounded by the world of the mineral kingdom, of the plant kingdom, of the animal kingdom. When we have passed through the portal of death, these spiritual beings that we have enumerated as the higher hierarchies, and even the worlds of these beings, are within us. We are united with them, we cannot at first distinguish ourselves from them. We live in them through their permeating us.

This is a difficult concept, but we must accustom ourselves to it: here we are outside the world, there we are within the world. There our being spreads itself over the entire world, but we are not able to distinguish ourselves in it. After death we are stuffed full, as it were, with the beings of the higher hierarchies, and with what these hierarchies do. It is most important that we first be able to separate the nearest hierarchy by which we are permeated, the hierarchy of Angels, Archangels, and Archai, from the higher hierarchies. Over there we do not come to a proper ego-consciousness at all (I have already described this maturation of ego-consciousness from other points of view in cycles and lectures). We do not come to a proper ego-consciousness over there if we are unable to find the force in us to distinguish what is in us: an Angel? an Elohim? Which is a being from the hierarchy of Angeloi? Which is a being from the hierarchy of the Exusiai, the Spirits of Form? Over there we must learn to distinguish, we must have the power to separate what we want to know from what is



united with us; otherwise it is in us, not outside us. Here we must come together with what is outside us, we must look at it; there we must disengage it from us, so that we may be united with it.

At the present stage of humanity's evolution, the world is such that we can release what we otherwise bear within us as if in a sleeping state only by acquiring spiritual concepts, those spiritual concepts that here people find so uncomfortable because they have to make a little bit of an effort, more effort than for ordinary concepts. If an individual acquires spiritual concepts, these concepts develop a tremendous force after death through which he gains the ability to recognize the spiritual world, to penetrate it. This is very important. People find it uncomfortable today to acquire spiritual concepts. They would rather go to presentations where slides are shown or something of that sort, so that they have to do as little super-sensible thinking as possible, since they can see everything. Or they like at least to go to presentations where they are told about things that they usually have before their eyes. But people avoid the effort of elevating themselves to concepts that are more difficult because they refer to no outer object, because their object is the facts to which they are related in the super-sensible world. Over there, however, they are the forces that first give the world to us in its reality.

Thus through spiritual ideas and concepts, we gain for ourselves the wisdom we need in order to have light on the other side; otherwise everything is dark. For what is acquired here as wisdom is light over there, spiritual light. Wisdom is spiritual light. In order that it may not be dark over there, we need wisdom. And if we do not acquire any spiritual concepts, we provide the best means to having no light in the spiritual world. Without light, one then moves out of the sphere that should be illuminated and comes back to the earth, where, being dead, one wanders around as a destructive center on earth. At best one can then be used by a black magician to give inspiration for very special projects and destructive works on earth.

Wisdom is therefore necessary so that one may have light after death. After death, however, an individual not only needs the ability to disengage himself from the beings of the spiritual world and have them before him but he also needs the capacity for love after death. Otherwise he would not be able to develop in the right way relationships to the beings that are seen through wisdom. One needs love. But the love that is developed here on earth is essentially dependent on the physical body; it is a feeling, which here in the physical world is dependent upon the rhythm of

breathing. This love we cannot take over into the spiritual world. It would be a total illusion to suppose that the love developed here, especially at the present time, can be taken over into the spiritual world.

However one does take into the spiritual world all the force of the love from what one gains here in the physical world through sensory perception, through life with physical being. Love is already enkindled through the understanding that is developed here in the physical world for this physical world. And precisely such experiences as the experience of viewing the world with modern natural science — if one takes them up as feelings — develop love for the other side. Love may be something lofty or debased depending on the realm in which it unfolds. If you pass through the portal of death and must remain in the region of the earth as a destructive center, you have also developed a great deal of love, of course (for having to remain is a consequence of your having been united with purely natural scientific concepts), but you apply this love to the work of destruction, you love the work of destruction, and you are compelled to observe how you yourself love this destructive work.

Yet love is something noble when a person can rise to higher worlds and love what he conquers for himself through spiritual concepts. Let us not forget that love is something base when it works in a lower sphere, but it is noble and lofty and spiritual when it works in a higher, spiritual sphere. This is the essential point, the question of what it is approaching. Without being conscious of this, we cannot look at things in the right way at all.

You see, it is concepts such as these about the human being's life after death that an individual must make his own today. It is no longer adequate for humanity of the present time and it is especially inadequate for humanity of the near future for the preacher to say that they must believe this or that, that they must prepare themselves for eternal life. This remains inadequate if the preacher is never able to say something definite about the world the human being actually enters when he passes through the portal of death. In earlier times this was sufficient, because the natural scientific, naturalistic concepts did not yet exist, because human beings were not yet infected by the merely material interests that have gradually laid hold of everything since the sixteenth century.

In earlier times it was sufficient to speak to people about the supersensible world in the way in which the religious faiths still want to speak. Today this will no longer do. Today people often get themselves into difficulties precisely because they wish to promote eternal bliss in an

egoistic way through the religious faiths. This is done out of deep sympathy for humanity, it must be noted. In this way, however, people entangle themselves all the more in the physical-sensible, in the naturalistic world, thus obstructing the ascent after passing through the portal of death.

When this happens, an entirely different situation arises, one that makes it necessary to emphasize very strongly that in the present and in the future spiritual science must be pursued by humanity. People have a deplorable situation when they can create for themselves no spiritual scientific conceptions for the life after death. Spiritual science is at the same time something that one must try to spread. Thus out of deep sympathy for people, out of an inner compassion, spiritual science is something that must be spread further, because it is deplorable what happens when people resist spiritual scientific conceptions, when they resist by their lack of understanding.

We must be absolutely clear, however, that the spiritual world is present everywhere. Just think, the world in which the dead are with the dead, in this super-sensible world, the threads that join the dead to those still living, the threads that join the dead to the higher hierarchies, belong to the world in which we stand. Just as the air is around us, so truly is this world always around us. We are not separated from this world at all; only by conditions of consciousness are we separated from the world we cross into after death. This must be firmly emphasized, for even within our circle not everyone is clear about the fact that the dead will fully find the dead again, that we are separated only as long as we are in the physical body. The other is without the physical body, but all those forces must be acquired that bring us together with the dead through our disengaging ourselves from them. Otherwise they live in us, and we cannot become aware of them! We must also bring into the right sphere the force of love that is developed here through natural scientific conceptions, for otherwise this force becomes an evil force for us over there. Precisely the love that is developed through natural scientific conceptions is able to become an evil force. A force in itself is neither good nor evil; it is one or the other according to the sphere in which it manifests.

Just as we stand in connection with this super-sensible world in which the dead reside, so also is the super-sensible world projected into this physical-sensible world, though in a different way. Indeed, the world is complicated, and comprehension of it must be acquired slowly and gradually. But one must have the will to do so.

The spiritual world projects into our world. Everything is interpenetrated by the spiritual world. In the sense-perceptible there is everywhere a super-sensible element. The super-sensible element that has to do with man's own sense-perceptible nature must be of very special interest to him. Now I beg you to note the following very carefully, for it is an exceedingly important conception. We human beings consist of body, soul, and spirit, but that is by no means an exhaustive statement concerning our being. Our body, our soul, our spirit are what first approach our consciousness, as it were, but they are not everything standing in connection with our existence. Not in the least! What I am about to say is connected with certain mysteries of human becoming, of human nature, which must be known today and become ever better known.

When the human being enters into earthly existence through birth, acquiring his physical body, he does not gain only the possibility of giving his existence to his own soul. I beg you to consider this well. The human being by no means knows everything about this physical body. Many things go on in it about which he knows nothing! He gradually comes to know what goes on in this physical body, yet in a very unsuitable way, through anatomy and physiology. If we had to wait for nourishment until we understood the process of digestion — well, one could not even say that people would have to die of hunger, for it is unthinkable that one must know something about what the organs have to do in order to prepare food for the organism! Thus a human being comes into this world with the organism in which he has clothed himself but without extending down into this organism with his soul. The opportunity therefore exists a short time before we are born (not very long before we are born) for another spiritual being in addition to our soul to take possession of our body, of the subconscious part of our body.

A short time before we are born we are permeated by another being; in our terminology we would call it an Ahrimanic spirit-being. This is within us just as our own soul is within us. These beings spend their life using human beings in order to be able to be in the sphere where they want to be. These beings have an extraordinarily high intelligence and a significantly developed will, but no warmth of heart at all, nothing of what we call human soul warmth (*Gemüt*). Thus we go through life in such a way that we have both our souls and a double of this kind, who is much more clever, very much more clever than we are, who is very intelligent, but with a Mephistophelian intelligence, an Ahrimanic intelligence, and also

an Ahrimanic will, a very strong will, a will that is much more akin to the nature-forces than our human will, which is regulated by the warmth of soul (*Gemüt*).

In the nineteenth century, natural science discovered that the nervous system is permeated by electrical forces. Natural science is right. But when natural scientists believe that the nerve-force that belongs to us as the basis of our conceptual life has something to do with electrical streams that go through our nerves, then they are incorrect. For the electrical streams, which are the forces put into us by the being I have just mentioned and described, do not belong to our own being at all. We carry electrical streams in us, but they are of a purely Ahrimanic nature.

These beings of high intelligence, but of purely Mephistophelian intelligence, and with a will more akin to nature than can be said of the human will, these beings once decided out of their own will that they did not want to live in that world in which they were destined to live by the wisdom-filled gods of the higher hierarchies. They wanted to conquer the earth, and to do this they need bodies; they do not have bodies of their own. They make use of as much of the human body as they can, because the human soul cannot entirely fill up the human body.

As the human body develops, these beings are able to enter this human body at a definite time before the human being is born, and below the threshold of our consciousness they accompany us. There is only one thing in human life that they absolutely cannot endure: they cannot endure death. Therefore they must always leave this human body, in which they have established themselves, before that body succumbs to death. This is a very harsh disappointment again and again, for just what they want to attain — to remain in human bodies beyond death — is thwarted. To do this would be a lofty achievement in the kingdom of these beings. Up until now they have not attained it.

Had the Mystery of Golgotha not occurred, had Christ not passed through the Mystery of Golgotha, conditions on earth would have been such that these beings would long ago have attained the possibility of remaining within the human being when he is karmically predestined for death. Then they would have completely triumphed over human evolution on earth, they would have become masters of human evolution on earth.

It is of tremendous and profound significance to have insight into the connection between Christ passing through the Mystery of Golgotha and these beings who want to conquer death in human nature but are not yet able today to endure it. They must always avoid experiencing in the human body the hour when the human being is predestined to die. They must avoid maintaining his body beyond the hour of death, of prolonging the life of his body beyond the hour of death.

This matter of which I am now speaking has long been known to certain occult brotherhoods. They knew these things well and withheld them from humanity (again, we do not want to discuss their right to do so). Today conditions are such that it is impossible not to equip people gradually with such concepts, which they will need when they have passed through the portal of death. Everything that the human being experiences here, even what he experiences below the threshold of consciousness, he needs after death, because he must look back upon this life, and in looking back this life must be entirely comprehensible. The worst thing is for him to be unable to do this. An individual will not have sufficient concepts to understand this life on looking back at it if he cannot shed light on a being that takes over a portion of our life. This is an Ahrimanic being, which takes possession of us before our birth and always remains there, always creating a figure around us in our subconscious. This will be the case unless we can again and again shed light upon it. For wisdom becomes light after death.

These beings are in general very important for human life, and knowledge of them must gradually lay hold of the human being, and will lay hold of him. Only it must lay hold of human beings in the right way. It must not be disseminated to humanity only by those occult brotherhoods who make it a power issue, intending thereby to enhance their own power. Above all it must not be guarded further for the sake of enhancing the power of certain egotistically minded brotherhoods. Humanity strives for universal knowledge, and that knowledge must be disseminated.

In the future it will no longer be wholesome for occult brotherhoods to be able to employ such things for the extension of their power. In the coming centuries human beings must increasingly gain knowledge of these beings. The human being in the coming centuries will have to know more and more that he bears such a double within him, such an Ahrimanic-Mephistophelian double. The human being must know this. Today the human being is already developing a great many concepts, but they are actually obscured, because the human being does not yet know how to



deal with them in the *right* way. The human being develops concepts today that can have a proper basis only when they are brought together with the facts that lie at their foundation.

And here something is disclosed that in the future must really be followed up if the human race is not to experience endless hindrances, really endless horrors. This double about which I have spoken is nothing more or less than the creator of all physical illnesses that emerge spontaneously from within; and to know him fully is organic medicine, illnesses that appear spontaneously from within the human being come not through outer injuries, not from the human soul, they come from this being. He is the creator of all illnesses that emerge spontaneously from within; he is the creator of all organic illnesses. And a brother of his, who is not composed Ahrimanicly but Luciferically, is the creator of all neurasthenic and neurotic illnesses, all the illnesses that are not really illnesses but only nervous illnesses, hysterical illnesses as they are described. Thus medicine must become spiritual in two directions. The demand for this is shown by the intrusion of views such as those of psychoanalysis and the like, where one keeps house with spiritual entities, as it were, but with inadequate means of knowledge so that one can do nothing at all with the phenomena that will intrude more and more into human life. For certain things need to happen, things that may even be harmful in a certain direction, because the human being must be exposed to what is harmful in order to overcome it and thereby gain strength.

As I have said, this double is really the creator of all illnesses that have an organic foundation that are not merely functional. In order to understand this fully, however, one must know a great deal more. One must know, for example, that our entire earth is not the dead product that mineralogy or geology thinks it to be, but it is a living being. Geology knows as much of the earth as we would know about the human being if we knew only the skeletal system. Imagine that you were unable to perceive other people with usual sense perception and instead there were only X-rays of our fellow human beings. Then you would know only the skeletal system of your acquaintances. You would know as much about the human being as the geologists and science in general know about the earth. Imagine coming in here and of all the respected ladies and gentlemen you find here you would see nothing more than bones. Then you would have as much consciousness of the people present here as science has of the earth.

The earth, which is known only as a skeletal system, is a living organism. As a living organism it works upon the beings who walk around on it, including human beings themselves. And just as the human being is differentiated within regarding the distribution of his bodily organs, so the earth is also differentiated regarding what it develops out of its living nature, by which it influences the people who walk around on it. When you think, you are not exerting your right index finger or your left big toe but your head. You know perfectly well that you do not think with your right big toe; you think with your head. Thus things are distributed in the living organism, which is differentiated. Our earth is differentiated in the same way. The same things do not at all stream out everywhere from the earth onto its inhabitants. In the different regions of the earth, something entirely different streams forth. There are different forces, among them magnetism and electricity, but also forces that enter more into the realm of the living. All these forces come up out of the earth and influence people in the most varied ways at different points on the earth. They influence the human being in various ways according to the geographical formation.

This is a very important fact. What the human being is initially as body, soul, and spirit has really very little direct relation to these forces that work up out of the earth. But the double about which I have spoken chooses to be related to these forces that stream up out of the earth. And indirectly, by way of mediation, the human being as body, soul, and spirit stands in relation to the earth, and to that which rays out at various points. This is due to the fact that his double cherishes the most intimate relationship to what streams forth there. There beings that take possession of the human being as Ahrimanic-Mephistophelian beings a short time before he is born have quite highly developed tastes. Some of these beings are especially pleased with the Eastern hemisphere: Europe, Asia, Africa. They choose to make use of the bodies of human beings born there. Others choose bodies born in the Western hemisphere, in America. What we have as a dim image in our geography is for these beings a living principle of their own experience. They choose their dwelling place according to this.

From this you will see further that one of the most important tasks of the future will be to foster again something that has been interrupted: geographic medicine, medical geography. With Paracelsus it was torn away from the ancient atavistic wisdom. Since then it has hardly been nurtured because of materialistic views. It must take its place again, and many things must become known again if we are to come to know the connection of the illness-producing being in man with earthly geography, with all the fusions, with all the outward radiations that emerge from the

earth in the various regions. It is very important for the human being to become acquainted with these things, for his life depends on it. In a very definite way he is inserted into this earthly existence by this double, and this double has his dwelling place within, within the human being himself.

This has become so infinitely important only in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch and will become especially important to human beings in the very near future. For this reason spiritual science must now spread, and this is now especially important because the present time calls upon the human being to reach an understanding of these things in a conscious way in order to find a relationship to these things. The human being must become strong in this epoch in order to adapt his existence to these beings.

This epoch began in the fifteenth century, our present period beginning in 1413. The fourth post-Atlantean period, the Greco-Latin, began in 747 B.C. and lasted until 1413. This was a time when a milder incision in history took place. The fifth post-Atlantean epoch began at that time, and we continue to live in it now. Only gradually is it bringing forth its special characteristics in our time, although these have been in preparation since the fifteenth century. In the fourth post-Atlantean epoch it was chiefly the Intellectual Soul (*Verstandes- und Gemütseele*) that was developed; now it is the Consciousness Soul that is being developed in the general evolution of humanity.

When the human being entered into this epoch, the guiding spiritual beings had to consider his special weakness in relation to this double. Had the human being taken into his consciousness very much of everything connected with this double, it would have gone badly, very badly for the human being. Already in the centuries before the fourteenth century, the human being had to be prepared by being protected, so that he would take in very little of what was suggestive in any way of this double. Therefore the knowledge of this double that existed throughout earlier ages was lost. Humanity had to be guarded so that it would not take up anything of the theory of this double; not only this, however, but it had to come in contact as little as possible with anything connected with this double.

For this purpose a very special arrangement was required. You must try to understand what developed at that time. In the centuries preceding the fourteenth century, the human being had to be guarded from this double. The double had to be gradually withdrawn from man's circle of vision. Only now is he gradually permitted to come into it again, now when the human being must adapt his relationship to him. A really significant arrangement

was required, which could be attained only in the following way. Since the ninth or tenth century, conditions in Europe were gradually adjusted in such a way that the European people lost a certain connection that they had formerly, a connection that was still important for human beings in earlier centuries, the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Beginning in the ninth century and especially from the twelfth century on, the entire shipping exchange with America with the *kind* of ships there were at that time, was abolished.

This may sound very strange to you. You will say, "We have never heard anything like this in history." In many respects, history is just a *fable convenue* a legend; for in earlier centuries of Europe development, ships continually sailed from the Norway of that time to America. Of course it was not called America it had a different name at that time. America was known to be the region where the magnetic forces particularly arose that brought the human being into relation with this double. For the clearest relations to the double proceed from that region of the earth that comprises the American continent. And in the earlier centuries people sailed over to America in Norwegian ships and studied illnesses there. The illnesses in America brought about under the influence of earthly magnetism were studied by Europe. And the mysterious origin of the older European medicine is to be sought there. There one could observe the course of illness that could not have been observed in Europe, where people were more sensitive with regard to the influence of the double.

Then it was necessary for the connection with America to be gradually forgotten, and this was essentially brought about by the Roman Catholic Church through its edicts. And only after the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch was America rediscovered in a physical, sense-perceptible way. This was only a rediscovery, however, which is so significant because the powers that were at work actually achieved their purpose: that nothing very much should be reported in the record of the ancient relations of Europe with America. And where it is reported it is not recognized, it is not known that these things relate to the connection of Europe with America in ancient times. The visits were nothing more than visits. That the Europeans themselves became the American people (as is said today when the expression "people" is confused with "nation" in an incomprehensible way) was possible only after the physical discovery of America, the physical rediscovery of America. Earlier there were visits that were made in order to study how the double plays a very special role in the differently constituted Indian race.

For a long time before the beginning of the development of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, Europe had to be protected from the influence of the Western world. This is the significant historical arrangement that was cultivated by wisdom-filled world powers. Europe had to be protected for a long time from all these influences; and it could not have been protected if the European world had not been completely shut off from America in the centuries before the fifteenth century.

The effort had to be made for a long time in the preparatory centuries to give something to European humanity that carried the finer sensitivity. You could say that the intellect, which had to take hold of its proper place in this fifth post-Atlantean epoch, had to be very carefully protected in its first appearance. What was supposed to be revealed to it had to be presented to it very gently. Often this refinement was similar to the refinement of education, where sound measures of punishment are also applied, of course. Everything to which *I* am referring pertains, of course, to greater historical impulses.

Thus it happened that Irish monks in particular who were under the influence of the pure Christian-Esoteric teaching developed in Ireland, worked in such a way that the necessity was perceived in Rome to cut Europe off from the Western hemisphere. For it was intended that this movement arising in Ireland should spread Christianity over Europe in such a way, in these centuries before the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, that people would not be disturbed by all that was emerging from the sub-earthly regions in the Western hemisphere. Europe was to be kept ignorant of all the influences from the Western hemisphere.

This is a good place to speak about these conditions. Columban and his pupil Gallus were essential individuals in the greatly significant mission movement that sought its success in Christianizing Europe by surrounding Europe at that time with spiritual walls, and allowing no influence to come from the direction I have indicated. Individualities such as Columban and his pupil Gallus, who founded the city where I am lecturing today and from whom it gets its name (St. Gallen) saw above all that the tender plant of Christianity could be spread in Europe only if Europe were Surrounded by a wall, as it were, in the spiritual respect.

Behind the processes of world history lie deep mysteries filled with significance. The history taught and learned in schools is only a *fable convenue*. Among the facts most important for an understanding of modern Europe is this one: that from the centuries when Ireland began to

spread Christianity in Europe until the twelfth century, the Roman Church worked on the problem at the same time through papal edicts, which gradually forbade shipping between Europe and America, so that Europe completely forgot the connection with America. This lapse in memory was needed so that the early period of preparation in Europe for the fifth post-Atlantean epoch could be developed in the right way. And only when the materialistic period began was America discovered again to the West, as is related today. From the East, America was discovered under the influence of the greed for gold, under the influence of purely materialistic culture, which simply must be taken into account in this fifth post-Atlantean epoch, and to which man has to find a suitable relationship.

These things are actual history. And these things, I also think, clarify what is actually the case. The earth is really something that must be called "living being." In accordance with geographical differentiations, the most varied forces stream up out of the various territories. Therefore people must not be separated according to territory but must receive from one another what is good and great in each territory and what can be produced just there. Hence a spiritual scientific world view is intent upon creating something that can really be accepted by all nations in all regions. For people must advance in the mutual exchange of their spiritual treasures. This is the important point.

On the other hand, there very easily arises from individual territories the endeavor to increase power and power and power. And the great danger emerging from the one-sided way in which the evolution of modern humanity is advancing can be judged from concrete, from truly concrete conditions, only when one knows that the earth is an organism, when one knows what is actually occurring from the various points of the earth. In Eastern Europe there is relatively little inclination purely toward what streams out of the earth. The Russians, for example, are fervently connected through the soil, but they receive quite special forces out of the soil, forces that do not come from the earth. The secret of the Russian geography consists of the fact that the Russian receives from the earth the light that is first imparted to the earth and then reflected back again from the earth. The Russian actually takes from the earth what streams toward it from outer regions. The Russian loves his earth, but he loves it because to him it is a mirror of the heavens. Because of this the Russian, even though he is so territorially minded, has something in this territorial inclination that is extraordinarily cosmopolitan although today this remains at a childlike stage — because the earth, moving through space, comes into relation to every possible part of the earth's environment. And when a



person receives into his soul, not what streams upward from below in the earth but what streams downward from above and then upward again, then it is different from receiving streams directly from the earth, which are placed in a certain kinship to human nature. But what the Russian loves in his earth, with which he permeates himself, gives him many weaknesses, but above all it gives him a certain ability to conquer that double nature of which I have spoken previously. Therefore he will be called upon to offer the most important impulses to the epoch in which this double nature must finally be subdued, in the sixth post-Atlantean epoch.

A certain portion of the earth's surface shows the closest kinship to these forces. If a person goes to this place, he enters their realm; as soon as he goes elsewhere, he is again outside their realm. For these forces are geographic; they are not ethnographic, not national, but purely geographic forces. There is a region where the force streaming up from below has the most influence on the double, and where, because with the outstreaming forces it enters most into kinship with the double, it is again imparted to the earth. This is the region of the earth where most of the mountain ranges run, not crosswise, from east to west, but where the ranges primarily run, from north to south (for this is also connected with these forces) where one is in the vicinity of the magnetic North Pole. This is the region where above all the kinship is developed with the Mephistophelian-Ahrimanic nature through outer conditions. And through this kinship much is brought about in the continuing evolution of the earth.

Today the human being should not move blindly through earthly evolution; he must be able to see through such relationships. Europe will be able to come into a proper relationship with America only when such conditions can be understood, when it is known what geographical determinants come from there. Otherwise, if Europe continues to be blind to these things, it will be with this poor Europe as it was with Greece in relation to Rome. This should not be; the world should not be geographically Americanized. First, however, this must be understood. Things should not be taken with such lack of seriousness as is so common today. Things have deep foundations, and knowledge is necessary today, not merely sympathy and antipathy, in order to gain a position in the connections in which present-day humanity is so tragically placed. Such things as we can discuss here more intimately can only be hinted at in public lectures. Yesterday I called attention to the necessity for spiritual science really to penetrate also into social and political concepts. For America's endeavor is to mechanize everything, to drive everything into the realm of pure naturalism, and gradually to extinguish European culture

from the earth. It cannot be otherwise. Obviously geographical concepts are not concepts of a people as such. It is only necessary to think of Emerson in order to know that nothing is intended here as characteristic of a people. But Emerson was a man of European education through and through. This *simply* shows the two opposite poles that are developing. Precisely under such influences as have been characterized today, people such as Emerson develop, who develop as they do because they confront the double with complete humanity. On the other hand, people are developing such as Woodrow Wilson, who is a mere sheath of the double, through whom the double himself works with special effectiveness. Such people are essentially actual embodiments of the geographic nature of America.

These matters are not connected with sympathy or antipathy, or with any kind of partisanship. They are connected solely with knowledge of the deeper causes of what human beings undergo in life. But it will achieve very little for the salvation of humanity unless clarification is given about what is really active in these matters. And today it is very necessary to make a connection again with much that had to be torn apart at the turning-point of a new epoch when the way to America was blocked. And I would like to offer human beings such as Gallus as a symbol of what you can feel and experience here in so many ways. They had to create a ground for their activity through the barrier they had erected. Such things must be understood.

Spiritual science alone will create real historical understanding. But you see prejudice upon prejudice will naturally pile up. For how could one think otherwise than that such knowledge too would begin to be partisan! But this was one of the reasons that certain occult brotherhoods concealed these things, though this reason is a cowardly one. They were concealed for the simple reason that knowledge is often uncomfortable for people. People do not want to become universally human, and this is especially the case with those who are predisposed to unite themselves with geographic outstreamings.

Questions of public life will gradually become questions of knowledge, lifted out of the atmosphere into which they have been forced today by an overwhelming majority of humanity. They will be forced out of the mere sphere of sympathies and antipathies. What is effective will by no means be decided by majorities. But what is effective can only have its effect if people do not shrink back from receiving important facts into their consciousness.

You could say that I have spoken here today in this way because the *genius loci* of this place requires it of me. It has been pointed out to you in a special example that for people of the present it is not enough any more to know history, to take the ordinary textbooks in hand, for there one discovers only that *fable convenue* (a story or fable agreed upon ~A) known today as history. What does one discover there about the important paths of exchange — particularly those lying in the dim origins of medicine — that still led from Europe to America in the early Christian centuries? What exists, however, does not really cease to be just because people later render their consciousness blind to it, like the ostrich that sticks its head in the sand so as not to see and then believes that what he fails to see is not there. A great deal is concealed from people simply by the *fable convenue* called "history," a great deal whose influence is quite near to contemporary man. Spiritual science will bring much more to light about the historical course of humanity, for people want to be clear about their own destiny, about the connection of their souls with their spiritual evolution.

Much of what has been historically lost spiritual science can bring to light. Otherwise humanity will have to decide to remain ignorant about a great deal that is close at hand. And although the human being of the present is informed about everything but how he is informed! — he will be able to make a judgment about the present only from a spiritual scientific standpoint. For with all due respect (you know one always says "with all due respect" when one says something unflattering), humanity is informed today about all sorts of things by the press, but it is informed by the press in such a way that the essential aspect, the true aspect, the real aspect, that which matters, is hidden.

And the human being must come to this degree of the knowledge of reality! This is not in the least something either personal or impersonal directed against the press, but it is intended to show that the press is connected with the active forces of the present and cannot be otherwise. Things cannot be otherwise, but man must be conscious of them. The great error is for a person to believe he must criticize things. What he must do is characterize them. This is the point.

I have tried to give you today a picture of many kinds of impulses that are active in the individual human being and in humanity as a whole. Apart from the particulars about which I have spoken, I wanted most of all to call forth, through the kind of impulse I have touched upon, a feeling for how the human being must notice the way in which he is imbedded with his whole being in a concrete spiritual world, with concrete spiritual beings and

concrete spiritual forces. I do this not only so that we grow into the world we enter after death and in which we live between death and a new birth but also, while we are here in the physical world, so that we may understand this physical world if we understand the spiritual world at the same time.

Medicine can endure only if it is a spiritual science, for illnesses come from a spiritual being that only makes use of the human body in order to profit from it, which it cannot do in the place assigned to it by the wise guidance of the world, against which it has revolted, as I have shown you. This is actually an Ahrimanic-Mephistophelian being within the human nature, which before birth is inhaled into the human body as into its home and leaves this human body only because it may not endure death under its present conditions, which cannot overcome death. Illnesses emerge because this being works in the human being. And when remedies are employed it means that something is given to this being from the outer world that it otherwise seeks through the human being. If I provide a remedy for the human body when this Ahrimanic-Mephistophelean being is at work, I give it something else. I stroke this being as it were. I come to terms with it, so that it lets go of the human being and becomes satisfied with what I have tossed into its jaws as a remedy.

All these things are just beginning, however. Medicine will become a spiritual science. Just as medicine was known as a spiritual science in ancient times, so it will again come to be known as a spiritual science.

Now, of course, I will also have called forth in you this feeling: that it is necessary not only to acquire a few concepts from spiritual science but to feel one's way into it; for in doing so one feels one's way also into the human being. The time has come when many scales will fall from people's eyes, even regarding outer history, for example, as I proved a couple of days ago in Zurich. There I at least showed that it is not perceived outwardly by the human being but is dreamed in reality, that one understands it only if one grasps it out of the dream of humanity not as something that is accomplished outwardly.

It is to be hoped that these things will then be carried further by the force that humanity has acquired in very small part (all too small) in what we call the anthroposophical movement. But this anthroposophical movement will be connected with what humanity will have to pursue in the future as its most important concerns. We must often remind ourselves of that simile that I have often used. The very clever people in the world

think, "Oh, those anthroposophists; that is only a sect with all kinds of fantastic stuff, with all kinds of foolishness in their heads. The educated part of humanity need not bother itself with that." This "educated part of humanity" thinks today about this sub-earthly, sectarian assembly among anthroposophists and theosophists in the same way, although modified by time, that the Romans, the distinguished Romans, felt when Christianity was spreading. The difference is that at that time the Christians had to be physically down below in catacombs; up above those things went on that were regarded by the distinguished Romans as the only right, while the dreaming Christians were down below. In a couple of centuries this was different. Romanism was swept away, and what had been down in the catacombs came up. What had ruled civilization was cast out.

Such comparisons must strengthen our forces, they must live into our souls so that we find strength in them, because we ourselves must still work in small circles. But the movement that is characterized by this anthroposophical stream must develop the force that can also actually come up. Once up above, to be sure, it finds little understanding for its spiritual basis. In spite of this, however, we must again and again think back to something like these conditions of the early Christians in the Roman catacombs. Despite the fact that it was sub-earthly, to a much greater degree than the anthroposophical movement is today, it nevertheless found its way to the surface. And many of those within this anthroposophical movement who have come to an understanding of spiritual concepts have already found the possibility in the sphere in which these spiritual concepts, which here are wisdom, unfold as light, of reckoning with that light.

And we must say again and again that among the membership that works together in the anthroposophical movement there always stand side by side those who are in the physical world and those who are already beyond in the super-sensible world, who have already passed through the portal of death and who are keepers today of what is gained here as spiritual wisdom. In this connection we can think of quite a number of members whose souls reside in the super-sensible. At this moment we remember Fraulein Sophie Stinde, one of our faithful coworkers on the building in Dornach. I think we will recall her today because it is a year ago in these days that her physical death-day took place, which is the super-sensible birthday for spiritual life.

What matters, my dear friends, is that we really strive to stand within the positive anthroposophical movement, to deepen in ourselves the feeling that we take up the concrete concepts about the spiritual world through what is really united with us. Now these are difficult times. We know that there are even more difficult times ahead. But whatever the conditions may be with regard to our being together on the physical plane, however long or short a time it may be until we meet again, let me say to you that we want to feel together and think together even if we are spatially separated from one another. We want always to be together in our spiritual scientific endeavors.





### 3

## Behind the Scenes of External Events, I

Translated by Dorothy S. Osmond and Owen Barfield

*Zürick, 6th November, 1917*

Many years ago, when I was working in Berlin, the news filtered into a theatre during the performance that the Empress of Austria had been assassinated at Geneva by one of the "Propagandists by Action" — so they were being called at that time. [1] During one of the intervals I happened to be standing near a man who was then a literary critic in Berlin and has since written philosophical books which have gained a certain reputation. This man voiced his astonishment at the news in a way that still lingers in my memory. He said: "One can understand many things that happen in the world without in the least justifying or approving of them ... one can understand many things that happen ... but that a revolutionary movement should instigate the murder of a sick woman whose continued existence could have made no real difference, whose death anyhow can have no clear connection with any political idea, this" — said the man — "is incomprehensible; it just doesn't make sense."

I am sure this man was expressing what must be the opinion of every right-minded, educated person in the modern world. We are reminded that in the life of men and the course of history, things do happen which seem senseless and purposeless not only when judged by the normal standards but even when they are attributed to some form of aberration.

But events of this very nature — and many, many others might be cited — show that what appears outwardly incomprehensible must inevitably do so because behind the scenes of world affairs — if I may use this expression — spiritual forces and spiritual deeds are playing to and fro [a phrase meaning *back and forth* – e.Ed], both in the good and in the bad sense. These spiritual deeds and happenings are only to be understood when the light of Spiritual Science can be shed into those regions that lie behind the scenes of life in the ordinary world of the senses. Things happen which become intelligible only when they can be illumined by ideas derived from the spiritual world and which, if viewed merely in their connection with the world of the senses, inevitably seem devoid of

meaning and purpose — either good or bad. And if by what may be called chance but may also possibly have been a matter of karma in symbolic garb, one has an experience of this kind in a theatre, then it prompts the reaction that what is going on "behind the scenes" looks very different from what is happening on the stage.

I have made these preliminary remarks because I propose today to speak about matters which will be further elaborated when we are next together — matters which it is important for men at the present time to know about and which are connected with events behind the scenes of the physical plane. These things cannot be understood if we give way to the easy-going modern habit of merely generalising about the facts of the spiritual world and their connection with human affairs on the Earth; they become intelligible only when we penetrate as deeply as possible into the concrete realities of the spiritual world.

You know from many passages in the Lecture-Courses that the evolution of mankind is to be divided into certain periods: the vast periods of the Saturn-, Sun-, Moon-evolutions; the shorter periods of the Lemurian, Atlantean and our own Post-Atlantean epochs; and again within these shorter periods which, however, extend over long stretches of time, we speak of certain epochs of culture within the Post-Atlantean period: the ancient Indian, the ancient Persian, the Egypto-Chaldean, the Greco-Latin and our own Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch.

The reason for speaking of these periods is that the faculties of humanity as a whole — in this case more particularly the faculties of soul — change fundamentally from one period to another; they change because a very real evolution takes place in every such period — I am speaking now of the shortest. Every such period contains something which mankind is obliged to undergo, something which may cause either happiness or unhappiness, which has to be realised and understood, which is the source of impulses of will leading to deeds, and so forth. The tasks devolving upon the Egypto-Chaldean epoch of civilisation differed from those of the Greco-Latin epoch — and our own age, too, faces its own specific tasks.

A really true idea of the distinct tasks of the several epochs in regard to the development of certain qualities — especially those of which we shall speak today — cannot be formed without taking into account the experiences contributed by human life as a whole to the external development of which history speaks and to which the materialistic thought of today prefers to confine itself. No really adequate characterisation of the

successive epochs can, however, be drawn from these experiences on the physical plane, for they, after all, constitute only one part of that cycle of human life which stretches from birth to death and from death onwards to a new birth. For in what actually happens, there is a constant interplay and interaction between the forces that come down from the world in which man lives between death and a new birth and those which are unfolded in his life here, on the physical plane. There is an unceasing interplay between the forces unfolded by human beings after death and those operating on the physical plane.

Conditions throughout the Fourth Post-Atlantean epoch were such that certain things might safely be withheld from the consciousness of man. Many things in respect of which men of the Greco-Latin epoch might without harm be kept unconscious must, however, enter more and more into the consciousness of those living in the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch. During this Fifth epoch, human beings must become conscious of much that in earlier times could remain in the unconscious.

These things unfold according to certain spiritual laws, under a kind of spiritual necessity. It is part of the destiny of the human race that certain faculties of comprehension and also certain forces of will, shall unfold in a particular epoch. In this Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch humanity becomes ripe for the knowledge of certain things, just as in earlier epochs men became ripe in other respects. One thing in respect of which humanity has become sufficiently mature in the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch seems highly paradoxical to the modern mind, because public opinion moves for the most part in exactly the opposite direction, would prefer, as it were, to *lead* men in the opposite direction. But this will be of no avail. The spiritual forces with which men are, if I may put it so, inoculated, in the course of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch, will be stronger than the wishes of certain people, stronger than the dictates of public opinion.

One of these things — and it will assert itself most powerfully — is the guiding or directing of men more deeply in line with occult principles than has ever before been possible. It lies in the general character of evolution that during this Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch, certain conditions connected with the exercise of power, of influence, must pass into the hands of small groups who will wield great power over other, large masses of people.

A certain section of public opinion vehemently resists this trend; nevertheless it will assert itself and for the following reason. During the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch, simply because of inner maturity and

evolutionary necessity, a large portion of humanity will unfold certain spiritual faculties, a certain natural capacity to see into the spiritual world. This portion of humanity, which will indeed provide the best foundation for the future Sixth Post-Atlantean epoch — this portion of humanity, while in process of preparation during the Fifth epoch, will show little inclination to be actively concerned with the affairs of the physical plane. Such men will have little interest in physical affairs and will be engrossed in ennobling the life of soul, in regulating certain matters connected with the spiritual life. And because of this, others less spiritually inclined will be able to seize for themselves certain factors connected with the exercise of power — to get them into their own hands.

This is something that arises with a kind of necessity. Among men who were cognisant of these things it was the subject of much discussion throughout the last third of the nineteenth century, and they always stressed the vital necessity that this potential should be directed - not into evil but into good channels. During the last third of the nineteenth century, especially just before its turn, one could hear occultists on every hand insisting that precautions must be taken to ensure that such means of power come into the hands of worthy men. Naturally, with the exception of a very few groups, opinions differed as to who were really worthy; each group championed the claims of those with whom the world had brought it into contact. But the whole matter was the subject of almost day-to-day conversation among occultists and, in a certain sense, has remained so to this day.

Simply because man attains the requisite degree of maturity, other things, too, will emerge in the course of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch, will become known to men and also pass into the sphere of the will. These are things which lead still further, so far indeed that they cannot but cause grave anxiety to everybody who is cognisant of them.

This Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch confronts the fact that the physical apparatus of human thinking becomes capable of understanding certain factors relating to illness and processes of healing, connections of Nature-processes with illnesses. This causes anxiety to those possessing real knowledge of these matters because their aim now must be to ensure that those who will be chosen to bring the relevant teachings and impulses to men will do so in the right and worthy way. For two possibilities exist: information about these things will either be conveyed to men in a form which does harm, or it may be imparted in a way which is for the good of the world. These things are connected with the most intimate depths of

certain conditions relating to human propagation, with circumstances connected with illnesses and with the onset of death, and when knowledge concerning them spreads among mankind they give rise to thoughts and impulses of deep import and significance. And the purpose of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch is that men shall become free enough to be enlightened about certain truths hitherto kept in the more unconscious region of the human soul, and to master them.

Those who knew, concerned themselves deeply with all the implications of these things and with the steps that could be taken in one direction or the other. For everything that can arise in this way bestows a certain power, enables a hand to be taken to a very far-reaching extent in the shaping of human affairs. All these considerations, as I said, occupied an important place in spiritual-scientific movements during the nineteenth century, and still do so, to this day, in connection with the evolution of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch.

Another fact must here be considered, a fact that to anyone cognisant of it, is very significant, and must therefore be brought into relation with many others. I have mentioned it here and there in the Lecture-Courses. When, having crossed the threshold of the spiritual world, a man begins to make observations there, peculiar facts, essentially individual facts come before his soul's eye. And then a deeper scrutiny of things which at first sight seem to have nothing to do with each other, reveals that they are indeed connected, that they mutually illumine and explain each other and in doing so greatly facilitate penetration into the nature of the spiritual world.

The other fact, of which I am now going to speak, will, at first, certainly not give you the impression of being connected with what I have just said, yet the very contrary proves to be the case. This other fact is the following: When one turns to the souls of human beings who have died in our present age and learns the circumstances of their existence, one perceives souls among them who feel grave apprehension at the prospect of coming into contact with those human souls who, here on Earth, met their death as did the Empress of Austria at that time in Geneva. One discovers that human beings sent through the Gate of Death by, let us say, the "Propagandists by Action," are a cause of grave anxiety to certain human beings who passed through death in a normal way and then have further experiences in the spiritual world. One notices, as it were, that those who died in the normal way and who may have occasion to contact these other souls, are fearful of such contact after death, and shrink from it.

I beg you, in such a case, to ignore the emotional paradox. Such innumerable possibilities of association and contact are open to souls that it would be out of place to allow oneself here to be swayed by feelings of compassion, however natural and justifiable they may be. A case like this must be viewed quite objectively. It is a fact that souls who have passed through the Gate of Death normally, feel a certain dread of those whose death was brought about by violent means resembling those adopted by anarchist propaganda.

Now there is a certain very strange connection between this last fact and the other of which I spoke previously. Closer scrutiny reveals that these souls who met their death by violent means come into possession of certain knowledge in the spiritual world after death, which the other souls do not wish to receive from them prematurely, before it is right and healthy to do so. For the very reason that here, on the physical plane, they were deprived of life in this way and sent with such violence through the Gate of Death, these souls retain a certain possibility of turning to account the powers and forces they possessed on Earth, for example, the power of intellect. From the other side, from the spiritual world, such souls can make use of the powers which were bound up with the physical body here on Earth and achieve with them something quite other than it is possible to achieve during life in the physical body. Thereby these souls are able to acquire knowledge of certain things *earlier* than is really conducive to the progress of human evolution.

It is very remarkable that both meaning and purpose are revealed in this way in a number of deeds hitherto seeming to lack all rhyme or reason. These deeds assume a strange aspect to one who sees things as they really are. In the physical world, all kinds of nonsense is talked; it may sound plausible but is, well just nonsense to closer observation. Here, in the physical world, it is said: people like these "Propagandists by Action" who murder others, are simply out to draw attention to misery in the world; it is a means of active agitation, etc., etc.. But one who analyses the matter and tries to bring it into line with the laws of social life will realise at once that, although such deeds appear to be senseless, their meaning suddenly becomes clear in the light of the knowledge that souls sent into the spiritual world in this violent way, acquire knowledge which they really ought not yet to possess and of which souls who died a normal death have a positive dread.



To investigate the causes underlying assassinations committed at various times, like that of the Empress Elizabeth of Austria, to discover the position of these souls who come into the spiritual world with certain secrets in their keeping — with consequences of which we shall speak — to investigate these things occultly was of course the important thing. A merely external view of the series of such assassinations may ascribe them all to chance; but if one analyses the matter, if one considers who the individuals thus sent to their death really are, it becomes clear that they have been selected, as it were — not, of course from the standpoint of the physical world but from that of the spiritual world. Investigation of this aspect of many of the well-known assassinations reveals something very remarkable. In the cases of Carnot, [2] the Empress Elizabeth of Austria and certain others, the remarkable fact is revealed that although the possibility of achieving something by their assassinations certainly existed, it was, as a matter of fact, not achieved at all. It would have been achieved if souls had been found to be their "customers," if I may put it so. If that had happened, both sides would have incurred transcendental, super-sensible guilt: those who had passed through death in the normal way would have had experiences which would have driven them into blameworthy paths, and those whose deaths had been caused by violence, by assassination, would have been guilty of divulging knowledge before the proper time.

Higher Spiritual Beings, Higher Hierarchies, prevented this from happening because of certain consequences which would have ensued and which it was necessary to frustrate for the sake of the well-being of a certain part of mankind. By the intervention of higher Spiritual Beings, the harm that might have resulted was prevented. And so there was evidence here of an attempt made with ineffective means, or rather, with means that had been deprived of their effectiveness. It was an attempt made in the spiritual world, behind the scenes of the physical world.

Probing into the deeper foundations of such matters, we discover the source of the impulses underlying them. And in the case of many of the assassinations which were news in Europe and will be known to you, the impulses — they were spiritual impulses, remember — were not really primary and original but were derivatives; they were "defence measures," if this rather trivial expression is permissible. The purpose of these deeds was to put a stop to something else, to frustrate other deeds, or, better said, to prevent the consequences of other deeds tending in the same direction.

This is a very mysterious matter and can only be understood by scrutinising what, exactly, it was proposed to prevent, against what, exactly, these defence measures were taken. Spiritual Science penetrates here into things deeply connected with the impulses of human life in the present and in the future and of which it is extremely difficult to speak because they everywhere run counter to certain naive and even justifiable interests of men. The matter becomes comprehensible only when we take into consideration the fact that all these attempts by means of assassinations of which I have spoken up to now, were amateurishly directed, were not under "expert" guidance. They were attempts made without thorough knowledge of the occult connections; they were defence measures born of fear, and they were not under united leadership. They become intelligible only when we study the plan which they were actually intended to avert, and which was itself being pursued and staged with much greater insight. In the nineteenth century, a remarkable Order was still in existence over in the East: the Order of the "Thugs." This Order, which flourished in a certain region of Asia, did not arise out of mere desire — the desire, I mean, of its members — to gain their ends. The members of this Order were charged with the task of murdering certain persons named by very secret and unknown superiors. It was an Order of murderers, so to speak, with the task of putting certain individuals to death. Evidence of its activity filtered through from time to time in news announcing the murder of such and such a person. The murder was committed on the orders of unknown superiors who had charged some member of this Order of the Thugs to carry it out.

In the places where this was undertaken, the aim was well understood. By arranging circumstances of the physical plane in such a way that the establishment of this Order of the Thugs was possible, and then by directing its activities as required, the plan was to bring about the violent death of such persons as would be equipped after their death with the faculty for learning certain secrets. The individuals who managed all this also organised corresponding conditions here, on the physical plane, to act as "mirrors" — "mirror events" as they are called in occultism. Such was the intention: to organise the appropriate "mirror events." Certain events of this kind — if only a few — have actually been organised on the physical plane. It is done in this way: certain suitable personalities are trained to be mediums, put into a mediumistic condition and by certain machinations the currents from the spiritual world are directed to the medium. The medium then divulges certain secrets which can only be disclosed by this means, namely, that in yonder world a person killed by a deed of violence, turns to

account here, on the Earth, those forces which owing to his violent death can still be made use of; as souls, they fathom certain secrets and then instill them into the medium. And it is possible for those interested in such research here, on the Earth, to investigate what these souls are instilling by such means.

What is investigated in this way is a sort of "premature spiritual birth" — if I may use this expression. The souls who passed through the Gate of Death in the normal way and are concerned with such things, know that they must be preparing themselves now — and they make it plain that they are engaged in this preparation — in order, later on, when humanity has sufficiently matured, to bring down many things to the Earth and inject them into the Earth by rightful means. This, indeed, is an important task devolving upon a number of human beings now passing through the Gate of Death. Having attained the requisite maturity for certain secrets at the right time — not prematurely, as is the case when forces generated by violent deaths are put into operation — the task of these souls is to use and apply the *normal* forces. It is actually the task of these human beings to acquire control of these forces and then to inspire them into men living on the Earth who are not mediums at all but who should experience them in the normal, legitimate way — through genuine Inspiration.

In normal life this would be a matter of waiting. But because, as the result of occult crime, these things which ought to come much later are sent as premature spiritual births along the path indicated — because of this, individuals intending evil to humanity and who in this sense are "black" or "grey" magicians, capture such secrets for their own ends.

Behind the scenes of outer happenings, such things have been proceeding during our own decades. The intention was this: to place in the hands of a certain group of men, firstly, the secret of the control of masses — I spoke of this to begin with. It is the secret of how to gain extensive control over those masses who concern themselves little with external affairs, yet possess spiritual capacities and are especially qualified to assist in the preparation of the Sixth Post-Atlantean epoch — it is the secret, too, of how the art of controlling these masses can be placed in the hands of a few individuals.

That was the one aim. The other is something that will play an important role in the future: it is a matter of acquiring the secret means whereby factors connected with processes of disease, with the process of propagation, may be given a particular turn.

Among a few friends, I have already spoken of these things. The age of materialism is striving, through the work of certain circles, to paralyse, to eliminate all spiritual development in mankind, to bring human beings to a point where simply by temperament and character they reject everything that is spiritual and regard it as folly.

This trend — and it is already perceptible in some individuals today — will intensify. People will actually long for the time when the Spiritual is universally deemed to be insanity, craziness! Attempts will be made to achieve this end by inoculations; just as viruses have been discovered as means of protection against illnesses, so certain inoculations will be used to influence the human body in such a way that it provides no place for the spiritual proclivities of the soul. Human beings will be immunised against any predisposition for spiritual ideas ... such, at least, will be the endeavour. They will try by inoculation to bring it about that even in childhood, human beings lose the urge towards the spiritual life. This is only one of the aspects of that more intimate knowledge, relating to the connection of Nature-processes and Nature-specifics with the human organism, which must arise during the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch. These things will certainly find their way into the life of mankind when the time comes. The only question is whether success will have attended those previous attempts — by means of such premature spiritual births as I have mentioned — to put knowledge into the hands of individuals who will use it for their own ends ... or whether the knowledge of these things will come in the right way, at the right time, and thus promote the well-being of humanity.

There was nothing amateurish about the methods of the organisation designed for promoting these premature spiritual births; with the help of the Order of murderers known as the Thugs, it worked very systematically, albeit in a way which horrifies anyone who has the good of humanity at heart. It worked systematically, not amateurishly, with full knowledge of the means required.

Because the effort was being made through instruments acquired prematurely from the spiritual world to place part of mankind in the egotistical possession of knowledge which, as humanity matures will be acquired in any case during the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch ... because this was being striven for, there arose in other groups of men the uneasiness and anxiety which staged this "Propaganda by Action" as a counter-blast, so to speak; it was intended to be a help but, being the child of fear, it was an amateurish attempt, a provisional attempt made with ineffective means.

These things that proceed behind the scenes of external happenings, are of deep import. Nor would they be mentioned here if it were not a necessity and a duty to bring them to the attention of people trained to some extent in Spiritual Science. It is a necessity for such things to pass into the consciousness of humanity in the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch. Only so can the goal of earthly evolution be attained.

Human beings must embark upon the unpleasant task of abandoning the mode of thinking which the universities produce in the so-called educated classes today; a time must come when a number of human beings declare themselves ready to accept this uncomfortable world-conception which takes its direction, its concepts, its ideas, from the spiritual world. For men must not, dare not, linger in the condition of sleep that is so congenial to those abstract concepts for which the age of materialism strives and then calls "noble."

Thinking over what I have thus indicated, you will realise that a whole number of possibilities exist for making use of currents emanating from the spiritual world in order to bring evil things to pass on the Earth during this Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch. There are many, many such possibilities — today I have told you of *one*. And the obligation to stress the necessity that such knowledge should reach the consciousness of a certain number of souls — this is bound up with the fundamental character of our age. The second half of the nineteenth century was an extremely important period. I have often indicated to circles of friends here and there that the year 1841 was a critical time, a year of decision and crisis. This, of course, is not discovered by looking merely at the events that happened in the physical world, but only by studying these events in connection with what was going on in the spiritual world. The year 1841 was, in truth, the critical year in respect of the onset of the age of materialism, for at that time a very definite battle began in the spiritual worlds — a battle waged by certain Spirits, Spirits of Darkness as we may call them, belonging to the hierarchical rank of the Angeloi. In the spiritual worlds they fought out this battle until the autumn of 1879. They were striving for many and definite aims, only one of which shall be mentioned today. Between the years 1841 and 1879, decision was to be taken as to whether a certain store of spiritual wisdom could be made sufficiently mature to trickle gradually down to the Earth from the last third of the nineteenth century onwards, that is to say, to enter into the souls of men as a stimulus to spiritual knowledge, to the knowledge described today as that of Spiritual Science, which has only been possible since that time.

The aim of these Angeloi-Spirits between the years 1841 and 1879 was to prevent what was thus to flow down to the Earth, from coming to maturity in the spiritual world. But these Spirits of Darkness were defeated in the war they waged against the Spirits of Light during this period. In the year 1879, on a smaller scale, an event came to pass of the kind that has several times come to pass in the course of evolution, and has always been pictured symbolically as the victory of Michael, or St. George, over the Dragon. In the year 1879, too, the Dragon was overcome in a certain realm. This time the "Dragon" was the Angeloi-Spirits who were striving for but could not achieve the aim I have indicated. In 1879, therefore, they were cast out of the spiritual world into the world of men — and here, in this world, they wander among humanity. They are present here, sending their forces into men's thoughts, feelings and impulses of will, egging them on to this undertaking or another. They have not been able to prevent the onset of the age when the spiritual knowledge flows down — their defeat in the battle lies precisely in this — for the spiritual knowledge is here and will unfold increasingly; human beings will be able to acquire the faculty of seeing into the spiritual world.

But having been cast down to the Earth, these Angeloi-Spirits are intent upon doing harm with the down-flowing knowledge; they want to guide it into wrongful channels, to rob it of its power for good and lead it into paths of evil. In short, having been cast down since the year 1879, their aim is to achieve here, with the help of men, what they were unable to achieve with the help of the Spirits in yonder world. Their aim is to bring ruin to that part of the good plan for world-evolution which consists in causing the knowledge of the control of masses, the knowledge concerning birth, illness and death, among other things, to spread among men when the time is ripe. These Spirits of Darkness want to spread such knowledge too soon, by means of the premature spiritual births. Among their other objects and activities, these Spirits operate in the manner I have just indicated.

The only way to combat the influence of these Ahrimanic Beings is to realise that against certain aims of Ahriman nothing avails except to see through him, to know that he is there. I have indicated this repeatedly in the Mystery Plays; think only of the end of the last Play. The Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch must evolve to the stage where many human beings address the Ahrimanic Powers and Beings as Faust addresses Mephistopheles: "In thy Nothingness I hope to find the All." Men must be resolved to look into that realm where materialism sees the "Nothingness"



and there see ... the spiritual world! Ahriman-Mephistopheles is then obliged to speak to such men as he speaks to Faust when sending him to the "Mothers":

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*"I will not grudge my praise before thou goest, For well I see that thou the Devil knowest."*

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The other day, I said, jokingly, in Dornach: "Mephistopheles would not have made such a remark to Woodrow Wilson! To Woodrow Wilson he would have said: 'The little fellows never notice the Devil, even when he has them by the collar!'" Truly, it is of the greatest importance that men shall learn to see into the realities of the spiritual world. And, believe me, it is simply the fact, that when, on the one side, there is some special necessity, the opposing forces are also especially strong — and so, today, men put up strong resistance to these things, struggle against them.

I beg you here in Zurich, in your laudable and welcome efforts to bring Spiritual Science to certain still very hostile circles, to be under no illusions! Many disappointments — and at first, nothing but disappointments — await all efforts to direct things that must come to pass, into the right paths. This, of course, should never deter us. We must be so imbued with the impulse needed for the present age, that we do what has to be done without regard to results — whether they fall out one way or the other.

This attitude alone makes achievement possible — and then it is often reached by an entirely unexpected route. I beg you to remember, too, that a great deal must often be done that yields no gratifying results. For the propaganda of Spiritual Science is a different matter from other current forms of propaganda. In these other domains, people are for the most part told things with which they are as familiar as devout ladies sitting in church are familiar with what the clergyman says from the pulpit. The programmes of most leagues and societies contain subject matter that can be imbibed very light-heartedly and superficially — it usually is, and remains, pure abstraction. Fine programmes are made — but these programmes are unrelated to and incapable of penetrating into reality. If it is our desire to cultivate spiritual strivings in this Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch, we must regard them as we regard the *Living*. What is the nature of the Living? The Living, the Life, in the realm of Spirit has its image in the realm of the Living in Nature. I ask you: is a fish in the sea afraid of laying

a number of eggs that come to nothing? Ask yourselves how many of the eggs that are actually laid, turn into fish? How many come to nothing? As it is in life, so, too, it is in the spiritual life. You may speak for long years, on countless occasions, to vast numbers of people ... and you must be satisfied if interest, at most, is awakened in a few among them — for that inheres in the nature of the Living. Achievement in any degree is only possible when one proceeds as Nature proceeds — Nature being the image of the Spirit. What would happen if Nature hesitated to allow living beings to lay the eggs that come to nothing, because a number obviously perish in the course of a year? The Nature-process continues and, moreover, achieves evolution. Considerations as to whether any particular thing can be achieved, whether it is in line with this or with that — are of no moment. What is of moment is that in the thing itself we see the impulse and that we simply cannot do otherwise than carry this impulse into the world.

And looking at the reasons — a few of which have been indicated today — why this impulse must be carried out into the world during the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch ... truly they are serious enough! Where necessity is greatest, remember, there the opposition is strongest. Men will have to learn to view all these things that come to pass here, on the physical plane, and in our time present a truly terrible aspect, in their connection with happenings behind the scenes. Only then do they become intelligible. But the historians, the sociologists, the economists, the politicians of today, who derive their rules and laws exclusively from the physical plane well, as far as the actual necessities are concerned, they act like persons who begin some important task by stretching themselves on a *chaise longue* and going to sleep, believing they can achieve it in the world of dream. The majority of those who belong to the world of culture, to the several branches of science today, really do set to work like this; in their state of dream they let reality pass them by. How do men write treatises on history, on sociology? They write without a single inkling of the real forces at play behind the subject of their dreamings. The realities underlying such deeply decisive events as we are witnessing nowadays, lie around modern men of science like the walls of a room into which they have been carried during sleep, have never seen and in which they go on sleeping. This is how materialistic science acquaints itself with the world.

In my book *Vom Menschenratsel (The Riddle of Man)* I have described a mode of consciousness that is at the same time a "seeing" (*Schauendes Bewusstsein*). This must, to a certain degree, become a faculty in humanity of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch for the following reason. Certain secrets

must come into the open because otherwise they would be spread among humanity by unlawful means such as those of which I have told you today. As I said, it is not easy to speak of these things, but in duty bound it is necessary to do so. Men must acquire for many things a gift of observation very different from the clumsy faculty of observation in vogue today.

In connection with what has been said, I want to add the following. Firstly, men can acquire something, even today, by trying to take things normally ascribed to chance seriously and regard them as hints for deepening the life of soul. Suppose you read that at one place or another, on this or that date, a certain man died. A great deal may light up if one asks oneself: "How would it have been if that man had died three months earlier or three months later?" reckoning, of course, merely with possibilities. But you may be sure that if such a question is put, forces are released whereby you will discern other things. Or again, while traveling in a train you may have a conversation that means a great deal to you. A materialist, naturally, would regard such a thing as a lucky stroke of chance. But those who are trying to penetrate behind the scenes of outer existence will be alert to such incidents; without forcing ideas too far but feeling that there is something in these "accidents", they pay attention, because these things point to forces playing into and between the events — forces whose origin is neither mechanical nor mathematical. That is one of the things I wanted to say.

The other is this, and I want to reiterate it with emphasis. In spite of the materialism of our time, much that is spiritual is revealing itself to men. But it goes against the grain to speak about these spiritual experiences. When someone becomes communicative, because he trusts you, he will often speak of what he, or some other person, has done ... If he tells you honestly and genuinely why, for example, he founded some newspaper, why he did this or that, he relates a dream, or what seemed to be a dream; he tells you of an impulse from the spiritual world. Such things happen at every turn nowadays — far more often than people think. Far more deeds are prompted by spiritual impulses than is usually imagined. But people hesitate to admit such things because they are as a rule not taken seriously.

It is well to deepen contemplation in both these directions, to be alert, in these days, to any sign or experience which strikes one's attention; and also to observe — for the opportunities are there — how in the good and in

the bad sense, things are revealed from the spiritual world, which impel men to act. Nowadays, above all, this is more often the case than people think.

That is what I wanted to put before you today. Next Tuesday we will continue the subject.

[1] Note by Translator: The date of the assassination was 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1898. "*Propagandisten der Tat*" seems to have been a phrase in current use at that time. In modern books of reference, this assassination and that of Carnot, of which mention is made later, are attributed to revolutionary anarchists.

[2] Carnot was the fourth President of the Third French Republic. He was assassinated at Lyons on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 1894.



## 4 Behind the Scenes of External Events, II

Translated by Dorothy S. Osmond and Owen Barfield

*Zürick, 13th November, 1917*

In the lecture here a week ago I dealt with a theme of vital importance in view of the events that are breaking with such tragic consequences into the life of mankind. This theme may be indicated, briefly, by saying: "It is urgently necessary for mankind once again to know and realise that the physical world is connected with spiritual realities, to become conscious of the fact that a spiritual world is working into the actual details of physical existence."

Our age, above all, must be alive to the necessity for the spreading of this consciousness among mankind. The human being of the present time does not differ so very markedly in outward, physical appearance from human beings living in those past ages with which ordinary history deals. History, after all, goes no farther back than the Third Post-Atlantean period. What lies before that is a very vague chapter in the only kind of historical scholarship that is recognised by modern man. Although in the intervening period, man's life of soul has undergone very great changes indeed, it cannot be said that equal changes have taken place so far as the external, physical organism is concerned. Therefore people neither notice, nor try to notice, what is really happening as the outcome of impulses from the spiritual world. We are living in very momentous times. This has nothing to do with the trivial remark, so often heard, that this age is an age of transition. Naturally, every age is one of transition. The point is to know *what* is in transition in any particular age.

We become particularly conscious of what is thus in transition in our time — that is to say, of what is assuming new forms and undergoing great change — when we are able to observe not only the life of beings moving about the Earth in physical bodies, but also the beings who do not belong to the physical world — among them, the Dead. In the world in which the human being lives between death and a new birth — there, the changes, especially the transformation that is proceeding during this present age, are to be observed in all their deep significance. But modern man is loath

to take in earnest matters concerning the spiritual world. The fact that this is so gives rise to many reflections in regard to the growth and existence of Anthroposophy. It really is the case that one need not be particularly biased in favour of the ideas represented in the Anthroposophical Movement before being willing to advocate them. In other Movements — and countless numbers of leagues, unions and the like are founded today, all of them convinced that they represent the most urgent needs of the world — in all such Movements people have the subjective fanaticism of their particular cause. They are infatuated with their own programme, maintaining that it will bring universal happiness, that it is an absolute necessity. In the case of the Anthroposophical Movement, such infatuation is simply not necessary, for the urge to advocate such ideas may come from something quite different. Briefly — and I must be brief because we can only be together for such short intervals — let me say the following: When a man has become convinced of the truth of the idea of Anthroposophy, he is impelled to do everything he can to spread them by the feeling of compassion for those who need these ideas at the present time — in other words, practically every human being with whom one comes into contact — compassion for men who need these ideas and without them will fall upon evil times.

In the last lecture here I tried to give you a conception of how a great deal that is unintelligible on the physical plane only begins to be intelligible when it can be viewed in its connection with the spiritual world. Today I want to put before you certain other points of view, which to begin with will appear to relate to quite different matters. We will start from a very common experience. Many people who consider themselves qualified to pass judgment on such matters, regard it as sign of religious enlightenment to repudiate ideas presented in Anthroposophy, for example, that on the other side of the threshold of the spiritual world, many Spiritual Beings, whole Hierarchies of Spiritual Beings are to be found ... Angeloi, Archangeloi, and still higher Hierarchies. It is considered to be a sign of enlightenment to dwell upon the One God and aspire to establish an intimate and direct relationship with Him. This is regarded as the only possible form of Monotheism and many people evince something like horror at a teaching that speaks of many Spiritual Beings.

Let us be quite clear about what this really implies. When a man's attitude to the spiritual world is merely that of the "enlightened" Church today, his relationship to the spiritual world — even if it is only in his feeling — is of a definite kind; it is simply a relationship with his Guardian Angel, the Angelos with whom he is, in fact, connected. And this Angelos



— the only Being with whom he is able to feel related — he calls his God; if he is a Christian he calls him Christ; he confuses his Angelos with Christ. This may be difficult to understand, but it is so. Protestant theologians who claim to be enlightened and inveigh against Polytheism, urging men to establish direct relationship with the one Being, Christ — whatever they may preach concerning Christ, the truth is that what they say has only to do with the relationship of the human being to his Angelos. Monotheism in our time is in danger of becoming a worship of the Angelos of each individual human being.

Men are still unwilling to admit many things that are nevertheless there. Even the crudest circumstances, however, prove to an objective observer that such illusions set men well on the path to calamitous ideas. This worship of man's own Angelos is the reason why each individual has his own God, merely imagining that he shares with others a Godhead who is common to them all. The truth is that the monotheist of today has only his own individual Angelos and because there is such uniformity in the words with which each human being describes his own egotistical relation to the Angelos, people imagine that they are speaking of the Divinity who is the one God of them all. If this state of things were to continue, individuals would develop, still more strongly, the tendency that is taking such a terrible form among the nations today. Although the nations still theorise about the one universal Godhead, they do not — and this holds good above all at the present time — really acknowledge this one Godhead, because each of them prefers to have its own special God.

This, however, is merely what comes to light in crude, external form. In reality, every human being today wants to have his own God and he gives the name of "Monotheism" to the relationship between himself and his own Angelos. And because conditions are so clouded in an age when men's only desire is for perception of the Material, the truth of what I have just said does not occur to them.

Today there is evidence on all hands that when one speaks of man's concrete relationship with the spiritual world to those who as yet know nothing about Anthroposophy, they are unwilling to go into such matters; they are afraid of it all. They will not summon up courage to think about impulses that are said to come from the spiritual world. The same tendency has always existed in times of crisis and we are living in one such time nowadays. It is grievous to see how utterly inattentive men are to the momentous and tragic events of the present time, how disinclined to pay the necessary heed, except when driven to it by material considerations.

The individual has to be trained, so to speak, before his attention is aroused to the fact that in the events of our time, deep and trenchant impulses in the life of mankind are placed before the soul.

That, after all, is why people simply did not listen when it was said that momentous, incisive thoughts and undertakings are called for by men if the world is to be lifted out of its present pitiable state — and that such thoughts and undertakings must be born from spiritual knowledge, real spiritual knowledge. Constant references to the universal Spirit, all the talk about inner, spiritual deepening and the like — none of it leads anywhere. What is essential is that men of the present time shall establish real and concrete relations with the spiritual world. It is not difficult for us to realise that even in earlier times when men were in closer contact with the spiritual world, their attention was directed to those concrete relationships which are no longer understood today. In earlier times men did not speak vaguely of swarms of human beings on the Earth below with some kind of Godhead up above, but they spoke in terms of concrete realities.

The most beautiful and significant fruits of these concrete relationships with the spiritual world are prophetic utterances like those of Daniel, of the Apocalypse, where men are not merely bidden to trust in a God, to believe in a God, but where they are told of the first heavenly kingdom, the second, the third ... told in all concrete reality of the connection of the spiritual world with the physical, material world. Humanity has lost all aptitude for speaking thus concretely of the relation of the Spiritual to the Physical, would prefer that everything should be painted the same colour, if I may put it so. Men like best of all to devise theories according to which human beings the Earth over can find equal material happiness. The socialist of today insists that certain ideas are right and proper for the life of man — right for England, for America, for Russia, for Asia; he thinks that if one and all arranged their national affairs according to socialist principles, the happiness which is the dream of modern man would come to the Earth of itself. All these ideas are abstract, unreal. Ignorance of the fact that something quite specific arises in one region of the Earth out of a particular people, something quite different in another region out of another people, the inability to understand the great difference between the West and the East — this is what causes endless confusion and chaos. For only when a man is able to build a bridge from his soul to the objective realities, can he co-operate fruitfully in shaping earthly existence.

People are unwilling to build such a bridge. Inner reasons have lately caused me to speak to friends in very many places of an event — momentous in its effect upon evolution — which took place in the last third of the nineteenth century; it is an event known to all occult schools although they are not always able to give accurate details of its actual course. I will speak of it briefly, again today. From the year 1841 onwards, a battle was waged in regions of the spiritual world, between certain Beings of the higher Hierarchies and other superior Beings. The Beings who rebelled and waged war from 1841 to 1879 had been used, before that time, in the service of the wise guidance of worlds. Even those Beings who rebel and become evil Beings of Darkness may, at certain other times, serve good and useful purposes. I am speaking, therefore, of Beings who up to the year 1841 had been used by higher Spirits in the service of the wise guidance of worlds but whose aims, from then onwards, ran counter to the aims of the Beings superior to them. These Beings of lower rank fought a great battle in the spiritual world — one of those battles that often take place — but at different levels — and are portrayed in legend and symbolism as the battle of Michael with the Dragon. In the autumn of 1879 this battle ended by certain Spirits of Darkness being cast down from the spiritual world to the Earth. Since then they have been working among men, creeping into their impulses of will, into their motives, into their ideas, indeed into all human affairs. And so, since the autumn of 1879, certain Spirits of Darkness have been among humanity and if men wish to understand earthly happenings, they must be alive to the presence of these Beings.

It is absolutely correct to say that in the year 1879 these Beings were cast down to the Earth. This made the heavens free but the Earth full of them. From that time onwards their habitation is no longer to be found in the heavens — they are on Earth.

If I am to describe the aim pursued by these Beings in their war of rebellion from 1841 to 1879, I must say the following: — They wanted to be able to prevent the spiritual wisdom, which will be revealed from the twentieth century onwards, from flowing into the souls of men. Only by the removal of the hindering Spirits of Darkness from the spiritual realm could the minds and hearts of men be opened to receive, from the twentieth century onwards, the spiritual knowledge destined for them; only so was the flow of this spiritual knowledge possible. Wandering as they now do among men, these Spirits of Darkness make it their business to spread confusion; from their arena here, on Earth, they want to prevent the

establishment of the right attitude *vis-à-vis* the spiritual truths, they want to withhold from men the blessings which it is the purpose of the spiritual truths to bring.

Intimate and penetrating knowledge of these things is the only means whereby the aims of the Spirits of Darkness may be counteracted. Certain occult brotherhoods, however, make it their business to work in exactly the opposite sense; they want to retain the wisdom exclusively within their own narrow circles, in order to exploit it in connection with their lusts for power. We are living in the midst of this struggle. On the one side there is the necessity for men to be led along the right paths by the assimilation of the spiritual truths; on the other side there are enclosed occult brotherhoods of an evil kind, desiring to prevent these truths from finding their way to men, with the result that they remain dull and stupid as regards the spiritual world, and thus make it possible for those within narrowly enclosed brotherhoods to carry on their intrigues from there.

Events of the present time bristle with such intrigues and machinations, and calamity looms ahead if men will not realise that these machinations are in full swing. You will feel at once that light is shed upon the real background of these things when I tell you of certain truths which have matured in our time — truths which must fall as it were like ripened fruit from the spiritual world into the kingdom of men but are prevented from spreading — against which, moreover, men are instinctively prejudiced because they are afraid of them.

In this connection I want to speak as concretely as possible. The fact that in 1879 a number of Spirits of Darkness were cast into the kingdom of men, has weighty and significant consequences — one of which is that since that time, clear thinking has assumed a far, far greater importance than it ever had before. At no other period could it have been said, having regard to the inner necessities of evolution, that clarity of thinking is as essential as eating and drinking are to the maintenance of physical life. For if man's thinking lacks clarity in the age in which we are actually living and in the times to come, he will not be able to see in their right light the ripened truths which are to fall from the spiritual world. Above all, he will fail to realise the vast and profound significance of the Mystery of Golgotha, of the Coming of Christ, for the whole evolution of humanity. Many there are who speak of Christ Jesus. Modern theology, however, would actually like to prevent anyone from speaking of the deep purpose imparted to the earthly evolution of mankind by the Mystery of Golgotha.

In the nature of things, fulfilment of what was to come to pass through the Mystery of Golgotha has been, and is, both slow and gradual. And in our present century, for the first time, this becomes intensely evident.

Previous epochs still enjoyed a heritage from the days when spirituality pervaded the atavistic inner life of man. Now, for the first time, man must strive for spirituality — if he desires it. And so, in our day, and actually only from the year 1879 onwards, very definite phenomena appear. Because external observation has become so crude, they are really only clearly to be perceived when the eyes of the soul are directed to that realm which the human being enters on passing through the Gate of Death. For souls born before the year 1879 and those born afterwards pass into the spiritual world in different ways. Truly, it is a momentous event of which we are here speaking.

One consequence of this event is that in their souls, human beings more and more come to resemble the thought, to resemble that which they regard as knowledge. This will seem a strange truth to the modern mind, but it is so, nevertheless. To see certain things in their proper light, with clarity of thought, with thoughts saturated with reality — that is vitally important. It is good to see Darwinism in the proper light — as I tried to present it in the public lecture yesterday. ("Anthroposophy and Natural Science." 12th November, 1917.) To regard Darwinism as the one and only valid conception of the world, believing the only possible truth to be that man descends from the animals — and reiterating the thought: I descend from the animals, I descend entirely from forces which also produce the animals ... such thoughts, in our age, tend to make the soul resembles its own conceptions of itself. This is really an important matter! When the body is discarded, the soul is then confronted with the sorry fate of having to perceive its resemblance with its own thought! A man who lives in the physical body believing that animal forces alone were at work in his evolution, fashions for himself a kind of consciousness in which he will perceive his own likeness to animal nature. For since the event of 1879, the character of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch has been such that the souls of men are transformed into the ideas they form of themselves. That is why I said: It is not necessary to be particularly biased in favour of anthroposophical Spiritual Science before being willing to advocate it; all that is necessary is compassion for men who need these thoughts and ideas because they are creative powers in the life of soul, because it is ordained that in times to come, what the human being considers himself to be, that he will become. This development is part of the wise guidance of worlds, in order that the human being may attain full and free

consciousness of the Self. On the one side the Gods were bound to make it possible for man to become what he makes of himself; and in order that he might imbue this self-created being with super-sensible meaning, that he might be able to find in this self-created being, something that gives him an eternal aim — in order that this might be, Christ Jesus fulfilled the Mystery of Golgotha. And when man understands Christ Jesus in the light of Spiritual Science, in the light of true thought, he finds the way to Him: the way which leads out from the animal into the Divine.

There is one truth that stands out strongly when the eyes of the soul are able to look into the world entered by the human being after death. Those who were born before 1879 always carry with them a certain heritage which protects them from becoming purely that which, here on Earth, they have pictured themselves to be. And for a long time still — these things are only gradually approaching — for a long time still this protection will be possible, but only through pain, only when men can suffer, when, to speak paradoxically, they can take on themselves the pain of knowing and feeling in themselves the shortcomings of their conception of man. Harmony with the Self, together with a knowledge which lets man after death be truly *man*, — this will arise for future times only if human beings become aware, here, in the physical body, of their true connection with the spiritual world. Those who are afraid of concrete facts of spiritual knowledge because of their materialistic ideas will, of course, for a long time yet be unwilling to acknowledge that any such change took place in the year 1879; nevertheless it will have to be acknowledged sooner or later. It is clear from this that one thing, above all, is essential and will become increasingly so in the future, namely, that all available spiritual knowledge shall spread over the Earth. Therefore in order to further their aims, the Spirits of Darkness will attach particular value to the breeding of confusion among men so that they will not succeed in forming the right thoughts and ideas into which, after death, they are transformed. What man thinks himself to be, that he is obliged to become.

This is a truth that was destined, after the great changes in the nineteenth century and from then onwards, to find its way to men. The human being must be *voluntarily* anything that he can be really; he must be able to think about his own being if he is to be truly himself in his life of soul. For even now the Dead could announce as a ripened truth: The soul is what it thinks itself to be. At the time when it was necessary, from the stage of the Earth to spread the truth: The soul is what it thinks itself to be, at that time Spirits of Darkness inspired human beings to announce the following: "Man *is* what he *eats*." And although this is not, in theory, widely



acknowledged, the practical conduct of life amounts very nearly to being an acknowledgment of the principle that man is what he eats — that and nothing else. Indeed this principle is more and more being applied and developed in external life. To a far greater extent than people believe, the grievous and tragic events of the present time are an outcome of the tenet: Man is what he eats. In a much deeper sense than is supposed by the superficial modern mind, a terrible amount of the blood that is shed today, is shed over unseemly issues. Humanity is already infiltrated by the principle that "man is what he eats." And it gives rise, indirectly, to much contention.

That is why the spread of thoughts and ideas corresponding to the realities of the times is so very necessary. Thought will gradually have to be known as a concretely real power of the soul, not merely as the miserable abstraction produced so proudly by the modern age. Men living in earlier times were still linked, by an ancient heritage, with the spiritual world. Although for many centuries now, atavistic clairvoyance has almost entirely ebbed away, this heritage still lives in the feeling and in the will. But the time has come when everything that is *conscious* must become a real power — hence the Spirits of Darkness strive to counter really effective thoughts by abstract thoughts in the form of all kinds of programmes for the world. This connection must be realised and understood. Thoughts must be imbued with greater and greater reality.

There are still many people who say: "Oh, well, in all good time we shall discover what transpires after death; why trouble about it now? Let us attend to the requirements of life and when we reach yonder world we shall soon discover what it is." Well and good, but if it is true that in yonder world a man becomes what he has pictured himself to be, then something else is also true. Take the idea that is not at all uncommon nowadays. Somebody dies, leaving relatives behind him. Although thought may not be entirely lacking in these people, they may be materialistically minded, and then, quite inevitably, they will think either that the dead man is decaying in the grave or that what still exists of him is preserved in the urn. Only if thought is entirely absent can men be materialists and *not* hold this view. If materialism were to triumph, the conviction would still further increase that all that remains of the Dead is disintegrating in the urn or in the grave. This thought is, however, a real power; it is an untruth. When those left behind think that the Dead no longer lives, is no longer there, this is a false thought — but it is real and actual in the souls of those who form it. The Dead is aware of this thought-reality, is aware of its significance for him. And it is by no means a matter of no consequence but, on the contrary, of

fundamental importance, whether those left behind cherish in their souls the thought of the Dead living on in the spiritual world, or whether they succumb to the woeful idea that the Dead, well, he is dead, he lies there decaying in the grave. Far from being a matter of no importance, there is a very great and essential difference.

Coming to Zurich nowadays one can hardly fail to be attentive to what is known here — and also elsewhere, but here it is pursued very actively — as Analytical Psychology, Psychoanalysis. It is of course the case that the psycho-analysts have become alive to many things pertaining to the realm of soul-and-spirit; they are indeed beginning to think of the soul-and-spirit simply because it confronts them so insistently. Let me here say a word or two about one characteristic feature in this Psychoanalysis.

A patient suffers from symptoms of hysteria. The forms taken by these manifestations of hysteria are very typical at the present time and for this reason attract attention. Illnesses particularly common at any given period are always a matter of concern, and efforts are made to discover where the causes lie. Psychoanalysis has actually reached the point of stating that the causes of these frequent manifestations of hysteria lie in the life of soul. As it is quite impossible to look for them in the material domain, or in the field of physiological or biological processes as such, they must lie in the Psyche — in the life of soul. The tendency of the times is to seek in the subconscious life of soul for causes of the various forms of hysteria. The psychoanalysts say: "Such and such a man shows signs of hysteria; the cause is that something is working in him below the threshold of his consciousness and is constantly surging upwards like waves from subterranean, sub-psyche depths — and that *is* what we must look for."

This is where the dangerous game begins. The psychoanalysts try to find all kinds of happenings which constitute an isolated, subterranean, hidden province of the Psyche, as they put it; in an hysterical subject of the age of 30, they look for "perversions" at the age, perhaps, of 7, which were not fully lived through or satisfied then and of which he must be made conscious again, because this will cure him and so forth. It is a game with extremely dangerous weapons, my dear friends! Out yonder on the physical battlefields, war is being waged with very dangerous weapons. Here, in many domains, with weapons of knowledge no less dangerous, a game is being played because people are not willing to deepen their thought in the sense of Spiritual Science and so to acquire a true understanding of these phenomena. The problem is approached with inadequate means of knowledge and it is a very dangerous game. It is, of

course, perfectly true that the Subconscious works in many people today, without ever rising into consciousness. But what the psychoanalysts believe they have unearthed is usually of the least significance of all and, for this reason successes so far as cures are concerned are in most cases highly dubious. When hysteria in a lady of 30 is put down to some sexual perversion which occurred, say, at the age of 14 and has gone on simmering in the Subconscious — this is probably the most unimportant factor of all. In some few cases it may actually be correct and then, if its importance has been wrongly estimated, it will be all the more misleading. But it is absolutely true that countless factors lurk within human beings today, trouble them and give rise to the diseases of modern civilisation.

Think of what I said before. The thought of the absent Dead dwells in some way in the soul although little attention is paid to it; the thought dwells there because the soul today is still heedless — and is rather susceptible to these heedless thoughts. According to an eternal law, the Dead is then forced to dwell with these thoughts; the Dead haunts the soul of the one who is still living. True contact with the Dead can only be established by knowing: "the Dead lives!" And human beings on the physical plane will be more and more prone to psychological illnesses as a consequence of the prevailing disbelief in the existence of the Dead. The causes of these hysterical manifestations are not, as a rule, early sexual troubles but unbelieving thoughts. For thoughts in our age are destined to become powers — in more senses than one. They work as powers of thought *per se*, in that after death the soul takes on a stronger and stronger likeness to what, in the body, it pictures itself to be; but in a higher sense still, thoughts become real powers in that they fetter beings — the Dead in this case — in a wrongful way to the living. Only by sustaining the thought that the Dead lives on, can man guard himself, as well as others, against the link with the Dead becoming a source of danger to those who have been left behind — and in a certain sense the same applies to the Dead himself, who under an eternal, wisdom-filled law is compelled to lurk in the survivor in such a way that this influence remains in the Subconscious and manifests, ultimately, as illness.

Ask yourselves now: What will be the real remedy for many of the phenomena confronting the psychoanalysts today? The universal remedy, the universal therapy will be the spread of knowledge of the spiritual world — not these individual treatments.

Life demands of us that we shall abstain from the thought: here one has to devote oneself to physical existence only and the world of post-mortem existence will reveal itself all in good time. For this also is true: just as our life here is important for the existence into which we pass between death and a new birth, so too the life of souls living between death and a new birth is important for the soul living here on Earth.

What I have now said refers to *one* thought — namely, the thought of disbelief in the existence of the Dead. But the Dead are and should be connected by many links with the living. The link of which I have just spoken is improper, but there are many true links which must be there and which constitute the right connection with the spiritual world. Anthroposophical Spiritual Science strives to establish the true connection, for the life of men together on the Earth will only take its rightful course in the future, if this true relationship is established with the spiritual world. Failing this, it will become increasingly possible for certain individuals to embark upon intrigues and machinations of the kind of which I spoke last Tuesday, in order to usurp for themselves power over others.

Of one thing let us be quite clear. It is only possible to understand the deeply symptomatic events now proceeding in the East (of Europe) when we have a clear, inner conception of the nature of those lands and peoples. Think of what we have been saying for many years about the qualities of the peoples there as a basis for the Sixth Post-Atlantean epoch. Only then can light be shed on all the difficult events and confusing influences that quite inevitably come from those Eastern lands. For, in effect, from what is happening there, something altogether different must in the course of time evolve. This, which is destined to evolve, is not so easy for the people of our time with their comfortable ways of thought to understand; no wonder they are taken aback by what happens there from day to day. But the important point is: to find the right way into all the streams and currents that are arising at the present time and will arise in the future. And little by little the right way is found when Spiritual Science is our guide to knowledge and understanding of the spiritual world. Thereby, too, the right relationship with the spiritual world is established.

In the last lecture here I told you of an improper relationship to the spiritual world that it is the aim of certain quarters to establish. I said that certain individuals are deprived of life here and sent into the spiritual world as the outcome of deliberate machinations; they have not, therefore, wholly lived out their life here and are still able to turn certain forces to account in the world where they live between death and a new birth. And

then certain brotherhoods working with dishonourable motives, desiring only to satisfy their own lust for power, can use mediums for the purposes of receiving from the Dead the knowledge which the Dead have thus been enabled to acquire.

Occult brotherhoods of this kind are also, as a rule, those that lead men astray in regard to the events of greatest importance in the spiritual world. When I tell you that in 1879, in November, a momentous event took place, a battle of the Powers of Darkness against the Powers of Light, which ended in the sense of the picture of Michael overcoming the Dragon ... then the point is not, simply to tell you: such and such an event took place. For you can read in many books — it is not an esoteric truth at all — that such an event is appointed in world-evolution. What I really want to bring home is the significance of the event and the attitude that you should adopt towards it. Eliphas Levi, Baader, Saint-Martin, all knew and spoke of such an event — there is nothing really esoteric in the fact itself. But in our time, endeavours are on foot to spread confusion about such events — wherever possible, a confusion that makes men regard them as mere superstition, although they have already been proclaimed by ancient learning. Here, again, is a reason why correct and true ideas about these things are so important.

There exists today a right and proper path of approach to the spiritual truths, which since 1879 have been filtering down from the spiritual to the physical world. It is the path indicated by Spiritual Science. And if in the stream of Spiritual Science there is no deviation from sincerity and purity of intention, Spiritual Science will lead to the establishment of the right relationship between the physical and the spiritual worlds. But what is attained thereby, and must arise among men, involves and demands strenuous effort. Laziness in all its many forms must be put away. Strenuous effort is essential. When mention is made of impulses which, coming from the spiritual world, also work in the shaping of the future ... well, then people come and say: "I want to know this or that specific detail." What they like best of all, nowadays, for example, is that one should give them a detailed description of what will happen in 1920 as the result of the present war. They do not understand that knowledge of the future ought not to be burdened with such detailed delineations, although this knowledge of the future can be absolutely reliable and effective. That is so terribly difficult to understand.

Let me make myself clear by means of a comparison. You will say: "Really that is unintelligible: he states on the one hand that details damage knowledge concerning the future, and on the other hand that one ought to pay attention to this knowledge because it speaks correctly about the future." I want to make this point clear by means of a simple and trivial analogy. There are bad chess players and good chess players. Set a bad player down in front of a board and he will make bad moves and lose the game. A good player will get more opportunities and will win the game. The bad chess player simply makes the wrong move and the good player the right move, at the given moment. But does the good player apply his mind to detailed deliberation of the actual moves that the other player will make later on? Is it necessary for him, if he is a good player, to know now what moves the other player will make in two hours time? No, it is not! But that does not mean that his skill — the skill of a really good chess player — is ineffective. He will do what is the right thing for the future, because he knows the right moves and, if he has no such insight, he will make the wrong moves; but he is inevitably exposed to the free will of the other player. One cannot, therefore, ask: What is the good of being able to play chess really well, if the other player is always there? It is a very great help indeed to be able to play chess well! If you will ponder over this comparison, I am sure you will see what I mean.

The analogy will serve at the same time to point the truth of what everyone versed in occult matters of this kind will tell you, namely, that the moment a man draws his impulses for action in the physical world, from the spiritual world, he must be prepared to encounter other spiritual Powers; there are the "other players" to be reckoned with; there is no open field before him where he can just do what he has planned. That is the inconvenient fact! Suppose you have some knowledge of occult impulses, of impulses deriving from the spiritual world and then try — in the world of politics, let us say — to turn them to real account. If you are typical men of the present day, you will prefer everything to run smoothly and automatically so that you can have it all under control. But if you want to turn spiritual impulses, occult impulses to account in the physical world, you will have to reckon everywhere with the free will not only of men here on Earth, but also of higher Beings. In other words, with conditions as they are at present, you must not reckon upon having a free field before you; you must realise that the field is already crowded.

And so it is a matter of acquiring through genuine Spiritual Science, correct knowledge, for example of the character of the Sixth Post-Atlantean epoch which is preparing in the East, and of putting the right occult



impulse into action at the right moment, just as the chess player must make his move according to that of the other player. What is really necessary is that a man shall deepen his understanding of the spiritual world and learn to do the right thing in each individual case. A recovery of spiritual vitality, unbroken effort and exertion — that is what is necessary, not all these overlapping, abstract programmes. Humanity today likes to have abstract programmes, likes best of all to condense into four or five paragraphs what should be done all over the world, so that delegates appointed by all the nations may vote in a kind of World Court of Arbitration on what has to come about on Earth in accordance with a rule accepted once and for all. But what is really necessary is that men shall seek for knowledge of the spiritual world, shall seek lasting union with the spiritual powers.

But this is connected also with something else, namely, that you must reckon with the other powers in the field. You cannot merely rely on your own power; you must reckon with the others. The quest of power as such is, of course, ruled out. Impulses truly derived from the occult world will assuredly be right and will produce the right effects, but they will never be at the disposal of mere impulses of power. That would be out of the question.

What will one do on the other hand if one does want to serve mere impulses of power? Then one will act quite differently, trying to gain knowledge of the future by such improper means as I described last time, where mediumistic revelations about the future were elicited from souls who had first been precipitated through the Gate of Death in such a way that they might still make use of earthly forces. In this way, certain occult brotherhoods acquired knowledge concerning the relation of West and East, and on the basis of this knowledge all sorts of machinations were set on foot, the effects of which go on to this day. Knowledge of this kind, placed at the disposal of the lust for power, always has some particular object in view. If you acquire knowledge of occult forces in a right and honest way, all you will do in human life will at the same time be reckoning with the Angel-Beings, with every single Angelos of every one of the human beings concerned. You know the human beings in regard to whom you apply occult truths are in relation to the spiritual world. Every one of them, a living soul, has his connection with the spiritual world. You look on them as living beings. So should the West be dealing with the East — open always to what may arise, reckoning with the "other players" as with living beings — reckoning in effect with the Angels who guard the individuals concerned. This is found inconvenient. This kind of influence the Ahrimanic

Powers want to do away with; they want mere power to prevail. And they can only achieve their end by such illicit means as I described last time, whereby they seek to gain possession of the forces leading on into the future. Our time is suffering great harm, in that the forces that were acquired in this way play their part in events. Hence the first task of the honest seeker after truth today is to convince himself of the existence of these evil forces and moreover that a right working into the future can be achieved only by finding access to these true impulses, which can be sought for in the sincere, straightforward ways of Spiritual Science.

Truly, the service to be rendered by Spiritual Science is by no means one-sided — for it is rendered both by the Living and the Dead. This is a solemn, serious matter. And as friends in Zurich are proposing to take steps to introduce spiritual Science in certain chosen circles, I have felt it necessary, in our Society here, to speak of these very serious aspects of spiritual knowledge in our time. That opposing powers are at work in manifold ways is to be observed even within our own Society. Think, too, of all that has been going on, really ever since this war began, in the way of calumny, of suspicion as to my own intentions and those of a few others! Here, too, of course, inimical powers are playing a part.

The very way in which we have spoken in these lectures will show you that our age sorely needs a renewal of spiritual life, needs to be wakened from a certain condition of sleep. There are so many who think that peace will come after the war and then it will all be over and done with. By no means! The events of the present time are portentous signs. To those who will not deepen their knowledge of Spiritual Science these signs will remain unintelligible. And because the times are so grave, because it will become more and more difficult to fight even such a battle as friends here have to fight before work can be done, I want to express my special, personal gratitude — it is a gratitude which comes, too, from Spiritual Science — that friends in Zurich have taken up the struggle so warmly and so effectively against unfavourable conditions and have been undaunted in their efforts to find opportunities for lectures. Thus it has actually been possible for the aim of friends in Zurich to be fulfilled at this time, when on account of the ever-increasing obstacles, such opportunities are hard to come by. I want to stress the fact that these difficulties will grow. And as in the immediate future we shall certainly have to think about making good use of the time still remaining open to us for the arrangement of meetings, I do not want to leave unexpressed my thanks for the great efforts made in connection with the public lectures and these two lectures to the Members

here. Later on, when we look back over events, it will assuredly seem significant that now, at a time of such tragic world events, we could be together and speak together as we have done.

And so, with the impulses of Spiritual Science, we will continue to work, trying to make the best of what can be wrested from the difficult conditions of the times, in the conviction which arises from a true understanding of Spiritual Science, that, insignificant as it may appear within the great stream of tragic, devastating happenings today, we are doing something of great and incisive importance for the times. The things we do in this way flow into the stream of events. Although this may still not be very apparent today, it has significance, nevertheless. If we are filled with this thought it will give us the strength to go further and it will contain in itself the power to ray out into the times. Our age must assimilate such thoughts. Let us live in this conviction as in a spiritual atmosphere! It can arise in us in very truth if we understand Spiritual Science aright.

In this sense, my dear friends, we will remain together.



# 5 Individual Spirit Beings and the Constant Foundation of the Universe, I

Translated by Charles Davy

*Dornach, 18th November, 1917*

You will remember our considering various views and statements associated nowadays with the psycho-analysts. [See *Psycho-Analysis in the Light of Anthroposophy* (published in U.S.A.).] The essential point was to bring out clearly the fact that the idea of the unconscious which prevails in psychoanalysis is unfounded. As long as this idea — a purely negative idea — persists, we are bound to say that psychoanalysis is approaching with inadequate means of knowledge a phenomenon of quite special importance for our time. And because the psycho-analysts are trying to explore the mind and soul and — as we have seen — to study their implications for social life, we must say that their way of approach is far more significant than anything academic studies have to offer in the same field. On the other hand, because psycho-analysis is trying, through pedagogy and therapeutics, and soon, probably, through social and political ideas, to carry its influence deeply into human living, so the dangers bound up with such an approach must always be taken very seriously.

Now the question arises: What really is it that these modern researchers cannot reach and do not want to reach? They recognise that a soul-element exists outside consciousness; they search for it outside consciousness; but they cannot bring themselves to the point of recognising the spirit itself. The spirit can never be grasped through the idea of the unconscious, for unconscious spirit is like a man without a head. I have indeed called your attention to the fact that there are people, victims of certain hysterical conditions, who when they walk about in the streets see people only as bodies, minus their heads. That is a definite malady. So among present-day researchers there are some who believe they can discern the entire spirit, but as they suppose it to be unconscious, they show that they are under the delusion that an unconscious spirit, a spirit without consciousness, would be found by anyone who crosses the

threshold — whether in the right sense, as described on the ground of spiritual-scientific research, or because of the kind of abnormal malady that comes to the attention of the psycho-analysts.

When we cross the threshold of consciousness, we always come into a realm of spirit; whether it is a subconscious or a super-conscious realm makes no difference. We always enter a realm where the spirit is in some sense conscious, where it displays a consciousness of some kind. We have to find out the conditions under which a given form of consciousness prevails; we must even gain through Spiritual Science the possibility of recognising which kind of consciousness a particular spirituality has.

I have told you of the case of the lady who leaves a party, runs in front of a cab-horse, is restrained from jumping into the river and taken back to the house she had just left, so that she is again under the same roof as the host, with whom she is subconsciously in love. In such a case it should not be said that the spirit which is outside the lady's consciousness, the spirit which urges and directs her, is an unconscious part of the soul: it is highly conscious. The consciousness of this demonic spirit (which led the lady back to her unlawful lover) is even much cleverer than is the lady in her upper storey — I should say, her consciousness. And these spirits, which are encountered whenever the threshold of consciousness is crossed in one way or another, and are active and potent there, are not unconscious; they are very effectively conscious for the purpose of their own activities. The phrase, "unconscious spirit," as used by the psycho-analysts, makes no sense: I could just as well say, if I wished to speak merely from my own point of view, that the whole distinguished company seated here are my unconscious, supposing I knew nothing of them. Just as little can one describe as "unconscious spirits" those spiritual beings who are all around us, and who may lay hold of a personality, as in the case I told you about a week ago. They are not unconscious; they are outside the range of our normal consciousness, but they are fully conscious on their own account.

It is extraordinarily important — precisely in connection with the task of Spiritual Science in our time — to be aware of this, for knowledge of the spiritual realm that lies beyond the threshold, which means a knowledge of real, conscious individualities, is not simply a discovery of present-day Spiritual Science; it is in fact a primordial knowledge. In earlier times it came through old, atavistic clairvoyance. To-day it has to be attained gradually, by other methods. But knowledge of these spiritual beings, who live outside our consciousness under conditions different from ours, but have an enduring relationship with human beings and can lay hold of a

person's thinking, feeling and willing — this knowledge has always been there. And within certain brotherhoods, who always looked on this knowledge as their secret property, it was treated as highly esoteric. Why was this so? To discuss this question fully would take us too far just now, but it must be said that particular brotherhoods were honestly convinced that the great majority of people were not ripe for this knowledge. And indeed this was true up to a certain point. But many other brotherhoods, called those of the left, tried to keep this knowledge for themselves, because when it is possessed by a small group, it gives them power over others who do not have it. And so endeavours were always made by certain groups to assure them power over others. Thus it could come about that a certain kind of knowledge was regarded as an esoteric possession, but was in fact utilised in order to gain power over one thing or another.

In this present time it is particularly necessary to be really clear about these things. For you know that since 1879 mankind has been living in a very special spiritual situation. Quite particularly powerful spirits of darkness were then cast down from the spiritual world into the human realm, and those persons who in a wrongful way keep the secrets connected with this event in the possession of their small groups are able to bring about everything possible by this means. Now I will first of all show you how certain secrets which concern present-day developments can be wrongfully made use of. You must then take care to bring what I am going to say to-day, rather on historical lines, into close connection with what I shall be adding to-morrow.

As you all know, attention has often been called within our movement to the fact that this century should bring human evolution into a special relationship with the Christ, in the sense that during this century — and even during the first half of it — the event indicated in my first Mystery Play is to come about: the Christ will appear to an increasing number of people as a Being truly and immediately present in the etheric realm.

Now we know that we are living in the age of materialism, and that since the middle of the nineteenth century this materialism has reached its peak. But in reality opposites always occur together. Precisely the high-point of materialism is necessarily accompanied by that inward development which makes it possible for the Christ to be really seen in the etheric realm. You can understand that a disclosure of this secret, concerning the etheric manifestation of Christ and the resulting new relationship of the Christ to human evolution, gives rise to resentment and ill-will among those



members of certain brotherhoods who wished to make use of this event, the appearance of the etheric Christ, for their own purposes and did not want it to become the common property of mankind. There are brotherhoods — and brotherhoods always influence public opinion by disseminating this or that in such a way that it will disturb people as little as possible — who put out the idea that the time of materialism will soon be over, or indeed that it is already at an end. The poor, pitiable "clever people," who to-day are promoting through so many gatherings and books and societies the idea that materialism is finished and that something of the spirit is now within reach, but without ever being able to offer people more than the word "spirit" and little phrases of a similar kind — these people are all more or less in the service of those who have an interest in declaring what is not true: that materialism is in ruins. That is far from true: on the contrary, a materialistic outlook makes progress and prospers best when people are taught that they are no longer materialists. The materialistic outlook is fast making headway and will continue to advance for some four or five hundred years.

The essential thing, as has often been emphasised here, is to be clearly conscious of the facts. Mankind will begin to recover when, through work in the life of the spirit, people come to know and to see in its true light the fact that the fifth post-Atlantean epoch is intended to create a materialistic state of being out of the general stream of human evolution. But all the more, then, must a spiritual state of being be set in opposition to this materialism. What people in our epoch must learn is the need to wage a fully conscious fight against the evil that is making its way into human evolution. Just as in the fourth epoch the struggle was to come to terms with birth and death, so now we have to come to terms with evil. Therefore the point is to grasp spiritual teaching with full consciousness, not to throw sand in the eyes of our contemporaries, as though the devil of materialism were not there. Those who handle these matters in an unrightful way know as well as I do about the event of the Christ-appearance, but they deal with it differently. And to understand this, we must pay attention to the following.

Now that we are living in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, it is quite wrong to say, as many people are comfortably fond of saying: "During this life between birth and death, the best thing is to give oneself over to living; whether after death we enter a spiritual world will be revealed soon enough — we can wait for that. Here and now we will enjoy our life, as though only a material world exists; if we do pass beyond death into a spiritual world, then we shall know whether a spiritual world is there!" That

is about as clever as if someone were to take an oath and say: "As truly as there is a God in Heaven, I am an atheist!" Yet there are many people who take the line: "After death we shall know what things are like there. Until then, there is no need to occupy oneself with any kind of spiritual knowledge."

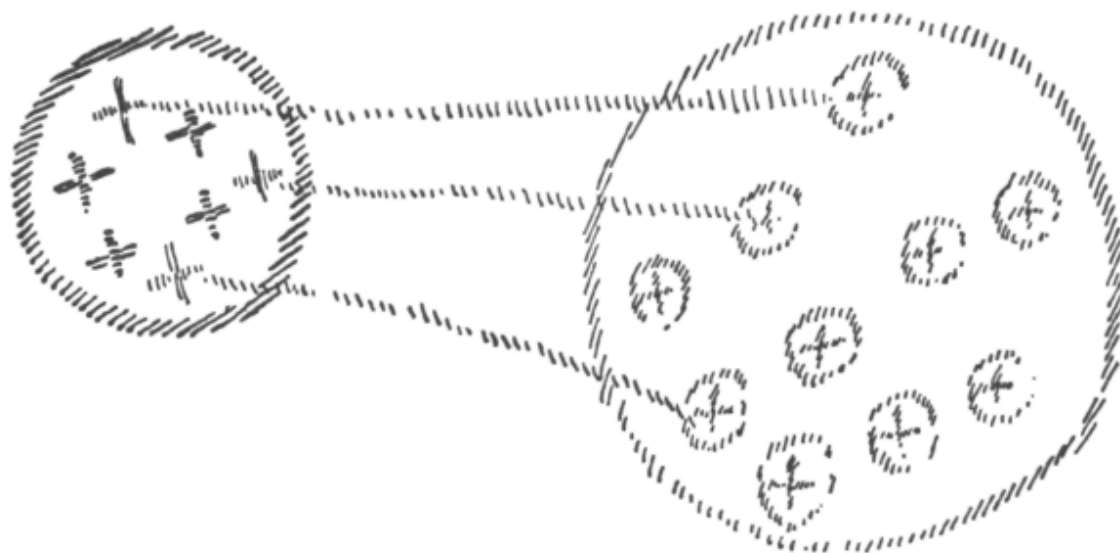
This way of thinking has been very tempting always, in all epochs, but in our epoch it is particularly disastrous, because the temptation to indulge in it comes very close to people owing to the power and prevalence of evil. When under present-day conditions of evolution a man goes through the portal of death, he takes with him the modes of consciousness he has developed between birth and death. If he has occupied himself entirely with concepts and ideas and experiences drawn from the material world, the world of the senses, he condemns himself to dwell after death in an environment related to those ideas. While a man who has absorbed spiritual concepts enters the spiritual world in the right way, a man who has refused to accept them will have to remain tied to earthly relationships in a certain sense, until — and it takes a long time — he has learnt over there to absorb enough spiritual ideas to carry him into the spiritual world. Accordingly, whether or not we have absorbed spiritual ideas in this life determines our environment over there. Many of those — one can say it only with sympathy — who resisted spiritual ideas during this life, or were prevented from absorbing them, are to be found wandering about the earth, still bound to the earthly realm. And a soul in this situation, no longer shut off from its surroundings by the body, and no longer prevented by the body from working destructively — such a soul, if it continues to dwell in the earth-sphere, becomes a destructive centre.

Thus we see that in these cases — we might call them normal nowadays — when the threshold of death is crossed by souls who have not wanted to have anything at all to do with spiritual ideas and feelings, the souls become destructive centres, because they are held back in the earth-sphere. Only those souls who in this life are permeated by a certain connection with the spiritual world go through the gate of death in such a way that they are accepted in the spiritual world, set free from the earth-sphere, and are able to weave the threads that can continually be woven from themselves to those they have left behind. For we must be clear about this: the spiritual threads between the dead and those of us who were close to them are not severed by death; they remain and are indeed much more intimate than they were during life.

This that I have been saying must be taken as a very serious and important truth. Once again, it is not something known to me alone; others know that this is how things are at the present time. But there are many who make use of this truth in a very bad sense. For while there are misguided materialists who believe that this life is the only life, there are also initiates who are materialists and who disseminate materialistic teachings through their brotherhoods. You must not suppose that these materialists take the feeble-minded view that there is no such thing as spirit, or that men have no souls which can live independently of the body. You can be sure that anyone who has been really initiated into the spiritual world will never succumb to the foolishness of believing only in matter. But there are many who have a certain interest in spreading materialism and try by all sorts of means to ensure that the majority of men will believe only in materialism and will live wholly under its influence. And there are brotherhoods led by initiates who have this interest. It suits these materialists very well when it is constantly said that materialism has already been overcome. For anything can be promoted by talking about it in an opposing sense; the necessary manoeuvres are often highly complicated.

What then are the aims of these initiates, who in reality know very well that the human soul is a purely spiritual entity, independent of the body, and nevertheless cherish and cultivate a materialistic outlook in other people? What they want is that the largest possible number of souls should absorb only materialistic ideas between birth and death. Thus these souls are made ready to linger on in the earth-sphere, to be held back there. And now observe that there are brotherhoods which are equipped to know all about this. These brotherhoods prepare certain human souls to remain after death in the realm of the material; then they arrange things — and this is quite possible for their infamous power — so that these souls come under the aegis of their brotherhood, and from this the brotherhood gains enormous strength. So these materialists are not materialists, for they believe in the spirit — these initiate-materialists are not so foolish as not to do that, and indeed they know the truth about the spirit well enough — but they compel human souls to remain bound to the material realm after death, in order to be able to use these souls for their own purposes. Thus these brotherhoods build up a sort of clientele of souls from among the dead who remain in the earth-sphere. These souls have in them certain forces which can be guided in the most varied ways, and by this means it is possible to achieve quite special opportunities for exercising power over those who are not initiated into these things.

Nothing less than that, you see, is the plan of certain brotherhoods. And nobody will understand these matters clearly unless he keeps the dust out of his eyes and refuses to be put off by suggestions that either such brotherhoods do not exist or that their activities are harmless. They are in fact extremely harmful; the intention of these initiates is that men should be led farther and farther into materialism, and should come to believe that there are indeed spiritual forces, but that these are no more than certain forces of nature.



Now I would like to describe for you the ideal that these initiates cherish. A certain effort is necessary to understand these things. Picture a world of harmless people: they are a little misled by the prevailing materialistic ideas, a little led away from the old well-founded religious ideas. Picture this — perhaps a diagram will be helpful.

Here (larger circle) is a realm of harmless human beings. They are not very clear about the spiritual world; misled by materialism, they are not sure what attitude to take towards the spiritual world, and especially towards those who have passed through the gate of death.

Now consider this: here (smaller circle) we have the realm of such a brotherhood as I have described. Its members are engaged in spreading the doctrine of materialism; they are taking care to see that these people shall think in purely materialistic terms. In this way they are training souls to remain in the earth-sphere after death. These souls will become a clientele of the lodge; appropriate measures can be taken to hold them

within the lodge. Thus the brotherhood has created a lodge which embraces both the living and the dead; but the dead are those who are still related to the forces of the earth.

It was then arranged that seances should be held, as they were during the second half of the nineteenth century. Then it can come about — please note this carefully — that what takes place in the seances is directed, with the help of the dead, by the lodge. But the real intention of the Masters who belong to lodges of that kind was that people should not know that they were dealing with the dead, but should believe that they were in touch simply with higher forces of nature. They were to be convinced that these higher forces, psychic forces and the like, do exist, but that they are higher forces of nature and nothing more. They were to get the idea that just as electricity and magnetism exist, so are there higher forces of a similar kind. The fact that these forces come from souls is precisely what the leaders of the lodge keep hidden. In this way the "harmless" people gradually become entirely dependent in their soul-life on the lodge, without knowing that they are dependent or from what source they are being guided.

The only weapon against these procedures is to *know* about them. If we know about them, we are protected; if we take them seriously and believe in the truth of our knowledge, we are safe. But we must not take too comfortably the task of making this knowledge our own. It is not yet too late. I have often insisted that these matters can be clarified only by degrees, and that only by degrees can I bring together the essential facts to complete the picture.

As I have often told you, in the course of the nineteenth century many brotherhoods introduced spiritualism in an experimental way, in order to see if they had got as far with mankind as they wished. Their expectation was that at the spiritualistic seances people would take it that higher nature-forces were at work. The brothers of the left were disappointed when most people assumed, instead, that spirits of the dead were manifesting. This was a bitter disappointment for these initiates; it was just what they did not want. They wanted to deprive mankind of belief in survival after death. The efficacy of the dead and their forces was to remain, but the correct, important idea that the manifestations came from the dead — this was to be taken away. This is a higher form of materialism; a materialism which not only belies the spirit but tries to drag it down into the material realm. You see, materialism can have forces which lead to a denial of itself. People can say: "Materialism has gone —

we are already talking of the spirit." But a person can remain a thorough materialist if he treats the whole of nature as spirit in such a way that psychism emerges. The only right way is to learn how to see into the real spiritual world, the world of actual spirituality.

Here we have the beginning of a trend which will gather force throughout the next four or five hundred years. For the moment the evil brotherhoods have put the brake on, but they will continue their activities unless they are stopped — and they can be stopped only if complacency regarding the spiritual-scientific world-outlook is overcome.

Thus these brothers over-reached themselves in their spiritualistic seances: instead of concealing themselves, they were shown up. It made them realise that their enterprise had not gone well. Therefore these same brotherhoods endeavoured, from the nineties onwards, to discredit spiritualism for a time. On this path, you see, very incisive results are achieved by spiritual means. And the aim of it all is to gain greater power and so to take advantage of certain conditions which must come about in the course of human evolution.

There is something that works against this materialising of human souls, this exile of souls in the earthly sphere. The lodges exist on earth, and if the souls are to manifest and to be made use of in the lodges, they must be kept in this earthly exile. The power that works against these endeavours to operate through souls in the earthly realm is the impulse of the Mystery of Golgotha. And this also is the healing impulse which acts against the materialising of souls. Now the way taken by the Christ is altogether outside the wills and intentions of men. Hence there is no man anywhere, and no initiate, whatever his knowledge, who can influence those actions of the Christ which in the course of the twentieth century will lead to that appearance of which I have often spoken to you and which you can find indicated in the Mystery Plays. That rests entirely with Christ alone. The Christ will be present as an etheric Being within the earth-sphere. The question for men is how they are to relate themselves to Him. No one, not even the most powerful initiate, has any kind of influence over this appearance. It will come! I beg you to keep firm hold of that. But measures can be taken with the aim of seeing to it that this Christ-Event is received in one way or another and has this or that effect.

Indeed, the aim of those brotherhoods I have spoken of, who wish to confine human souls in the material realm, is that the Christ should pass by unobserved in the twentieth century; that His coming as an etheric



individuality should not be noticed by men. And this endeavour takes shape under the influence of a quite definite idea and a quite definite purpose. These brotherhoods want to take over the Christ's sphere of influence, which should spread out more and more widely during the twentieth century, for another being (of whom we will later speak more precisely). There are Western brotherhoods who want to dispute the impulse of the Christ and to set in His place another individuality who has never appeared in the flesh — an etheric individuality, but a strongly Ahrimanic one.

All these methods I have told you about, this working with the dead and so on, have finally one single purpose — to lead people away from the Christ who has passed through the Mystery of Golgotha, and to assign to another being dominion over the earth. This is a very real battle, not an affair of abstract concepts; a real battle which is concerned with setting another being in place of the Christ-Being for the rest of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, for the sixth epoch and for the seventh. One of the tasks of healthy, honest spiritual development will be to destroy and make away with such endeavours, which are anti-Christian in the highest degree. For this other being, whom these brotherhoods want to set up as a ruler, will be called "Christ" by them; yes, they will really call him "Christ!" And it will be essential for people to learn to distinguish between the true Christ, who will not this time appear in the flesh, and this other being who is marked off by the fact that he has never been embodied on the earth. It is this etheric being whom these brotherhoods want to set in the place of Christ, so that the Christ may pass by unobserved.

Here is one side of the battle, which is concerned with falsifying the appearance of Christ during the twentieth century. Anyone who looks only at the surface of life, and pays heed to all the external discussions about Christ and the Jesus-question, and so on, knows nothing of the deeper facts. All these discussions serve only to hide the real issues and to lead people away from them. When the theologians discuss "Christ" in this way, a spiritual influence from somewhere is always at work, and these learned men are in fact furthering aims and purposes quite different from those they are aware of.

This is the danger of the idea of the unconscious: it leads to unclear thinking about all such connections. While the evil brotherhoods pursue their aims very consciously, these aims never enter the consciousness of the people who engage in all sorts of superficial discussions. We lose the truth of these things by talking of the "unconscious," for this so-called unconscious is merely beyond the threshold of ordinary consciousness, and

is the very sphere in which someone who knows about these things can manipulate them. Here we have *one* side of the situation: a number of brotherhoods actually do wish to substitute for the working of Christ the working of another being and are ready to use any means to bring this about.

On the other side are certain Eastern brotherhoods, especially Indian ones, who want to intervene no less significantly in the evolution of mankind. But they have a different purpose: they have never developed an esoteric method of achieving something by drawing the souls of the dead into the purview of their lodges: that is far removed from their aims. But in their own way they also do not want the impulses of the Mystery of Golgotha to work into the course of human evolution. Since the dead are not at their disposal, as they are for some of the Western brotherhoods I have mentioned, they do not wish to set against the Christ, who is to appear as an etheric individuality during the twentieth century, some other individuality; for that they would need the dead. But they do want to distract attention from the Christ; to prevent Christianity from rising to supremacy; to obscure the truth about the Christ, who passed through the Mystery of Golgotha after His one and only incarnation of three years on earth, and who cannot be incarnated again on earth. These brotherhoods do not want to control the dead in their lodges: in place of the dead they employ beings of another kind.

When a man dies, he gives up his etheric body, which separates from the physical body, as you know, soon after death, and is then normally taken up into the cosmos. This is a somewhat complicated process; I have described it for you in various ways. But before the Mystery of Golgotha something else was possible, and even afterwards it was still possible, especially in the East. When a man surrenders his etheric body after death, certain beings can clothe themselves in it and become etheric beings with the aid of these etheric bodies of dead men. This is what happens in the East: demonic beings are enticed to clothe themselves in the etheric bodies which men have cast aside; and it is these spirits who are drawn into the Eastern lodges. The Western lodges, therefore, have the dead who are banished into matter; the Eastern lodges of the left have demonic spirits — spirits who do not belong to earth-evolution but have insinuated themselves into it by donning the discarded etheric bodies of dead men.

Esoterically, the procedure is to make this fact into an object of worship. You know that the calling up of illusions belongs to the arts of certain brotherhoods, because when men are not aware of how far illusion is

present in the midst of reality, they can easily be taken in by skilfully produced illusions. The immediate object is achieved by introducing a certain form of worship.

Suppose I have a group of men with a common ancestry; then, after as an "evil" brother I have made it possible for the etheric body of a certain ancestor to be taken over by a demonic spirit, I tell the people that this ancestor is to be worshipped. The ancestor is simply the man whose cast-off etheric body has been taken over, through the machinations of the lodge, by a demonic spirit. So ancestor-worship is introduced, but the ancestors who are worshipped are simply whatever demonic beings have clothed themselves in the etheric bodies of these ancestors.

The Eastern peoples can be diverted from the Mystery of Golgotha by methods such as these. The result will be that for Eastern peoples — or perhaps for people generally, since that is the ultimate aim — the coming manifestation of Christ in our earthly world will pass unnoticed. These Eastern lodges do not want to substitute another Christ; they want only that the appearance of Christ Jesus shall not be noticed. There is thus an attack from two sides against the Christ Impulse that is to manifest in etheric form during the twentieth century; and this is the situation in which we stand to-day. Particular trends are always only an outcome of what the great impulses in human evolution are bringing about. That is why it is so saddening to hear it said continually that influences from the unconscious, the so-called unconscious, are an effect of suppressed love or the like, when in fact influences from a highly conscious spirituality are at work on humanity from all sides, while remaining relatively unconscious if no conscious attention is paid to them.

We must now bring in some further considerations. Men with good intentions for the development of mankind have always reckoned with the activities I have just described and have done their best — and no man can or should be expected to do more — to set things right.

A particularly good home for spiritual life, protected against all possible illusions, was Ireland, the island of Ireland, in the first Christian centuries. More than any other spot on earth it was sheltered from illusions; and that is why so many missionaries of Christianity went out from Ireland in those early times. But these missionaries had to have regard for the simple folk among whom they worked — for the peoples of Europe were very simple in those days — and also to understand the great impulses behind human evolution. During the fourth and fifth centuries Irish initiates were at work

in central Europe and they set themselves to prepare for the demands of the future. They were in a certain way under the influence of the initiate-knowledge that in the fifteenth century — in 1413, as you know — the fifth post-Atlantean epoch was to begin. Hence they knew that they had to prepare for a quite new epoch, and at the same time to protect a simple-minded people. What did they do in order to keep the simple people of Europe sheltered and enclosed, so that certain harmful influences could not reach them? The course of events was guided, from well-instructed and honourable sources, in such a way that gradually all the voyages which had formerly been made from Northern lands to America were brought to an end. Whereas in earlier times ships had sailed to America from Norway for certain purposes (I will say more of this to-morrow), it was gradually arranged that America should be forgotten and the connection lost. By the fifteenth century, indeed, the peoples of Europe knew nothing of America. Especially from Rome was this change brought about, because European humanity had to be shielded from American influences. A leading part in it was played by Irish monks, who as Irish initiates were engaged in the Christianising of Europe.

In earlier times quite definite impulses had been brought from America, but in the period when the fifth post-Atlantean epoch was beginning it was necessary that the peoples of Europe should be uninfluenced by America — should know nothing of it and should live in the belief that there was no such country. Only when the fifth post-Atlantean epoch had begun was America again "discovered," as history says. But, as you know very well, much of the history taught in schools is *fable convenue*, and one of these fables is that America was discovered for the first time in 1492. In fact, it was only *rediscovered*. The connection had been blotted out for a period, as destiny required. But we must know the truth of these historical circumstances and how it was that Europe was hedged in and carefully sheltered from certain influences which were not to come in.

These things show how necessary it is not to take the so-called unconscious as actually unconscious, but to recognise it as something that pursues its aims very consciously below the threshold of ordinary consciousness. It is important to-day that more people should come to know of certain secrets. That is why I went as far as one can go publicly in my Zürich lectures, [Four public lectures given on 5th, 7th, 12th and 14th November, 1917, on the following subjects: *Anthroposophy and Psychology; Anthroposophy and History; Anthroposophy and Natural Science; Anthroposophy and Social Science*. (Not yet translated.)] when, as you know, I explained to what extent the history of mankind is not known

by ordinary consciousness, but is in fact dreamt through; and when I said that only when people become aware of this, will they come to see history in its true colours.

These are means by which consciousness is gradually awakened. The facts and events confirm what I say; only they must not be overlooked. People sleep their way blindly through events — through tragic catastrophes such as the present one. I would like first to impress on you the historical aspect of these matters: we will speak of them in greater detail to-morrow.

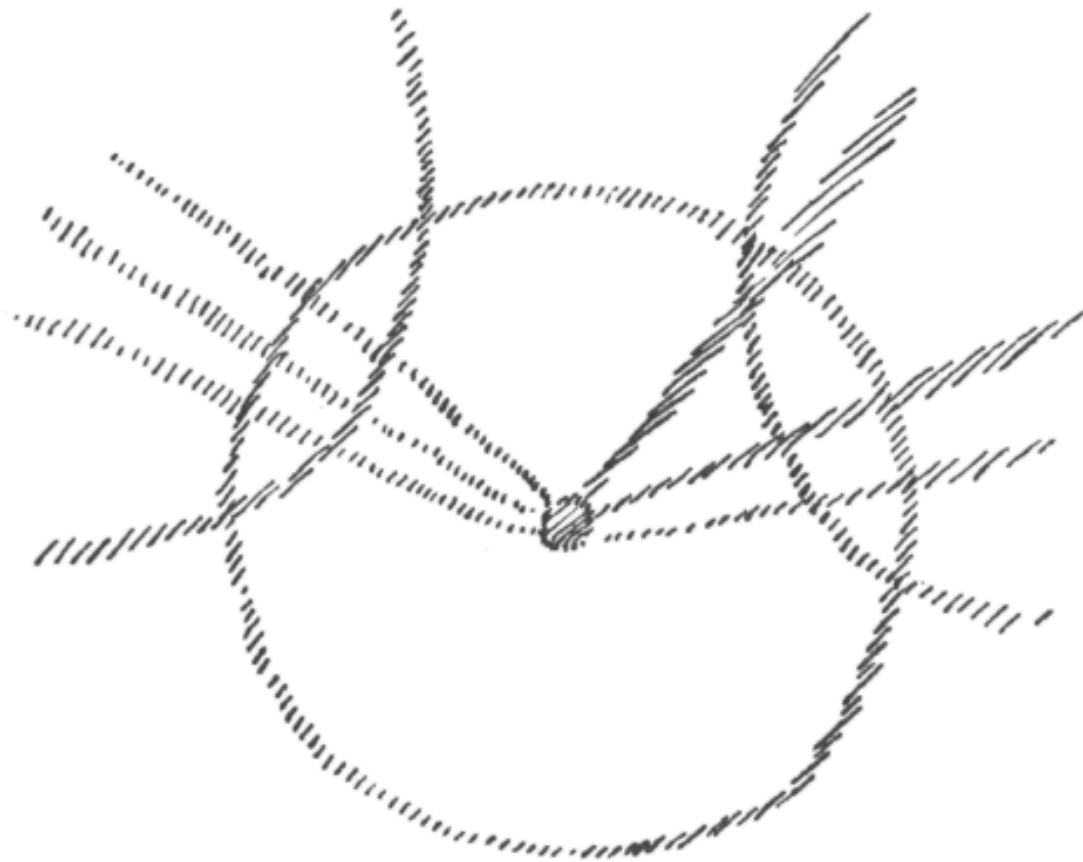
I want to add one further point. You will have seen from my explanations how great is the difference between West and East in relation to the evolution of mankind. Now I would ask you to observe the following. The psycho-analysts talk of the subconscious, the subconscious soul-life, etc. To apply such vague concepts to these things is useless. The point is to grasp what there really is beyond the threshold of consciousness. Certainly there is a great deal down below the threshold, and on its own account it is highly conscious. We must learn to understand what kind of spirituality exists down there, beyond the threshold of consciousness. We must speak of a *conscious* spirituality, not of unconscious mind. Yes, we must be quite clear that we know nothing of a great deal that goes on within us — it would indeed go badly with us if we had normally to be aware of it all. Just imagine how we should cope with eating and drinking if we had to acquaint ourselves with all the physiological and biological processes that go on from the moment when we swallow a piece of food! All that proceeds unconsciously, and spiritual forces are at work there, even in the purely physiological realm. But you will agree that we cannot wait to eat and drink until we have learnt all the details of it. It is the same with much else: by far the greater part of our being is unconscious, or — a better word — subconscious.

Now the peculiar thing is that this subconscious within us is invariably taken possession of by another being. Hence we are not only a union of body, soul and spirit, carrying an independent soul in our body through the world, but shortly before birth another being takes possession of our subconscious parts. This subconscious being goes with us all the way from birth to death. We can to some extent describe this being by saying that it is highly intelligent, and endowed with a will which is closely related to the forces of nature. I must emphasise a further peculiarity of this being — it would incur the gravest danger if under present conditions it were to accompany man through death. At present it cannot do so; therefore it

disappears shortly before death in order to save itself; yet it retains the impulse to order human life in such a way that it would be able to conquer death for its own purposes. It would be terrible for human evolution if this being which has taken hold of man were able to overcome death and so, by dying with man, to pass over into the worlds which man enters after death. This being must always take leave of man before death, but in many cases this is very difficult for it to do, and all sorts of complications result. For the moment the important thing is that this being, which has its dominion entirely within the subconscious, is extremely dependent upon the earth as a whole organism.

The earth is very different from what geologists or mineralogists or palaeontologists say about it; the earth is a living being through and through. These scientists deal only with its mineral part, its skeleton, and its skeleton is all we normally perceive. This is much the same as if you were to enter this hall and through a special change of sight were to see only the bones of the people assembled here. Just imagine that you came in through the door and only skeletons were sitting on the chairs: not that they *were* nothing but bones — that would be going too far — but that you could *see* only the bones, as though with an X-ray apparatus. That is as much as geology sees of the earth — its skeleton only. But the earth is more than a skeleton: it is a living organism, and from its centre it sends out particular forces to every point and region on its surface.





These outward-streaming forces belong to the earth as a living organism, and they affect a man differently according to where he lives on the earth. His soul is not directly influenced by these forces, for his immortal soul is very largely independent of earth-conditions, and can be made dependent on them only by such special arts as those I have described to-day. But through the other being, which seizes hold of man before birth and has to leave him before death, these various earth-forces work with particular strength into the racial and geographical varieties of mankind. So it is on this "double" (*Doppelgänger*), which man carries within himself, that geographical and other diversities exert special influence.

This is extraordinarily important. To-morrow we shall see how the "double" is influenced from various points on the earth and what the consequences are. I have already indicated that you will need to bring what I have said to-day into direct connection with what I shall be saying to-morrow, for one lecture can scarcely be understood without the other.

We have to try to assimilate ideas which are most seriously related to the total reality in which the human soul lives, in accordance with its own nature. This reality goes through various metamorphoses, but how these changes occur depends to a great extent on human beings. And one significant change comes about if people realise how human souls, according to whether they absorb materialistic or spiritual concepts between birth and death, are exiled to the earth or pass on to their rightful spheres. The ideas on these matters that prevail among us must become continually clearer, for only then shall we relate ourselves truly to the world as a whole, which is what we must do more and more, for we are concerned not merely with an abstract spiritual movement, but with a very concrete one which has to take account of the spiritual life of a certain number of individuals.

It is a great satisfaction to me that these discussions, which are quite specially important for those of our friends who have passed through the gate of death but are still faithful members of our movement, can be carried on as a reality which unites us more and more deeply with them. I say this to-day because it behoves us to think with loving remembrance of Fräulein Stinde. Yesterday was the anniversary of her death, and with specially loving remembrance we think of one who was so inwardly linked to our Building, [The first Goetheanum, later destroyed by fire and replaced by the present Goetheanum.] and whose impulses were so inwardly connected with its impulses.



# 6 Individual Spirit Beings and the Constant Foundation of the Universe, II

Translated by Charles Davy

*Dornach, 19th November, 1917*

We have been considering the emergence of a search for knowledge with inadequate means, and this has opened up wide historical perspectives. Now with regard to these matters, and also to what I said with the same intention when I last spoke here, I must ask you to realise that we are concerned not with a theory or with a system of ideas but with the communication of facts. That is the point to keep in mind; otherwise these matters will not be clearly understood. I am not setting out historical laws or ideas, but stating facts — facts that are connected with the plans and purposes both of certain personalities who are held together in brotherhoods and of other beings who work on these brotherhoods and whose influence is also sought. They are beings who are not incarnated in the flesh, but are embodied in the spiritual world. It is essential to keep this in mind when you hear what I told you yesterday. For where these brotherhoods are concerned, we have to do with various parties (as indeed you will have learnt from explanations given in earlier lectures, e.g. *The Occult Movement in the 19th Century* (See p. 71)). Thus there is one party which stands for keeping certain higher truths absolutely secret; and again, allowing for various shades of opinion, there are brothers, particularly since the middle of the fifteenth century, who hold that certain truths, if only those called for by the needs of the moment, should be carefully and pertinently disclosed. Besides these two main parties there are other variations; hence you will see that whatever influence is finally exerted on human evolution from the side of these brotherhoods will very often reflect some kind of compromise.

Early in the 1840s, those brotherhoods who have knowledge of the spiritual impulses that play into history saw coming on that battle of certain spiritual beings with higher Spirits which terminated in 1879, when certain Angel-beings, Spirits of Darkness, were cast down, an event symbolised by

the victory of Michael over the dragon. When therefore, in the middle of the nineteenth century, these brotherhoods felt that this event was approaching, they had to decide what attitude to take towards it and to consider what should be done.

Those brothers who wished above all to reckon with the demands of the moment were actuated up to a certain point with the best intentions, but they were mistaken in their approach to the materialism of the time; they thought that men who were prepared to accept only what could be known in physical terms should be offered something from the spiritual world in a materialistic form. So it was with good intentions that Spiritualism was launched on the world in the 1840s.

Since at that time a critical mentality, concerned solely with the external world, was due to prevail on earth, it was necessary to give people at least some inkling, some feeling, that a spiritual world existed around them. And so now this compromise, as is the way with compromises, was put into effect. Those brothers who were altogether against communicating spiritual truths to mankind found themselves outvoted, one might say; they had to give in and agree. Even so, it was not their original intention to introduce the phenomena connected with Spiritualism into the world. Where collective groups of people are concerned one always gets compromises, and naturally, when a collective decision has been reached, not only those who favoured it will be looking for results, but those who at first opposed it will be expecting something or other from it.

Thus the well-meaning members of these brotherhoods took the mistaken view that through the use of mediums people would be convinced of the presence around them of a spiritual world; then on the basis of this conviction it would be possible to impart higher truths. This could indeed have happened if the phenomena that came through the mediums had in fact been interpreted in the intended way, as evidence for the presence of an interpenetrating spiritual world. But — as I explained yesterday — something quite different resulted. The mediumistic phenomena were interpreted by those who took part in the seances as coming from the dead. Hence the experiment was a disappointment for all concerned. Those brothers who had allowed themselves to be outvoted were very grieved that the séance manifestations could be spoken of — sometimes correctly — as coming from the spirits of the dead. The well-intentioned progressive brothers had not expected any mention of the dead, but rather of a general elemental world, so they too were disappointed.

These activities, however, are pursued above all by persons who have been in some way initiated. And besides the brotherhoods already mentioned, we have to reckon with others, or with sections of the same brotherhoods, wherein a minority of members, or even a majority, consists of initiates who within their brotherhoods are known as "brothers of the left;" they are those who treat every impulse that enters into human evolution as a question of power. Naturally, these brothers expected all sorts of things from Spiritualism.

As I told you yesterday, it was these brothers of the left who were specially responsible for dealing in the way I described with the souls of the dead. Their interest was centred on observing what came out of the seances, and by degrees they got control of the whole field. The well-intentioned initiates gradually lost all interest in Spiritualism; they felt in a certain sense ashamed, because those who had all along opposed Spiritualism said they might have known from the start that nothing would come of it. But the result was that Spiritualism came under the power of the brothers of the left. Yesterday I said that these brothers had been disappointed in the following way. They saw that Spiritualism could bring to light what they had set on foot, and they were above all anxious that this should not happen. Since the persons attending the seances believed they were in touch with the dead, communications from the dead might reveal what the brothers of the left were doing with the souls of the dead. The very souls which they were misusing might manifest in the course of a séance.

You must please once more keep in mind that I am not expounding theories but relating facts — facts that go back to particular individuals. And when individuals are united in brotherhoods, they will differ in what they expect from the same event. When one speaks of facts that belong to the spiritual world, it is always a question of looking for the outcome of individual impulses. In ordinary life one action will often contradict another. If theories are discussed, the rule of contradiction must be observed. But when one is speaking of facts, then — just because they are facts — we shall very often find that facts in the spiritual world agree just as little as do human actions on the physical plane. Therefore I ask you to keep this in mind. One cannot talk of realities in these matters unless one talks of individual facts. That is the point. Therefore we must keep the various streams apart and distinguish between them.

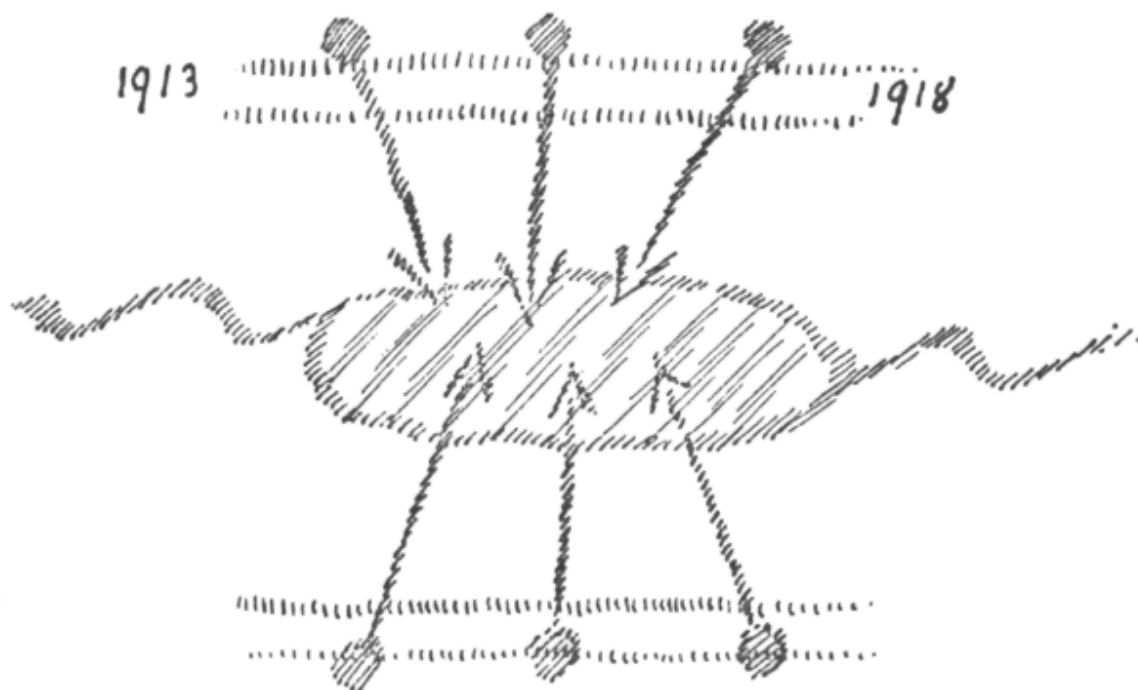
This is connected with something very important, which must be kept clearly in view by anyone who hopes to arrive at a more or less satisfying outlook on the world. It is a fundamental point, and we must bring it before us, even though it is somewhat abstract.

A person who tries to build up a world-picture rightly endeavours to bring its separate elements into harmony. He does this from habit — a thoroughly justified habit, connected for many centuries with the dearest possession of our souls: with monotheism. He tries therefore to lead back the whole range of his experience of the world to a unitary principle. This is valid enough in its own way — not, however, in the sense in which it is usually applied, but in quite another sense of which we will speak next time. To-day I will deal only with the essential principle.

If we approach the world with the preconceived idea that everything must be explicable without contradiction, as though it came from a single source, we shall be disappointed again and again when we look without prejudice at the world and the experiences it affords. We have acquired the habit of treating everything we perceive in the light of the didactic concept which says that everything leads back to a unitary divine origin — everything derives from God and so must admit of a single mode of explanation.

But this is not so. The experiences we encounter in the world do not spring from a single ground, but from diverse spiritual individualities, who all play a part in producing them. That is the essential point. We will speak to-morrow of the sense in which monotheism is justified. Up to a certain stage, and indeed up to a high stage, we must think of independent individualities as soon as we cross the threshold of the spiritual world. And then we cannot expect to explain everything we experience in unitary terms. Take any series of events — let us say the experiences encountered from 1913 to 1918. A diagram will naturally show them taking their course from two directions at once ...





An historian will always try to reduce the whole process to the working of a single principle, but that is not how things happen. Directly we cross the threshold of the spiritual world, whether downwards or upwards — it is one and the same — we find that different individualities, relatively independent of each other, are working into these events. We shall never understand the course of events if we assume a single source for them; we shall see them rightly only if in the turbulence of events we reckon with the activities of individualities who are working either with or against each other.

This is something that belongs to the deepest secrets of human evolution. For centuries, even for millennia, it has been obscured by monotheistic feeling, but you must take it into account. If to-day we are to come closer to ultimate questions, we must above all not confuse logic with abstract freedom from contradictions. In a world where independent individualities are simultaneously at work, contradictions are bound to occur, and to expect them not to occur leads to an impoverishment of ideas; to ideas which cannot embrace the whole of reality. The only adequate ideas will be those that are able to grasp a world replete with contradictions, for that is the real world.

The realms of nature that lie around us come into being in a very remarkable way. In all that we call nature, the nature we approach through science on the one hand and through aesthetic perception on the other, various individualities are at work. But in the present phase of human evolution a wise Providence has ordained an arrangement which is a great blessing for mankind. We can lay hold of nature with ideas that assume a monistic dispensation, because sense-perception allows us normally to experience only as much of nature as is in accord with that principle. Behind the tapestry of nature there lies something different which is sustained from a quite other direction; but sense-perception shuts it out, admitting only as much of nature as can pass through its sieve. Everything contradictory is strained out, and nature is communicated to us in the guise of a monistic system. But directly we cross the threshold and bring the true facts to bear on the interpretation of nature — the facts concerning the elemental spirits or the influence of human souls, which can also act on nature — then we are no longer able to speak of a monistic system applicable to nature. Once again we see clearly that we have to do with the workings of individualities who may either oppose or reinforce one another.

In the elemental world we find earth-spirits, gnomes; water-spirits, undines; air-spirits, sylphs; fire-spirits, salamanders. They are all there, but they do not form a single united band. Each of the four kingdoms is in a certain sense independent; they do not work only in rank and file as a single system, but they oppose one another. Their purposes are, to begin with, entirely distinct; the outcome reflects the interactions of their purposes in the most varied ways. If we know what these purposes are, we can discern in a given phenomenon the working together, let us say, of fire-spirits and undines. But we must never suppose that behind them is a single authority which gives them definite orders. This way of thinking is widespread to-day; and philosophers such as, for example, Wilhelm Wundt (whom Fritz Mauthner described with some justice as "an authority by the grace of his publisher" — yet before the war he ranked as an authority almost everywhere) — these philosophers are out to force into a unity all the manifold life of the soul, its concepts, its feeling, its willing, because they say that the soul is a unity, and therefore all this must belong to a unitary system. But that is not so, and the strongly conflicting tendencies in human life, which psycho-analysis indeed brings out, would not occur if our conceptual life did not lead back beyond the threshold into regions where it is influenced by individualities quite different from those that influence our feeling and our willing.

Really it is strange! Here (*drawing on blackboard*) we have in the human being a conceptual life, a life of feeling and a life of willing — yet a systematiser such as Wundt cannot get away from the idea that all this must form a single system. In fact, the life of concepts leads into one world, the life of feeling into another world, and the life of willing into another again. The function of the human soul is precisely to bring together into a unity activities which in the pre-human world — and therefore in the still existing pre-human world — are threefold.

All these things must be taken into account as soon as we study the impulses which have played into human evolution. I have already said that each post-Atlantean epoch has a special task, and I have described the task for mankind in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch as that of coming to terms with evil as an impulse in world-evolution. We have spoken of what this means from various points of view. The indispensable need is that the forces which manifest as evil when they appear in the wrong place shall be overcome by human endeavour during this epoch, so that men can begin to make out of these forces something favourable for the whole future of cosmic evolution. Hence the task of this fifth post-Atlantean epoch is quite specially arduous, and many temptations lie ahead. And as the powers of evil make their appearance in gradual stages, men are naturally much more inclined to give way to them in all realms instead of battling to place what appears as evil in the service of the rightful course of world-development. This, nevertheless, is what has to come about — up to a certain point evil must be turned to good ends. Failing that, we shall not be able to go forward into the sixth post-Atlantean epoch, which will have a quite different task. Its task will be to enable men, while still connected with the earth, to have the spiritual world continually in view and to live in accordance with spiritual impulses. It is precisely in connection with the task of opposing evil during our own epoch that a certain darkening of the human personality can occur.

We know that since 1879 the Spirits of Darkness who are nearest to man, belonging as they do to the realm of the Angels, have been roaming about in the human world, because they were cast down into it from the spiritual world. Hence they are present in human impulses and work through them. Just because these beings are able to work invisibly, so close to man, and by their influence to hinder him from recognising the spiritual with his reason — which is also a task for our epoch — so in this epoch there are many opportunities for surrendering to all sorts of errors and observations that belong to the darkness of evil. During this epoch man has to learn by degrees to grasp the spiritual with his reason; for this possibility has been

offered to him by the vanquishing of the Spirits of Darkness in 1879, as a result of which more and more spiritual wisdom has been able to flow down from the spiritual worlds. Only if the Spirits of Darkness had remained up there in spiritual realms would they have been able to obstruct this flow. Henceforward they can do nothing to hinder it; but they can continue to create confusion and to darken human souls. We have already described in part the opportunities they have for doing this, and the precautions they have taken to prevent men from receiving spiritual wisdom.

All this, of course, gives no occasion for lamentation but for a strengthening of human energy and aspiration towards the spiritual. For if men achieve what can be achieved in this epoch by taking hold of the forces of evil and turning them to good ends, then they will at the same time achieve something tremendous: this fifth post-Atlantean epoch will gain for human evolution grander conceptions than those of any other post-Atlantean epoch, or indeed of any previous epoch. For example, the Christ appeared and passed through the Mystery of Golgotha during the fourth post-Atlantean epoch, but only in our fifth epoch will it be possible for human reason to encompass the meaning of this event. In the fourth epoch men could comprehend that in the Christ Impulse they had something which would carry their souls beyond death: this was made sufficiently clear through Pauline Christianity. The fifth epoch will bring an even more important development: men will come to recognise the Christ as their helper in the task of transforming the forces of evil into good. But connected with this characteristic of the fifth epoch is a fact we must inscribe daily in our souls and never forget, although we are readily inclined to forget it. In this epoch we have to be fighters for the spirit: we must realise that our forces grow slack unless they are kept constantly in training for the conquest of the spiritual world. In this fifth epoch man is in the highest degree dependent upon his freedom, and he has to experience it to the full. And the idea of human freedom should be the criterion of whatever he encounters in this epoch. For if human energies were to grow slack, everything might turn to evil. Man is no longer in a condition to be guided like a child. If the aim of certain brotherhoods is to treat him in this way, as he was in the third and fourth epochs, they are far from doing right and are not advancing human evolution. Anyone who in this epoch speaks of the spiritual world must constantly remind himself to do so in such a way that acceptance or rejection of it is left to the freedom of the

individual. Therefore certain things can only be — said; but the saying is just as important as any other way of presenting them was in other epochs. I will give you an example.

In our time the communication of truths — or, if I may use a trivial phrase, lecturing on them — is the most important thing. People should then be left to a free choice of attitude. One should go no further than the lecture, the communication of truths; the rest should follow out of free decision, just as it does when someone takes a decision on the physical plane. This applies also to the things which can in a certain sense be directed and guided only from the spiritual world.

We shall understand one another better if we go into details. During the fourth post-Atlantean epoch it was still necessary to consider other things, not only the spoken word. What were these other things? Let us take a definite instance. The island of Ireland, to use its modern name, has quite special characteristics which distinguish it from the rest of the world. Every part of the earth has some distinguishing characteristics — there is nothing unusual in that — but the point here is that Ireland has them to an exceptional degree.

You know from my *Occult Science* that it is possible to look back and discern various influences which have flowed from the spiritual world into the evolution of the earth. You have heard also what things were like in the Lemurian Age and of the various evolutionary developments since then. Yesterday I called attention to the fact that the whole earth must be regarded as a living organism, and that the various influences which radiate out to the inhabitants of particular territories have a special effect on the "double," also mentioned yesterday. In ancient times people who knew of Ireland gave expression to its peculiar characteristics in the form of myths and legends. One could indeed speak of an esoteric legend which indicated the nature of Ireland within the whole earth-organism. Lucifer, it was said, had once tempted mankind in Paradise, wherefore mankind was driven out and scattered over the earth, which was already in existence at that time. Thus a distinction was drawn — so the legend tells us — between Paradise, with Lucifer in it, and the rest of the earth. But with Ireland it was different. Ireland did not belong in the same sense to the rest of the earth, for Paradise, before Lucifer entered it, had created an image of itself on earth, and that image became Ireland.

Let us understand this clearly. Ireland is that piece of the earth which has no share in Lucifer, no connection with Lucifer. The part of Paradise that had to be separated, so that an earthly image of it might come into being, would have stood in the way of Lucifer's entry into Paradise. According to this legend, therefore, Ireland was conceived as having been first of all that part of Paradise which would have kept Lucifer out. Only when Ireland had been separated off, could Lucifer get in.

This legend, of which I have given you a very incomplete account, is a very beautiful one. For many people it explained the quite individual task of Ireland through the centuries. In the first of my Mystery Plays you will find what has been often described: how Europe was Christianised by Irish monks. After Patrick had introduced Christianity into Ireland, it came about that Christianity there led to the highest spiritual devotion. In further interpretation of the legend I have just described, Ireland — Ierne for the Greeks and Ivernia for the Romans — was even called the island of the saints, because of the piety that prevailed in the Christian monasteries there. This is connected with the fact that the forces which radiate from the earth and lay hold of the "double" are at their very best in the island of Ireland.

You will say: then the Irish should be the best of men. But that is not how things work out in the world! People immigrate into every region of the earth and have descendants, and so on. Human beings are thus not merely a product of the patch of earth where they live; their character may well contradict the influences that come from the earth. We must not attribute their development to the qualities found in a particular part of the earth-organism; that would be merely to succumb to illusions.

But we can say, more or less as I have said to-day, that Ireland is a quite special piece of land and this is one factor among many from which should come a fruitful working out of social-political ideas. Ireland is *one* such factor, and all these factors must be taken account of in conjunction with one another. In this way we must develop a science of human relationships on the earth. Until that is done, there will be no real health in the organisation of public affairs. That which can be communicated from out of the spiritual world must flow into any measures that are taken. For this reason I have said in public lectures that statesmen and others concerned with public affairs should acquaint themselves with these communications, for only then will they be able to control reality. But they do not do this, or at least they have not done it so far; yet the necessity for it remains.



This speaking, this communication, is the important thing to-day, in accordance with the tasks of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch, for then, before speaking leads to actions, decisions have to be taken just as they are taken in relation to impulses on the physical plane. In earlier times it was different; other methods could then be employed.

At a particular time in the third post-Atlantean epoch a certain brotherhood took occasion to send a large number of colonists from Asia Minor to Ireland. These settlers came from the region where much later, in the fourth epoch, the philosopher Thales was born. It was from this same milieu and spiritual background that the initiates sent colonists to Ireland — why? Because they were aware of the special characteristics of a land such as Ireland, as indicated by the esoteric legend I have told you about. They knew that the forces which rise from the earth through the soil of Ireland act in such a way that people there are little influenced towards developing intellectuality, or the ego, or towards a capacity for taking decisions. The initiates who sent these colonists to Ireland knew this very well, and they chose people who appeared to be karmically suited to be exposed to such influences. In Ireland there still exist descendants of the old immigrants from Asia Minor who were intended to develop no trace of intellectuality, or of reasoning power or of decisiveness, but were on the other hand to manifest certain special qualities of temperament to an outstanding degree.

So, you see, preparations were made a very long time in advance for the peaceful interpretation of Christianity which eventually found scope in Ireland, and for the glorious developments which led to the Christianising of Europe. The fellow-countrymen of the later Thales sent to Ireland people who proved well suited to become those monks who could work in the way I have described. Such plans were often carried through in earlier times, and when in external history written by historians who lack understanding — though of course they may be intelligent enough, for intelligence to-day can be picked up in the street — you find accounts of ancient colonisations, you must be clear that a far-reaching wisdom lay behind them. They were guided and led in the light of what was to come about in the future, and the local characteristics of earth-evolution were always taken into account.

That was another way of introducing spiritual wisdom into the world. It should not be adopted to-day by anyone who is following the rightful path. To prescribe the movement of people against their will, in order to partition

parts of the earth, would be wrong. The right way is to impart true facts and to leave people to decide their actions for themselves.

Hence you can see that there has been a real advance from the third and fourth post-Atlantean epochs up to the present; and this is something we must grasp quite clearly. We must recognise how this impulse for freedom must penetrate all the dominating tendencies of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. For it is precisely this freedom of the human mind that is opposed by that adversary of whom I have told you — the "double" who accompanies man from shortly before birth until death, though just before death he has to depart. If someone is under the influence which proceeds directly from the "double," he may bring about all sorts of things which can appear in this epoch but are not in harmony with it. It will then not be possible for him to fulfil his task of fighting against evil in such a way that to a certain extent the evil is changed into good.

Just think of all that really lies behind the situation of humanity in the fifth post-Atlantean epoch! The detailed facts must be seen in their true colours, and understood. For wherever the "double" is strongly active, he will be working against mankind. In this fifth post-Atlantean epoch people have not reached the stage of being able to judge the facts correctly; particularly during these last three sad years they have not been at all inclined to form true judgments.

Take a fact which seems to be far removed from our immediate subject. In a large ironworks, 10,000 tons of cast iron were to be loaded into railway trucks. A definite number of workmen — 75 — were assigned to the job, and it appeared that each man could load 12½ tons a day.

There was a man named Taylor in whom the influence of the "double" prevailed over the needs of the human soul in our epoch. He first asked the managers if they did not think a man could load a good deal more than 12½ tons a day. They said that in their opinion a workman could load 18 tons a day at the utmost. Taylor then called for some experiments.

So, you see, Taylor proceeded to experiment with human beings! Machine standards were to be carried over into social life. Taylor wished to find out whether it was true, as the managers believed, that 18 tons a day was the utmost a man could load. He ordered rest-periods, calculated in physiological terms to be just long enough for a man to make good the energy he had previously expended. Naturally it turned out that the results varied with individuals. This does not matter with machines — you simply

take the arithmetical mean — but it cannot properly be done with human beings, for each individual has his own justified capacity. All the same, Taylor did it — that is, he chose those workmen whose need for rest corresponded to the period he had calculated; the others were simply thrown out. The outcome was that the selected workmen, by dint of fully restoring their energies during the rest-periods, were each able to load 47½ tons a day.

Here we have the mechanics of the Darwinian theory applied to working life: the fit were kept on and the unfit discarded. The fit in this case were those who, with the aid of the given rest-periods, could load 47½ tons, instead of the 18 tons previously regarded as the maximum. In this way the workmen also could be satisfied, for such enormous economies were effected that wages could be raised by 60 per cent. Thus the chosen workmen, who had proved themselves fit in the struggle for existence, were very well pleased. But — the unfit could go hungry!

This is just the beginning of a far-reaching principle. Such things are little noticed, because they are not seen — as they must be seen — in the light of the great issues involved. So far we have not gone beyond the application of faulty scientific ideas to human life; but the underlying impulse remains. The next step will be to make similar use of the occult truths which will be disclosed in the course of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch. Darwinism contains no occult truths, but its application to direct experiments on human beings would have horrible results. But if occult truths are brought in, as and when they become available, it will be possible to use them for obtaining enormous power over men — if only by a continual selection of the "fittest." But things will not stop there. There would be an endeavour to use a certain occult discovery for making the fit ever fitter and fitter ... and by that means a tremendous power for utilising human beings — a power directly opposed to the good tendencies of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch — would be achieved.

I wished to give you these inter-related examples in order to show you *how* such far-ranging intentions begin, and how these matters must be illuminated from higher standpoints. Next time we will turn our attention to the three or four great truths which the fifth post-Atlantean epoch must arrive at, and how they could be misused if, instead of being brought into line with the rightful tendencies of the epoch, they were placed in the service of the "double," represented by those brotherhoods who wish to set up another being in place of the Christ.



# 7 Individual Spirit Beings and the Constant Foundation of the Universe, III

Translated by Charles Davy

Dornach, 25th November, 1917

To-day I want to make various comments on matters that have been mentioned lately, and to fill in certain gaps. If you follow with attention current trends, you will have noticed a feeling that the thoughts and impressions and impulses which for a long time have led to such "splendid progress" are no longer capable of helping us to cope with the immediate future. Yesterday one of our members gave me a copy of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* for last Wednesday, November 21st. There speaks a very learned gentleman ... he must be very learned, for he is not only a Doctor of Philosophy but also a Doctor of Theology, and also a Professor, so naturally he is a very clever man. He has written an article which deals with all sorts of spiritual needs of the present time, and in the course of it he says:

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*"The experience of the form of being which lies behind things does not require pious dedication or a religious evaluation, for it is itself religion. We are concerned not with feeling and grasping a particular content, but with the great Irrational which lies hidden behind all existence ... Anyone who makes contact with this, so that the divine spark leaps across, goes through an experience which is of primal character and may be called the primordial experience. Anyone who experiences this one thing, together with all that is stirred by the same flow of life, is imbued with — to use a favourite modern phrase — a feeling of cosmic existence."*

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Excuse me for reading this to you: I am quoting it not in order to arouse in you any magnificent ideas, but so as to bring before you a sign of the times:

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*"A cosmic religiosity is coming to birth among us, and how strong is the demand for it is shown by the evident spread of the theosophical movement, which undertakes to discover and unveil the phases of this life beyond the range of the senses."*

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It is really difficult to stumble through all these wishy-washy ideas, but you will agree that the article is remarkable as a symptom of the times! He goes on: "In this cosmic piety there is no question of a mysticism which turns away from the world ..." and so on.

It would be hard to discover anything intelligent in all this, but since it is written by a man with all these degrees, one must suppose that some intelligence is there! Otherwise we should have to take it as the obscure stammering of a learned man who has reached a dead end on his own path and now feels impelled to call attention to something which certainly exists and evidently appears to him as not wholly unattainable.

There is no cause for satisfaction in such remarks; we must above all take care not to let them lull us into a comfortable slumber just because it has again been noticed, from some point of view or other, that something lies behind the spiritual-scientific movement. That would be really harmful. People who write in this way are often quite satisfied with having written it. With these misty thoughts they point to something which is trying to make its way into the world, but they are far too complacent to go in for the serious study that Spiritual Science requires. Nothing less than that must lay hold of men's minds if some reality is to be brought into the trends of the times, so that healing can come of it. Of course it is easier to talk of this "surge" of "cosmic feeling" than to give serious attention to those things that are demanded by the signs of the times and must be made known to mankind. For this reason it seems to me necessary to repeat here the remarks I have made in public lectures and shall make again, with particular emphasis now on the distinction between the worn-out ideas which have led into these catastrophic times and those which must take hold of human souls if any sort of progress is to be accomplished.

The old wisdom, through which mankind has been guided up to our time, may give rise to thousands of congresses, world-congresses, people's congresses and so on; thousands and thousands of societies may be founded; but we must be clear that all these congresses and societies will



accomplish nothing unless the life-blood of Spiritual Science flows through them. What is lacking among people to-day is the courage to embark on real research into the spiritual world. Strange as it may sound, it must be said — as a first step nothing else would be needed than to spread the little booklet, *Human Life in the light of Anthroposophy*, in the widest circles. Something would thereby be done to evoke knowledge of a connection between man and the cosmic order. The booklet calls attention precisely to this knowledge by showing in concrete terms how throughout the year the earth undergoes changes in its state of consciousness — and so on. What is said in that booklet and in this lecture is said with full consideration for the needs of our time. Acceptance of it would signify more than all this wishy-washy talk on cosmic feeling and surges and I know not what. I have just read this to you and I can't bring myself to repeat it — it is all put in such a senseless way.

This should of course not prevent us from taking note of such things: they are important and real. What I want to bring home to you is that we must not befog ourselves: we must be absolutely clear as to what we wish to do on behalf of Spiritual Science.

Now I will turn again to the fact that in this fifth post-Atlantean epoch humanity will have to find ways of dealing with great life-problems which in a certain sense were veiled by the wisdom of the past. I have already called your attention to them. One of these great problems will be concerned with finding out how to place the spiritual etheric forces at the service of practical life. I have told you that in this epoch we have to solve the problem of how the radiations from human states of mind are carried over into machines; of how human beings are to be brought into relation with an environment which must become increasingly mechanised. A week ago I pointed out how superficially this mechanisation is treated in a certain part of the world. I gave you the example of how an American way of thinking tries to extend the realm of the machine over human life itself. I told you of the rest-pauses which were used in order to enable a given number of workmen to load up to 47½ tons, instead of a much lower figure; this involves simply the application of Darwinian natural selection to human life.

Where this kind of thing goes on, the wish to yoke up human strength with the strength of machines is always involved. It would be quite mistaken merely to oppose these things. They are not going to fade away; they are on the march. The only question is whether in the course of world-history they are going to be brought on to the scene by men who

are unselfishly aware of the great aims of earth-evolution and wish to shape these developments for the healing of mankind, or by groups of men who want to use them for their own or the group's selfish ends. That is the issue. The point is not *what* is going to happen, for it certainly will happen, but *how* it happens — how these things are handled. The welding together of human beings with machines will be a great and important problem for the rest of the earth-evolution.

I have often pointed out, even in public lectures, that human consciousness depends on destructive forces. During public lectures in Basle I twice said that in our nerve-system we are always in process of dying. These forces of death will become stronger and stronger, and we shall find that they are related to the forces of electricity and magnetism, and to those at work in machines. A man will be able in a certain sense to guide his intentions and his thoughts into the forces of the machines. Forces in human nature that are still unknown will be discovered — forces which will act upon external electricity and magnetism.

That is one problem: the bringing together of human beings with machines, and this is something which will exert ever-increasing influence on the future.

The other problem is concerned with calling in spiritual relationships to our aid. This can be done only when the time is ripe, and when a sufficient number of people are rightly prepared for it. But we must come to the stage when spiritual forces are brought into action for the governance of life in relation to illness and death.

Medicine will be spiritualised — very highly spiritualised. These things will be caricatured from various standpoints, but the caricatures only show what has to come. Again, the question is whether or not this problem — like the other problem I have mentioned — is handled in an egotistic way by individuals or by groups.

The third great question concerns ways of thinking about human birth and upbringing. I have told you how congresses on this subject have already been held, and how a materialistic form of science will be brought to bear in the future on procreation and the union of man and woman. These things indicate the great significance that attaches to this process of becoming. It is easy enough to ask why those who have the right knowledge in these matters do not apply it. In the future it will be clear enough what the state of affairs is regarding this application, and what are

the forces which are even now opposing, for example, a more generous provision for a spiritualised medicine or a spiritualised economic life. All that can be done at present is to speak of these things, until people — I mean those who are ready to accept them selflessly — understand them sufficiently. There are many who think they have already got as far as that, but many hindrances arise from the circumstances of life to-day. These will be overcome in the right way only if understanding goes deeper and deeper, and if we actually refrain, for a time at least, from attempting practical applications on any large scale.

Things have developed in such a way that one can say: Little is known of all that lay behind the old atavistic searchings which continued up to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. People talk a great deal about the old alchemy; sometimes they call to mind the creation of Homunculus and so on. But most of this talk misses the point. If people would come to understand what can be said about the Homunculus scene in *Faust*, for instance, they would be better informed: the essential thing is that a mist has been spread over these subjects since the sixteenth century. They have receded into the background of human consciousness.

The law which prevails here is the same law which governs the rhythmic alternation of waking and sleeping in man. Just as a person cannot do without sleep, so mankind could not dispense with the sleep regarding spiritual knowledge which has marked the whole period since the sixteenth century. Man had to fall asleep to the spiritual, so that it could reappear in a new form. These necessities must be clearly seen, but without letting them depress us. We must realise clearly that the time for awakening has now come, that we have to play our part in it, that events often run ahead of our knowledge and that we shall not understand the events going on around us unless we are willing to receive the knowledge and to act in accordance with it.

I have repeatedly told you that certain groups are working esoterically in the direction I have indicated. It was first of all necessary that certain forms of knowledge — called nowadays by such misunderstood words as alchemy, astrology, etc. — should fall into abeyance, so that men should no longer be able to discern the soul-element in outer Nature and should rather be thrown back on themselves. And in order that they should awaken their inward forces, certain things had to appear as abstractions. Now these things must again take on a concrete spiritual form.

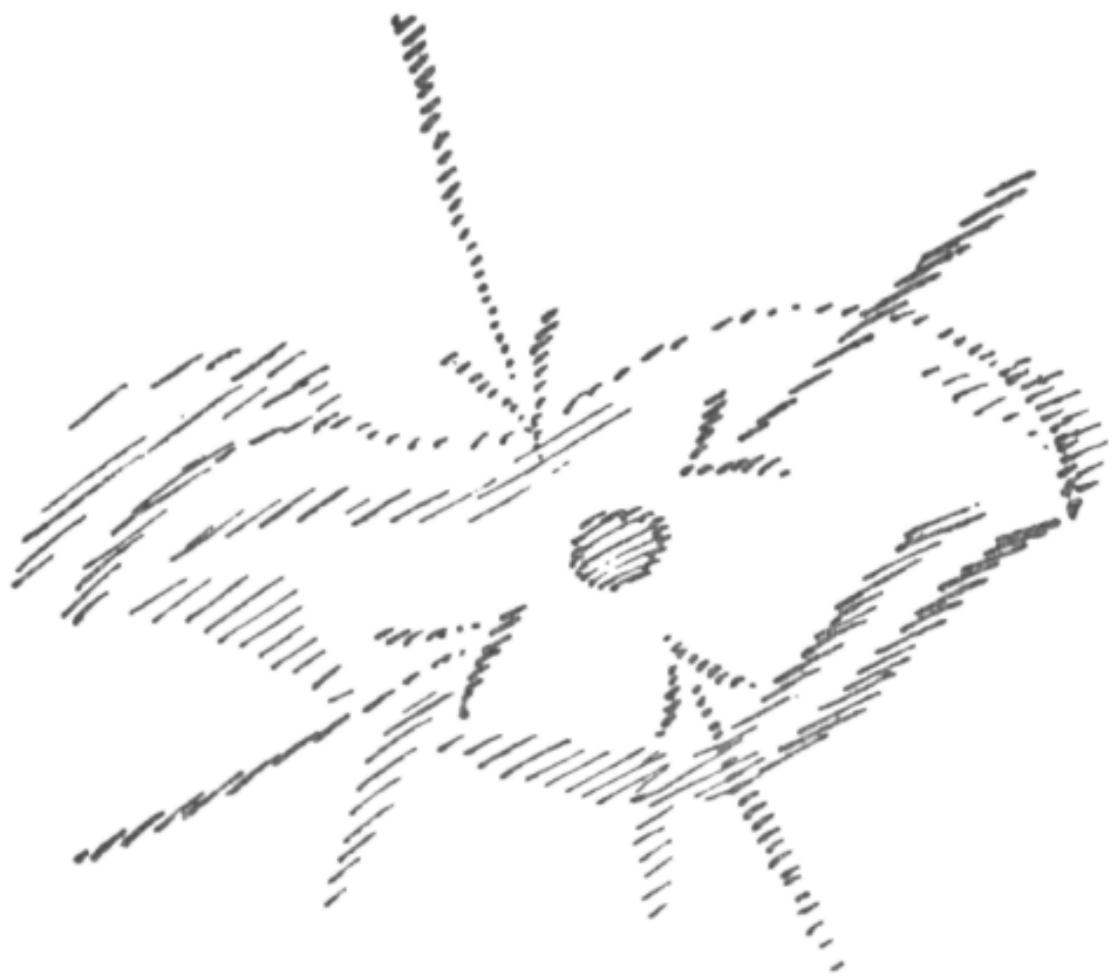
During the last centuries three ideas have gradually emerged in abstract guise. They were incorrectly named by Kant, and correctly by Goethe. Kant called them God, Freedom and Immortality; Goethe called them God, Virtue and Immortality. If we look into what lies behind these three words, we find that the same words are taken abstractly by modern man and were taken more concretely — but also more materially in the old atavistic sense — up to the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. Experiments in the old style were carried out: the alchemists sought to observe processes in which the working of God could be seen. And they tried to produce the Philosopher's Stone.

Something concrete lies behind all these things. The Philosopher's Stone was to enable men to become virtuous — but this was thought of in a more material sense. It was also to lead to an experience of immortality: to bring a man into such a relationship to the cosmic whole that he would experience in himself what lies beyond birth and death. All the nebulous ideas by which people nowadays try to grasp these things no longer correspond with what was really intended. It has all become abstract, and it is of abstract ideas that modern men speak. They want to understand *God* through an abstract theology, and *virtue* also as something abstract — the more abstract it is, the better people like it. And it is the same with *immortality*. Speculation turns on what in man could be immortal. In my first Basle lecture [23rd November, 1917. (Not translated into English.)] I said that the kind of learning which under the name of philosophy occupies itself with such questions as that of immortality is a starveling, undernourished kind of learning. That is merely another way of describing the abstract terms in which such matters are pursued.

In certain Western brotherhoods, however, a connection with the old traditions has been retained, and endeavours are made to use it for the egotistic interests of the group. It is time to call attention to these things. Of course, if from this Western quarter anything is said about God, virtue or freedom, and immortality, the words are given an abstract sense, but in the circle of initiates it is well known that all this is not mere abstract speculation. For their own part, they look for something much more concrete behind these abstract formulae, and in their own schools these terms are accordingly translated. God is translated as *gold*, and an endeavour is made to arrive at what lies behind the secret of gold, as it may be called. For gold, the representative of the sun-like within the earth's crust, does in fact enshrine an important secret. Gold stands in the same material relationships to other substances as the thought of God does to other thoughts. The only question is what is made of this secret.

This is linked up with the egotistic use of the mystery of birth, and here, real cosmic understanding is sought. All such understanding has been replaced for modern men by a purely earthly understanding. If someone wants to investigate, for example, how the embryonic life-cell of animal or man develops, he studies it through a microscope and is concerned only with what lies there directly under his lens. But that is far from being the whole thing. It will be realised — and some groups are very near this already — that the forces at work are not contained in the cell but come from the cosmos and its constellations. When a seed of life arises, it does so because the living creature which harbours the seed is receiving forces, cosmic forces, from all sides of the cosmos. And when fertilisation occurs, the results depend on *which* cosmic forces enter actively into the process.

One thing, not yet seen, will be recognised. To-day the idea is that we have a living creature, a hen, let us say. When a new seed of life appears in the hen, the biologist investigates how the egg arises out of the hen; he looks within the hen itself for the forces which cause the seed to grow. That is nonsense. The egg does not grow out of the hen; the hen is merely the substratum for it. The growth-forces work from out of the cosmos on to the soil which has been prepared in the hen for engendering the egg. The biologist to-day believes that the relevant forces are all to be found within the field of his microscope. Actually, what he sees there depends on stellar forces which work together in a certain pattern at a given point. When we discover the cosmic at this point, then for the first time we shall have got at the reality and the truth: it is the cosmic whole which conjures up the egg in the hen.



All this is connected especially with the secret of the sun, and in earthly terms with the secret of gold. To-day I can give you only a sort of schematic indication of it; these things will become much clearer in the course of time.

When "virtue" is discussed in these same schools, they call it simply "health," and try to learn how the cosmic constellations are connected with health and sickness in men. By this means they come to know the particular earthly substances, the juices and so on, which are in their turn connected with sickness and health. We shall see develop increasingly from a certain direction a more material form of medical knowledge, but it will rest on a spiritual foundation.



From this side also will be spread the idea that man cannot be made good by learning all sorts of ethical principles, but by ingesting copper, for example, under a certain constellation, and arsenic under another. You can well imagine how ideas of this kind can be used by egotistic groups for enhancing their own power. They need only withhold this knowledge from others, and this will be the best means of dominating large numbers of men. They will not need to talk about such things; it will be enough to bring forward some new titbit. Then they will find openings for this titbit, having first flavoured it appropriately, and they will achieve their purpose when these novelties are accepted in a materialistic sense. We have only to remember that spiritual potencies are hidden in everything material. Only he who knows that in a true sense there really is nothing material, but only the spiritual — only he will penetrate behind the secrets of life.

Similar endeavours are made from the same quarter to transpose the problem of immortality into a materialistic frame, and this, too, can be done by making use of the cosmic constellations. This method certainly does not yield the immortality that is the subject of so many speculations, but immortality of another sort. Given a brotherhood lodge, then — at least so long as life cannot be lengthened by working on the physical body — preparations are made for subjecting a soul to such experiences as will enable it to remain within the lodge after death, so that it may contribute its forces to those at the disposal of the lodge. In these circles, accordingly, immortality is called simply "lengthening of life."

External signs of all this can indeed be seen. I don't know if some of you may have noticed a book which also came from the West and caused a little stir for a while; it was called "On the Nonsense of Death." These things all move in the same direction. They are still at their beginnings, for everything beyond that is kept as a closely guarded esoteric secret by the egotistic groups. But these things are really possible if they are given a materialistic colouring; if the abstract ideas of God, virtue and immortality are turned into the concrete ideas of gold, health and lengthening of life, and if what I have called the great problem of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch is utilised for the purpose of an egotistic group. You see, this "cosmic feeling," which the learned Professor and Doctor of Theology talks about, is already being widely presented to people — and often, unfortunately, in an egotistic sense — as cosmic knowledge. For centuries science has kept its eyes fixed on earthly processes, and has ignored all the most significant influences that come from beyond the earth, but it is precisely in our fifth post-Atlantean epoch that extra-terrestrial forces from the cosmos will be put to use.

And so, just as it is essential for an orthodox professor of biology to have the most powerful microscope available and the most efficient laboratory methods, so, in the future, when science has been spiritualised, it will be of the utmost importance whether certain processes are carried through in the morning or in the evening, or at midday, and whether what has been done in the morning is allowed to be further influenced by an evening activity, or whether the cosmic influences are cut out, paralysed, from the morning until the evening. Processes of this kind will of necessity come to light and will run their course. Naturally, a great deal of water will have to flow under the bridges before the professional chairs and laboratories, at present organised on purely materialistic lines, are handed over to spiritual scientists, but this replacement must come about if humanity is not to sink into utter decadence. For example, if the question is one of doing good in the immediate future, existing laboratory methods must give way to methods whereby certain processes take place in the morning and are interrupted during the day, so that the cosmic stream passes through them again in the evening and is in turn rhythmically withheld again until morning. So the processes would take their course: certain cosmic workings would always be interrupted by day, and the cosmic morning and evening processes would be brought in. All sorts of arrangements would be necessary for this. You will realise that if one is not in a position to take any public action about these things, all one can do is to speak of them.

However, just as gold, health and the prolongation of life are put in the place of God, virtue and immortality, so from the same quarter efforts will be made to work not with the morning and evening processes, but with others. Last week I told you how an attempt will be made to set aside the impulse of the Mystery of Golgotha, while for the West another impulse, a sort of Anti-Christ is introduced; and from the East an attempt will be made to paralyse the twentieth-century manifestation of the Christ Impulse by diverting attention from the coming etheric Christ.

Those concerned to present an Anti-Christ as the real Christ will try also to make use of something that works through the most material forces, but in this very way can work spiritually. Above all they will strive to make use of electricity and earth-magnetism in order to produce effects all over the world. I have shown you how earth-forces rise up into what I have called the human Double, the *Doppelgänger*. This secret will be opened up. An American secret will be to make use of earth-magnetism, with its north-south duality, and by this means to send over the earth guiding forces which will have spiritual effects. Look at the magnetic chart of the earth and compare it with what I am now saying. Observe where the magnetic

needle deviates to East and West and where it does not deviate. I can give only hints about all this. From a certain direction in the heavens, spiritual beings are continually active, and they have only to be put into the service of the earth, and — because these beings working in from the cosmos can mediate the secret of the earth's magnetism — it will be possible for egotistic groups to get behind this secret and to accomplish a great deal in connection with gold, health and the prolongation of life. It will be necessary for them only to pluck up their faltering courage — and in certain circles that will be done readily enough!

From the East an endeavour will be made to strengthen what I have already explained: to place in the service of the earth the beings which work in from the opposite side of the cosmos. In the future there will be a great battle. Human science will stretch out to the cosmic, but will try to get there by different paths. It will be the task of good, healing science to find certain cosmic forces which can reach the earth through the co-operation of two cosmic streams, those of Pisces and Virgo. The great secret to be discovered will be how the influence which works from the direction of Pisces as a power of the sun unites itself with the influence working from the direction of Virgo. It will make for good when it is learnt how the morning and evening forces from the two sides of the cosmos can be brought into the service of humanity. (See diagram at end of lecture.)

These forces, however, will be left aside by those who try to achieve their whole purpose through the polaric duality of positive and negative forces. The forces which enable the spiritual to stream down to earth with the aid of positive and negative magnetism come from Gemini; they are the midday forces. In ancient times it was known that cosmic influences were involved in this, and to-day even exoteric scientists are aware that in some or other way positive and negative magnetism lie behind Gemini in the Zodiac. The aim will be to paralyse all that could be gained through a revelation of the true duality in the cosmos — to paralyse it in a materialistic, egotistic way by means of the forces which stream in particularly from Gemini and can be placed entirely at the service of the human "Double."

Other brotherhoods, concerned above all to divert attention from the Mystery of Golgotha, will try to make use of the duality in human nature — the duality which in our epoch embraces man as a unity, but includes within him his lower animal nature. A human being is really a centaur in a certain sense: his humanity rests on his lower animal nature in its astral form. This working together of the duality in man gives rise to a duality of

forces. This duality of forces will be utilised particularly by certain egotistic brotherhoods, chiefly from the side of India and the East, in order to mislead eastern Europe, whose task it is to prepare for the sixth post-Atlantean epoch. And this will be done with the aid of the forces which work in from Sagittarius.

Whether to conquer the cosmic for mankind in a wrong, twofold way, or rightly in a one-fold way — that is the question facing mankind. From this will come a true renewal of astrology, which in its old form is atavistic and cannot survive. The wise Beings of the cosmos will enter into the struggle; one side will use the morning and evening processes in the way I have indicated; the West will prefer the midday processes, shutting out the morning and evening ones; and the East will prefer the midnight ones. Men will no longer manufacture substances on the basis merely of chemical attraction and repulsion; they will know that different substances arise according to whether they are made with morning and evening processes, or with midday and midnight ones. It will be known that such substances act in a quite different way on the triad, God, virtue and immortality — gold, health and prolongation of life. When the forces of Pisces and Virgo act in co-operation, nothing wrongful can be brought into being. Men will achieve something through which the mechanism of life will be detached, in a certain sense, from man himself, but will not give any one group power and rulership over another. The cosmic forces drawn from this direction will create remarkable machines, but only those that will relieve man of work, because they will carry a certain power of intelligence within themselves. And a Spiritual Science which itself reaches out towards the cosmic will have to see to it that all the great temptations which come from these machine-animals, created by man himself, are not allowed to exercise any harmful influence upon him.

With regard to all this, the essential thing is that people should prepare themselves for it by not treating realities as illusions and by coming to a genuine spiritual conception and understanding of the world. To see things as they are — very much depends on that! But we can see them as they are only if we are in a position to bring the ideas of Spiritual Science to bear on reality. For the rest of the earth's existence the dead will be co-operating actively in the highest degree, and it is *how* they co-operate that will matter. Here, above all, a great distinction will arise. On one side the attitude of men on earth can rightly lead the co-operation of the dead in such a direction that the dead will be active out of their own impulse, an impulse coming from the spiritual world which the dead are themselves experiencing. But from the other side many endeavours will be made to

introduce the dead into human existence by artificial means. Along the indirect path through Gemini the dead will be led into human life, with the result that human vibrations will pass over into the mechanism of machines and will continue to vibrate there in a quite definite way. The cosmos will impart motion to the machines by the indirect path I have indicated.

It will thus be essential, when these problems emerge, that no improper methods should be applied to them, but only those elemental forces which belong to nature on their own account, and great care will have to be taken not to introduce improper forces into the realm of machines. In this occult sphere the human element must not be related to machinery in such a way that the Darwinian natural selection theory is used to determine the working capacity of human beings, in the way of which I gave you an example last week.

I am making these remarks — obviously they cannot exhaust the subject in so short a time — in the belief that you will meditate on these things and will try to build a bridge between them and all those experiences of life which can be encountered, particularly in this difficult time. You will see how things become clear to you if you contemplate them in the light that can come from such ideas as those I have been placing before you. The real point is not that in our time powers and constellations of powers are standing opposed to each other, as we are always being told in external exoteric life. The real point is quite different. It is that a kind of veil is now meant to be spread over the true impulses at work. Certain human powers are intent on saving something for themselves — what is it? Their aim is that impulses which up to the time of the French Revolution were justified, and were represented also by certain occult schools, shall now be taken charge of in an Ahrimanic-Luciferic sense, so as to maintain a form of society which is generally thought to have been overcome since the end of the eighteenth century.

Two powers, especially, stand in opposition to each other: the power representing the principle that was overcome at the end of the eighteenth century and the power representing the new age. A great many people, of course, are instinctively supporters of the new age. Therefore the representatives of the old impulses, those of the eighteenth, seventeenth and sixteenth centuries, must be yoked by artificial means to the forces which emanate from certain brotherhoods who are working for group-egotistic ends. The most effective principle for extending power over as many men as may be needed is to-day the principle of economic dependence. But that is only an instrument: the real thing is quite

different. The real issue you can gather for yourselves from all the various hints I have given. The economic principle is connected with everything which seeks to enlist a great number of men all over the world as a kind of army in the service of these principles.

These are the powers which stand opposed to each other. And this indicates what it is that is really battling in the world to-day. In the West we have the principle which is really rooted in the eighteenth, seventeenth and sixteenth centuries, but which passes unnoticed because it clothes itself in the phrases of revolution and democracy. It wears them as a mask and by this means strives to gain all possible power for itself. These endeavours are favoured if as many people as possible do not exert themselves to see things as they are, and in this field allow themselves to be lulled to sleep again and again by the illusion that to-day there is a war between the *Entente* and the powers of Central Europe.

In reality there is no such war; only by going behind this illusion can one get at the real struggle, but light can be thrown on it if it is approached along the lines which, for certain reasons, I only hint at. At least we should endeavour not to take illusions for realities: then gradually the illusion will be dispelled as far as it need be. Above all we must strive to see these things objectively, as they really are.

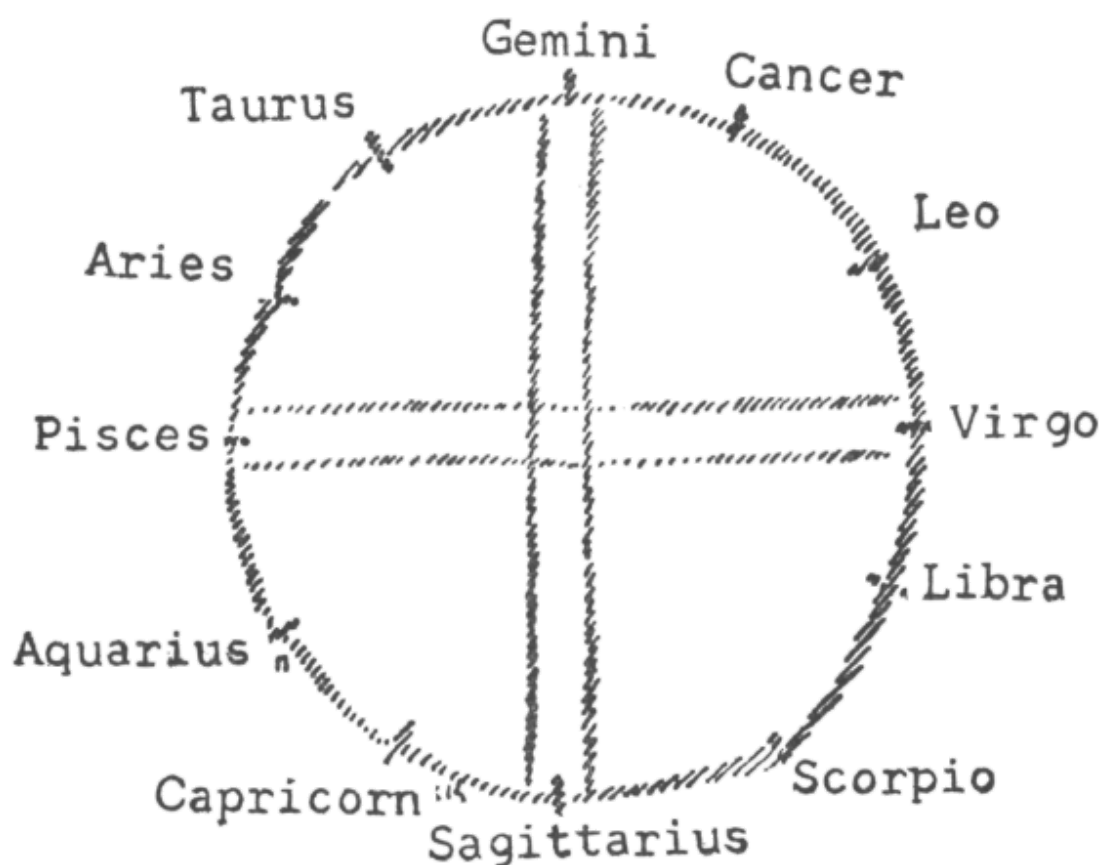
If you bring together all that I have been saying, you will see that an apparently casual remark I made in the course of these lectures was not so at all. When I quoted something that Mephistopheles said to Faust, "I see you know the Devil" (he would certainly not have said this to Woodrow Wilson), it was by no means a casual remark: it can throw a great deal of light on the present situation. We must really look at these things objectively, without sympathy or antipathy; above all, we must be able to see how much in a particular case depends on the setting and how much on the capacity of an individual, for behind an individual's capacity there often lies something quite different from what lies behind the setting. Ask yourselves without prejudice — how much would Woodrow Wilson's brain be worth if it were not throned on the Presidency of the United States? Consider how it would be if this brain had a quite different setting: then its individual capacity would be revealed! The setting is what matters.

Let me now speak abstractly and radically, of course without discussing in detail the particular case I have mentioned — in a neutral country that would not be appropriate. If you take any individual brain, it can be revealing to ask whether it is worth something because it is illuminated and



activated by a particular spiritual soul-force — whether it has the kind of spiritual significance I have been speaking of here — or whether it is worth no more than its weight, measured on a pair of scales.

In the eyes of people to-day, all this is grotesque; but what seems grotesque to them must come to seem obvious, if certain things are to be diverted from an unhealthy stream into a health-giving one. And what good is it to be always talking about them? You must come to see that there is no point in wishy-washy talk about "cosmic religiosity" or "how strong the striving for it is," or of "the movement which aims at discovering and revealing the circulation of the life behind the senses," and so on. All this does is to spread a mist over things which must be brought out clearly in the world, and should above all be carried as practical moral-ethical impulses into human life.



I can give you only indications. I leave you to build on them in your own meditations. I have been speaking aphoristically in many respects. But you will have the possibility of drawing a great deal out of the relationships shown in this picture of the Zodiac, if you truly use it as a subject for meditation.



## Appendix: Book Review by Bobby Matherne (1940 - 2019)

This is a review of the print version of the book published in 2004 by Matherne in 2005.

This is another amazing book of insights shared with us by Rudolf Steiner. We learn how an ahrimanic double is born in human beings and the destruction it brings to the world. How certain brotherhoods mine the insights of recently dead members to further their goals for power. How the way we deal with our deceased loved one can bring us disease or health. In this review I can only offer my extract of insights offered by Steiner in his seven lectures. Like any extract, this will seem bitter if one tries to ingest it directly — one must dilute it with the liquids of thoughtfulness to bring out the full flavor of the insights contained in the book. Or better yet, read the entire book.

Materialistic or earthly sciences end their study of the human being when the body dies. Spiritual science picks up its study of the human at that point and is our only source of information and data. Baconian science can *not* study what happens to the human being when the body dies because it has restricted itself to dealing only with sensory data — the tapestry of the natural world behind which one finds spiritual realities — it must exclude any other sources of data as fantasy or illusions. Steiner knew this about science and spoke of it frequently because he was a scientist of the earthly sciences as well as spiritual science. He knew his audience consisted of people educated in the earthly sciences. As a result, he offered them factual knowledge of the spiritual world to supplement their factual knowledge of the material world. And that knowledge takes its point of departure from the earthly sciences by focusing its study at the point when the human body dies. The human body dies, but the spirit lives on.

It is interesting to me that we have in English a word to describe existence in the time between birth and death, mainly, the verb "live," but we have no word to describe existence in the time between death and a new birth. Perhaps if we were to create a verb for that period of time between death and a new birth, it would facilitate us being able to coherently talk about it without using the awkward phrase "the period of time between death and a new birth." The phrase presupposes a non-

existent condition because the materialistic connotations of the word "death" itself. I pondered over this conundrum for some time, and came up with a possible solution: press the noun, "spirit" into usage as a verb. The first definition (noun) is quoted from Cassel's Concise Dictionary (1997) for the noun form and the second is my definition of the verb form:

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*spirit (spir' it) n. a rational being unconnected with a physical body.*

*spirit (spir' it) v.i. exist as a human being unconnected with a physical body.*

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With this new usage of *spirit* as a verb, we can say that earthly science studies how the human being *lives* and spiritual science studies how the human being *spirits*. We live during the time between death and a new birth, while in the time between death and a new birth, we *spirit*, i. e., living ceases and spiriting begins. While both earthly science and spiritual science have a lot to say about what we do while we are living, spiritual science is our sole source of information of what we do while we are spiriting. As human beings we alternate between living and spiriting and it behooves us to learn as much as we can about both processes.

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*[page 18] Once this has been established there can be a real penetration into realms where it can be said that death is the starting-point, just as birth and youth is the starting-point for the earthly sciences. But it has to be made clear that the death referred to is not the death that brings to an end what can be seen externally by the senses, which is how it is usually regarded. The death in question is a part of existence, just as the forces which are brought into life by birth are a part of existence. We encounter death not only as a one-off event, for we carry the forces of death — of destruction — within us just as much as we carry within us the forces of birth, those forces given to us at birth, which are forces of construction.*

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Steiner takes us to the border of earthly and spiritual science and helps us to resolve the confusion between thinking in the brain and experiences in the soul. The earth sciences take us on a muddy path when they claim that all thinking stems from our brain and only while we are alive. They are focusing on the tracks left by the thinker and ignoring the thinker.

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*[page 19] Those, however, who learn to perceive soul life by means of soul organs, spirit eyes or ears, such as I described in principle earlier on, those who really discover what soul life is, know that to call the brain a tool for thinking is just like talking about walking along a muddy path and leaving footprints there which someone coming along later tries to explain. How does he explain them? By saying that down in the depths of the earth there are forces that vibrate up and down and thus produce the footprints. The footprints, however, were not caused by those forces at all, but by me when I walked there.*

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Thinking as described by materialistic sciences such as physiology are correct so far as they go, but they don't go far enough. They can make electroencephalograms (eegs) which show the tracks of a human brain's thinking, but those are merely the muddy footprints left behind by the thinkers, not the thoughts themselves.

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*[page 19, 20] This is how physiologists today explain that what takes place in the brain is generated by the brain, and there is indeed something in the nervous system that corresponds to every thought and idea, every feeling. Just as my footprints correspond with where I have trodden, so is there something in the brain that does correspond with every impression encountered by the soul. But it is the soul that has impressed it upon the brain. The earth is just as little the organ for my treading or my footprints, it is just as little what produces them as the brain is the organ for all kinds of thought or ideation processes. I cannot walk without the ground, for I cannot walk in the air; I need the ground to walk on. And the brain is needed for the same reason, not because it produces the soul impressions but because the soul*

*processes need the firm foundation upon which to express themselves during the period when the human being lives in a body between birth and death.*

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The way that physiologists imagine thoughts occur is as upside-down in our time as the way people thought the Sun moved around the Earth in pre-Copernican times. It is time for a revolution, Steiner avers, that will be as dramatic as the Copernican revolution was in its time. People will come to understand the brain is not the originator of thoughts, but the muddy path upon which thoughts remain behind. The brain operates in synchronism with the soul and, just as a muddy path, is progressively destroyed by foot traffic and cart traffic and must be re-built, so also must the nervous system be re-built constantly when the destructive activity over its pathways occur.

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*[page 20] There is also another aspect. As we continue along the path of soul research we find that the processes in the brain and nervous system corresponding with the life of the soul are, in fact, not constructive processes; they do not arise on account of there being constructive, thriving, flourishing processes in the nervous system such as those present in the rest of the organism. No, indeed. What the soul carries out in the nervous system is a destructive activity; while we are awake and conscious, and not asleep, it is a destructive activity. Only because our nervous system is embedded in us in such a way that it is constantly refreshed by the rest of our organism can the destructive, decomposing and demolishing activity which thinking lets loose on our nervous system be ever and again counteracted. It is a destructive activity of a quality exactly equivalent to that experienced all in one go when the human being dies, whereupon the whole of the organism disintegrates. Death lives in us constantly so long as we use our powers of thinking. In tiny amounts it is constantly within us, and the one-off event that is death is merely a summation of what is constantly at work in us. Although the dying is continuously being balanced out, this balancing is such that when the time comes death can take place as a matter of course.*

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Our modern day science is correct in its observations and deductions therefrom, but it does not go far enough to view the whole picture for the simple reason that it has, since Bacon's time, restricted itself to sensibly perceptual data. The processes of soul and spirit which arise anew during thinking, e.g., are not sensibly observable, but are super-sensibly observable. And with the addition of the super-sensible data which Steiner provides us, a complete understanding of the processes of the human being are possible, just as in earlier times, the mathematical data of Tycho Brahe, Copernicus, and others led to a complete understanding of the positions of planets in our solar system. Mathematical data represented super-sensible data to the large majority of people of the time because they were uneducated in the realm of higher mathematics. They had to accept what those who were capable of such mathematics reported to them. Each leap in human evolution begins with us being made aware of super-sensible processes at work in our world. It happened with Pasteur's pointing to microscopic bacteria as the cause of disease, Salk's pointing to a virus as the cause of polio, and so on. These super-sensible agents of disease became available when human beings created instruments for viewing and detecting the previously super-sensible data which was present. Rudolf Steiner has shown us that the human being is such an instrument for detecting the super-sensible processes of the world around us. And he is talking of the soul processes of Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition for which our microscopes, oscilloscopes, and various man-made devices for measuring sensory data are totally inadequate. These are processes which reveal a world which is not measurable or viewable as sensory data, but instead a world which is hidden behind the tapestry of sensory data.

For the human being who is untrained in mathematics, the new world view of Copernicus had to be taken on faith. For the human being trained in mathematics, that world view of planets orbiting the Sun becomes a reality. Similarly, the human being who is untrained in super-sensible sight will have to take Steiner's world view on faith, but anyone who wishes to follow the processes of attaining super-sensible sight, the world Steiner describes will become a reality. The first step into super-sensible sight is the process Steiner calls, Imagination. Through Imagination, we humans are able to view, for example, the processes of destruction at work while we are thinking.

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*[page 21, 22] It then becomes possible to observe further how the soul element that works and weaves in us and which, within the limitations I have described, brings about destruction, is in fact also a part of an overall whole. What I have termed, 'soul development' pushes forward from ordinary consciousness to spiritual vision as I have written in my book *The Riddle of Man*. This visionary consciousness makes it possible to attain knowledge through Imagination. Imagination in this sense reveals not what is externally visible to the senses but something that belongs to the human being although it is not physically visible. This element, which is the first thing to be perceived by such newly awakened consciousness, is what I have been referring to recently as the body of formative forces.*

*This is the supersensible body of the human being which is active throughout our whole life from birth, or one should say from conception, right up to our physical death. It is also the bearer of our memories, and as a supersensible being it is linked to a supersensible world that is external to it. Thus our physical life with its ordinary consciousness is like an island. Around this island and imbuing it lies what links our body of formative forces with the supersensible world by which this body, in its turn, is surrounded. We then see that our world of inner pictures and thoughts, just as I have described it, while being connected to our physical brain that provides it with a firm ground to stand on, is in fact carried by the body of formative forces. This is the bearer of our thinking, and our thoughts are formed within this body of formative forces, so that in the activity of thinking the human being lives within this body of formative forces.*

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The body of formative forces is also called by Steiner in other places the etheric body or the life body. This refers to an entity visible to supersensible sight, namely, that of Imagination, which disappears shortly after death and dissolves into the cosmos at which time the etheric body as "bearer of our thinking" gives up to the cosmos all these memories to

the cosmos. The portion of the cosmos containing all the memories of living humans is called in the Bible, *The Book of Jashar*, and in esoteric knowledge, the Akasha or Akashic Record or Akashic Chronicles.

The next level of supersensible entity attached to the human being is called the astral body and it contains our feelings and emotions. To discover the thoughts which fill these feelings and emotions requires a higher level of supersensible perception or soul experience known as Inspiration. This is another human capability of which modern science is as yet unaware. (1)

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*[page 22, 23] Proceeding now to another soul experience, that of feeling, we discover that things are different. Our feelings and also our emotions and passions do not relate to our life of soul in the way our thinking does. The spiritual researcher finds that the ordinary thoughts we have are attached to the body of formative forces but that this is not the case with our feelings and emotions. Our feelings and emotions live in us in a much more subconscious way; and at the same time they are linked with something much more far-reaching than merely our life between birth and death. I do not mean that we are without thoughts in this aspect of life, for all feelings are also imbued with thoughts. But the thoughts which imbue our feelings do not usually enter our consciousness; they lie below the level of consciousness. As our feelings surge up they are interspersed with thoughts, but these thoughts are more far-reaching, and we can only find them by rising up to a higher form of consciousness than that of Imagination, namely, Inspiration, an inspired consciousness — by which I am not referring to anything connected with superstition. You can read about this in detail in my books(2).*

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The third level is known as Intuition, and along with the other two processes of Imagination and Inspiration, it is capitalized to distinguish it from the mundane processes of the same name.

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*[page 25] Turning now to the realm of the will, we note that this is very far removed indeed from what human beings have in their ordinary consciousness. What do we know about what goes on inside us when the thought 'I want that' turns into the reaching out of our hand? The actual processes of the will are asleep in the human being. With regard to feelings and emotions we can at least state that in these we dream in ourselves. It is because the will is asleep with regard to ordinary consciousness that the question of freedom is so very fraught. [RJM NOTE: i.e., ... the question of freedom is so heavily laden with unconscious processes.]*

*We can only reach an understanding of the processes embedded in the will if we apply the spiritual consciousness of genuine Intuition, by which I do not mean the vague and hazy kind of everyday intuitive inkling. In my writings I have referred to the three stages of consciousness: Imagination, Inspiration, Intuition. To get into the realm of the will that ought to work and live in us it first has to be hauled up out of the depths of the soul. One then also finds that this will element, too, is imbued with thought, with spiritual thoughts — not ordinary ones which are something separate.*

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Steiner leads us to understand that Intuition is a direct revelation from the spiritual world, from the world of the Ego or "I" — a world of which, like that of the Will, we are completely oblivious, up until now. And Intuition as a gift from the spiritual world is fraught or pregnant with possibilities for spiritual activities which, when applied in our lives, are the essence of human freedom. Humans bring a plan from previous lives into this one and that plan is executed as one would a plan for building a house: one does not consider it an infringement on one's freedom if the house is executed according to one's plan. But one might, if one were unconscious of having made the plan in the first place, which is the case of humans who have no access to Intuition.

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*[page 25, 26] The way we carry our will within us means that what works into it is not only what we have experienced in the spiritual world or what works into our feelings and emotions*

*between death and a new birth. It is our experiences in former lives on earth that are at work in our will. And at the same time impulses for future lives on earth also live in what we develop and cultivate in our present will.*

*Genuine spiritual research sees that human life as a whole falls into two parts, those between birth and death, and the much longer ones — because the next physical existence has to be prepared over long aeons — which are experienced in the spiritual world. Human life as a whole is composed of these lives, lives on earth over and over again, and spiritual lives over and over again. This is not some fantastic notion; it is what we find if we learn to focus our spiritual eyes on all that is eternal, immortal in the human soul.*

*None of this excludes human freedom. If I build a house this year in which I shall live after two years, this does not detract from my freedom any more than does the way one life on earth determines the lives that will follow. It would be a misconception to put this forward as something that infringes the idea of human freedom.*

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Everyone has known someone who, in the middle of their lives, suddenly underwent some kind of "conversion" experience. This person led one kind of life before the experience, and suddenly as if compelled to change, an entirely new life style emerges. Steiner tells us that this amazing change comes about as a result of a violent end to a previous lifetime for that person.

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*[page 27, 28] When a violent death intervenes in someone's life this has consequences for the next life on earth by bringing it about that at a specific point in that life a change of direction occurs. Research into the life of the soul is going on even now, but on the whole this investigates only the most external aspects. A moment can arrive in a person's life when the whole course of his destiny changes and he steps out on new paths as though inwardly challenged to do so. Such things are termed 'conversions' in America because people like to give things a name. But it is not necessarily always a matter*

*of religion. A person can be forced into a new direction of life, a permanent change in the direction in which his will takes him. A radical change like this in the direction of one's will originates in the violent end of the previous life. How frequently the type of death is of importance especially in the middle of the subsequent life is made obvious to concrete research. If death comes about naturally through sickness or old age, then it has much more importance for the life between death and the next birth than it has for the next earthly life.*

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When we receive spiritual knowledge of our destiny we begin to comprehend our destiny, we awake to our destiny, we see it in clarity whereas before we saw it as if in some vague dream we forgot about upon arising.

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*[page 30] From that moment onwards you realize that having this experience of destiny in such a purely spiritual way enables you to explain how destiny has positioned you in life, how one's destiny hangs on threads that have been spun out from former lives on earth as well as lives between death and a new birth, threads that then spin on from this life into the one that follows. You realize that ordinary consciousness merely dreams its way through destiny; ordinary consciousness merely accepts destiny without understanding it, just as one accepts dreams. Spiritual consciousness, in which we wake up as we wake up from dreams into ordinary consciousness, gains us a new relationship to destiny. We recognize destiny as that which works with us on our overall life, the life that proceeds on and on through births and deaths.*

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Between birth and death we have a consciousness which is spatial, whereas between death and a new birth our consciousness is temporal — based on looking backwards at our previous life in the flesh. What we do, what we think about, how we live thus influences directly our experiences as we spirit during the time between death and a new birth.



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*[page 31] Of course what happens after death is in some way connected with the life we live here in our physical body. Here through our body we have the consciousness of the normal waking state. After death, though, we have a consciousness that is not spatial and founded on our nervous system but temporal and built on looking backwards. We have in our nervous system the counterbalance and counterstroke for our ordinary consciousness between birth and death, whereas the foundation for our consciousness in the spiritual world between death and a new birth is formed by what is already in our consciousness here. Just as we are here surrounded by the world, so, once we have died, does our life present itself before us as an important organ. Therefore much depends on the consciousness we have while we are in our physical body, since this reaches out into the consciousness that comes to meet us after death.*

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How we exist in the body determines how we will exist in the spirit later. Will we be bound to an earthly environment or will we enter a spiritual environment? The consequences are important, not only to us, but also to those left behind on the Earth because if we remain bound to the Earth, we will operate in a detrimental way. Steiner gives us an example of an atheist, which he calls extreme in his time, but which doesn't seem too extreme some 90 years later in our time, especially given the large number of atheists in the twentieth century and destroyers (e.g. terrorists) in the nascent twenty-first century.

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*[page 32] Take an extreme case which, however, is not very likely to occur. Think of a person who resists all supersensible ideas, someone who has become an atheist and has not gained even from religion the slightest feeling that he might want to take an interest in such things. (I know that I am speaking in paradoxes, but what I am saying has a good foundation in spiritual science.) Such a person is condemning himself to remain in the sphere of the earth, to remain here with his consciousness, whereas someone who has taken in*

*spiritual ideas can enter into a spiritual environment. The person who has ideas based solely on the senses condemns himself to remain in the sense-perceptible environment.*

*We can work in a beneficial way when we are in our physical body in the physical world, for here our physical body acts as a protective cloak. But if we remain present in the physical world after death we work in a detrimental way. When our consciousness harbors physical ideas and inner pictures after death we become destroyers. I have already pointed out, in connection with the laws of heredity, how the human being's forces intervene in the physical world even when he is in the spiritual world. Those who cultivate only a physical consciousness and thus condemn themselves to remaining in the physical world become the focus for destructive forces that interfere in what happens in people's lives and in the world at large.*

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Impressed as you may be by these revelations, you may think that you have experienced none of them personally, unable as you may be to see into the spiritual world, and thus they are worthless to you. Nothing could be further from the truth. Just as a map someone carefully created of the terrain can help you avoid a precipitous fall into an icy fjord on a hiking trip in Norway, so also the map Steiner has created of the spiritual world can benefit you directly.

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*[page 34] One might easily presume that to be someone who can enter into the spiritual world one must of necessity become a spiritual researcher. This is not necessary, although I have written a great deal in my book *How to Know Higher Worlds* about what the soul must do in order to enter there. Anyone can do this to some extent today, but not everyone needs to do so. What you develop in your soul is an entirely inner affair; but what it leads to is that the truths being researched can be formulated into concepts, so that you can clothe in thoughts and ideas like those I have put forward today — what a spiritual researcher tells you. It is something that can be communicated. One of the laws of spiritual research is that it does not matter whether you have found*

*these things out through your own research or whether you have been informed about them by a reliable source. It is not a matter of finding these things out yourself, for the important thing is that you have them and develop them within yourself.*

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This next passage caused me to laugh out loud when I reached the end of it. In the story, Steiner illustrates that arguments against spiritual science brought about by materialists and atheists could just as easily be promulgated by any competent spiritual scientist without breaking a sweat. Those who call serious spiritual scientists *dilettantes* are very likely projecting an unconscious dilettantism of their own upon others.

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*[page 36, 37] In 1869 Eduard von Hartmann came forward with his Philosophy of the Unconscious, turning against Darwinism, which saw the world purely in external terms, and pointing to the need for inner forces, though he did this in an inadequate, merely philosophical manner — having no spiritual research to go on. Those whose enthusiasm focused on Darwinism were of course prepared to call this philosopher a dilettante to whom it was not necessary to listen. Writings were published mocking the dilettante Eduard von Hartmann and stating that there was no call for a genuine scientist to take note of such views.*

*An anonymous paper appeared with a brilliant refutation of Hartmann's thoughts. The scientists and those who thought as they did were in full agreement with this paper, for it completely refuted Eduard von Hartmann. Everything that could be brought forward in a scholarly manner on the basis of science was indeed brought forward in this paper written by an anonymous author against Hartmann — in rather the same way as objections are put forward today against spiritual research. This paper was much applauded. Haeckel intoned: 'Here is a genuine scientist writing to refute that dilettante Hartmann; here we see what a real scientist can do; indeed I could not have written anything better myself; let him come forward and we will accept him as one of our own.' In short, the scientists made a good deal of propaganda about this*

*paper which suited them so well, and it was soon out of print. A second edition was needed, and then the author himself came forward: he was Eduard von Hartmann!*

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In Lecture 2, Steiner introduces the concept of the double and geographical-based medicine. But first he fills in some details about the geocentric view of the cosmos. One salubrious effect this view had on people is that when they died they were not earthbound because they knew a spiritual sphere circled the Earth. Therefore they did not become destroyers as is the lot of all spirits who are locked into the earth-sphere after passing through the gate of death. With the advent of the Copernican view that the Earth circled the Sun, people lost this protection from becoming earth-bound after death. Since the beginning of the fifth post-Atlantean Epoch in 1453, it became necessary for humans to spend "this life searching increasingly for inner pictures, concepts and ideas about supersensible matters." We can *not* wait and see what will happen when we die.

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*[page 45, 46] We cannot do this because it is necessary for us to know now — between our birth and our death — about certain matters concerning the spiritual world, as I pointed out yesterday, in order to be in possession of these inner pictures and ideas when we step through the gate of death.*

*This was not the same in earlier periods of human evolution. As you know, up to the sixteenth century, when the Copernican view was presented, people had quite different beliefs about the structure of the universe. Obviously it was necessary for human progress, and to enable human freedom to enter into the evolution of humanity, that the Copernican view of the world should make its appearance on the scene, just as it is now necessary for spiritual science to appear. Nevertheless, the physical view of the world which people had before the arrival of Copernicanism — call it wrong, if you wish — that view of a physical world in which the earth stood still while the sun and the stars circled round its skies, and where beyond those skies there was a spiritual sphere where spiritual beings lived, that was a view which human beings could still take with them through the gate of death without being held*

*back in the earthly sphere once they had died. It was a view of the world which did not cause them to become destroyers in the earthly sphere once they had passed through the gate of death. But when Copernicanism burst upon the scene it brought a view of the whole universe spread out in space ruled only by spatial laws; and it was when Copernicanism showed the earth circling round the sun that this view bound human beings to physical, sense-perceptible existence and prevented them from rising up into the spiritual world in the appropriate way after death.*

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It prevented humans from *automatically* rising up in the spiritual world after death as they did before Copernicanism was universally accepted; it essentially required that human beings develop and nurture views (pictures, concepts, and ideas) of the spiritual world on a volitional basis in order to rise into the spiritual world after death. Those who succumbed to the Baconian view — that all they could learn about the world must come from sense-perceptual data and who presupposed that meant that all of the world was comprised solely of material things and forces — they were the ones likely to bound to the earth-sphere after death and become destructive forces. What is needed is for people to be concerned both about the world of effects *and* the world of causes which underlie the effects. (Page 48)

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*[page 48] We must imbue ourselves with this feeling entirely if we are to understand rightly the immeasurable and profound significance of what is achieved through living together in spiritual collaboration now and in the future of humanity.*

*This is not something that can be gained on the basis of any kind of clubby fellowship, for it is a sacred task laid upon present and future humanity by the divine spiritual beings who govern the world. People will be unable to avoid taking in at least some inner conceptions about the supersensible world because such conceptions will less and less be forthcoming from the sense-perceptible world. By its very progress, science will increasingly drive conceptions about the supersensible world out of the world of the senses.*

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With science removing systematically every aspect of spirituality (which it considers to be superstition), people will less and less receive conceptions of the supersensible world from science. It will be up to human beings to heed the impulse received from the spiritual beings as their major source of inner conceptions about the supersensible world. Since this can only be done volitionally, one can choose to do nothing, but to do nothing to counteract the tendencies of science is to condemn oneself to a lugubrious end.

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*[page 48, 49] If human beings failed to take in any supersensible, spiritual concepts, this would eventually exclude them entirely from the spiritual world; they would be condemning themselves to becoming after death totally bound up with the physical earth alone, and with what the physical earth will one day become.*

*Since the physical earth will become a corpse in the future, human beings would thus be facing the frightful prospect of condemning themselves to inhabiting a corpse in the guise of its soul if they failed to decide that they must learn how to live in the spiritual world and take root there. A most important task has thus indeed been set for the cultivation of spiritual science. Once every day we should fill our soul with this sacred thought so as never again to lose our enthusiasm for this matter of spiritual science.*

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One practical way of filling our soul daily with a sacred thought is to recite the first 14 verses of the John Gospel each morning, whose fifth verse says, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." This exercise was shared with me by Kristina Kaine who said the practice goes back to the Essenes. Assiduous recitation of these verses while alive will help one to remain linked through love to those souls of loved ones living on Earth when one is spiriting in the world beyond Earth. The alternative is unpleasant to consider.

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*[page 49] All those inner conceptions which can multiply more and more if we join in with the many concepts about the spiritual world which have already come from that world into*



*our spiritual stream, all these conceptions that are coming to us enable us to free ourselves from being bound to the earth, to what is destructive in the earthly realm, so that we can derive our work from another direction. So we do remain linked with the souls we have left behind on the earth and with those with whom we are karmically connected, and also with the earth, but from the direction of other realms. We are in fact more intensively linked with the souls left behind on the earth when our links with them derive from higher spiritual realms and when we are not condemned by a purely materialistic way of life to haunt the earth like ghosts without being linked through love with anything on it but are turned instead into focuses of destruction.*

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Do you believe in light after death? You may have done a double take when you read the previous sentence, but I mean it quite literally. We will each reside in darkness after death if we do not make the effort now while among the living. If you find a resonant chord with the people Steiner characterizes in the next passage, you may consider this a wake-up call.

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*[page 51, 52] People today feel uncomfortable if they have to acquire spiritual concepts. They like going to meetings where they are shown lantern slides or similar things and therefore do not have to think in a supersensible way; they like to see things in front of them, or at least hear lectures that tell them only about what they anyway always have before their eyes. People today shy away from making an effort to ascend to concepts that are more difficult here because they have no outer object since their objects are the facts that relate to the supersensible world. Over there, however, these concepts are the forces which actually bring the reality of the world to us.*

*Through spiritual ideas and concepts we gain the wisdom we need in order to have light over there where otherwise everything will be in darkness. What we attain here in the way of wisdom is light, spiritual light, over there. Wisdom is spiritual light. We need wisdom in order not to find ourselves in darkness over there. Not to acquire spiritual concepts is the best way of having no light over there. And when one has no*

*light one moves away again from the sphere into which one ought to be casting light; one drifts back to earth and wanders about there as a focus of destruction. At most one might be used from time to time by a black magician in order to provide inspiration for certain quite specific functions, but also for destructive activities on the earth.*

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"Wisdom," Steiner says, "is something we need so that we can have light after death." But, he adds, we need something more, namely, love. But the love of the physical world is a low kind of love which will cause us to remain attached to the Earth will lead us to be agents of destruction. I wonder how many animal lovers, tree-huggers, and environmentalists will fall into this category when they are spiriting.

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*[page 53] Love, however, is something that can be either high or low depending on the realm in which it unfolds. If you pass through the gate of death and then have to remain in the earth realm as a focus of destruction, well, this is also due to having developed great love. The fact that you have to remain like this is a consequence of your having been bound up with purely naturalistic concepts, but then you employ this love for works of destruction; you love the work of destruction and are condemned to observe yourself loving the work of destruction.*

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Preachers today are still for the most exhorting their flocks to believe the same things as they have for millennia, but all this preaching will be no help unless it is accompanied by descriptions of what the world will be like for humans after passing through the gate of death. Religions, by not changing, have begun unknowingly to relegate their deceased members to imprisonment in the earthly sphere. Why must religions and preaching change today? Because of the materialistic world we are imbued with from our birth — which only came into being in recent centuries.

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*[page 53, 54] In former times when scientific, naturalistic concepts did not yet exist, and because people had not yet become infected with the merely material interests which have*

*gained so much ground since the sixteenth century, it was in order for preachers to talk about the supersensible world in the way the various religious denominations still want to talk today. But this is not in order now. In deep compassion for humanity it unfortunately has to be said that people today often become ensnared for the very reason that they want to promote their own eternal bliss in an egoistic way via the religious denominations. By this very means they become excessively ensnared in the physical, sense-perceptible natural world, thus blocking their own ascent once they have passed through the gate of death.*

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It should be clear that spiritual science provides the essentials necessary for human beings in our time to avoid being ensnared in the clutches of the earthly sphere and thereby to avoid becoming a force for destruction when their time for living is over. It should also be clear where the sources of destruction in our present world originate. And what the corrective actions should be.

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*[page 54] This is yet another reason why it is necessary to emphasize profoundly how important it is for humanity to occupy itself with spiritual science in the present time and in the future, for those who are unable to form ideas about the life after death deserve the utmost commiseration. One of many reasons for the need to try and spread the word about spiritual science is that it must be done out of deepest sympathy for people because it is so lamentable if, from lack of understanding, they continue to resist making any approach to the ideas of spiritual science.*

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When we are born we are new to our body when we arrive in it as a soul. We are like a child who has inherited a large home from his deceased parents — before it has examined all the rooms, someone has taken up residence in one of the rooms. This being which enters us at birth is what is referred to in the title of this book as the human double. It lives below our consciousness, in our subconscious, like a hitchhiker in the back of a pickup truck of which we are unaware. The characteristics of this human

double is that of an ahrimanic spirit in the sense that it strives for power, immortality in the earthly sphere, and will manipulate its host to achieve that. It wishes for us to become free, but immoral.

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*[page 56, 57] So, we arrive in this world with the garment of our organism without being able to reach down into it with our soul to any great extent. Instead, shortly before we are born, not very long before we are born, there is also an opportunity for another spiritual being, apart from our soul, to take possession of our body, namely, of the subconscious part of our body. This is a fact. Shortly before we are born another being indwells us; in the terminology we use today we would call this an ahrimanic being. It is just as much in us as is our own soul.*

*These beings lead their lives by making use of human beings to enable them to inhabit the sphere in which they wish to dwell. They have an exceptionally high degree of intelligence and a very significantly developed will, but no qualities of soul, nothing like what we would call the human qualities of soul and heart and mind. So we proceed through our life while having our soul and also a double who is far cleverer, far cleverer than we are, very intelligent, but with a Mephistophelian intelligence, an ahrimanic intelligence, and in addition also an ahrimanic will, a very strong will, a will that is much more akin to the forces of nature than it is to our human will which is ruled by our heart and mind.*

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Even the electrical currents which course along our nerves are due to the presence of these ahrimanic beings. No wonder that when our scientists attempt to create robotic beings, they use such electric forces — the robots are purely ahrimanic constructions and are basically immortal if maintained indefinitely, which would suit any ahrimanic being.

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*[page 57] In the nineteenth century science discovered that our nervous system is interspersed with forces of electricity. Science was quite right. But the scientists are wrong if they believe that the nervous force which belongs to us and which*

*provides the foundation for our inner world of pictures and thinking has anything to do with the electric currents that course along our nerves. Those electric currents are the forces that are introduced into our being by the being I have just been describing. They do not belong to our being at all. There are electrical currents in us, but they are of a purely ahrimanic nature.*

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These ahrimanic beings cannot stand to remain in the human body at the point of death and must leave. This has come about because of the Christ being who came to Earth, entered a human body, and went through the process of death in the deed that Steiner calls the Mystery of Golgotha. Here we have another salubrious effect of that deed.

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*[page 58] If the Mystery of Golgotha had not taken place, if Christ had not passed through the Mystery of Golgotha, these beings would long since have gained the ability on earth to remain in the human body after a karmically predetermined death. They would then have gained control over human evolution on earth and would have become the masters of this human evolution on the earth.*

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The presence of our ahrimanic double is something each human being must come to know about, otherwise our light after death will greatly dimmed. People need the concept of the ahrimanic double when they pass through the gate of death.

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*[page 58, 59] Everything we experience here, including what lies beneath the threshold of consciousness, is needed by us after death when we have to look back to this life and in this looking back must comprehend it, for being unable to do this is the worst thing that can happen to us. But our concepts for understanding this life as we look back over it are insufficient if we cannot throw light on a being who plays such a part in our life as does this ahrimanic being who takes possession of us before birth and is ever-present as a feature of our*

*subconscious. Our concepts for understanding this life are insufficient if we cannot throw light on these things; for wisdom is transformed into light after we die.*

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The health of all future humankind depends on the dissemination of the knowledge of the ahrimanic double, a knowledge which secret brotherhoods have withheld from humankind, up until now. Steiner explains clearly that the time has come for this knowledge to be revealed because the current stage of human evolution warrants it, in fact, requires it. As he discusses these issues in the next passage, notice how ahrimanic beings are at the root of our bodily diseases and luciferic beings at the root of neuroses.

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*[page 60] Something is opening up here which will in future definitely have to be pursued if humanity is not to meet with endless hindrances, endless frightful happenings. This double of whom I have been speaking is neither more nor less than the originator of all physical diseases that arise spontaneously from within, and to know this being fully is what is meant by organic medicine. Diseases that come spontaneously from within, not those caused by external injuries, do not come from the soul but from this being who is the originator of all organic diseases that arise spontaneously from within. This being is the originator of all organic diseases, while his brother, whose nature is luciferic, rather than ahrimanic, is the originator of all neuro-psychological and neurotic diseases, all diseases which are not really diseases at all but merely, as one says, nervous diseases, hysterical diseases and so on.*

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Steiner explains that what geologists know of the Earth we live upon is equivalent to the knowledge that could be acquired about living human beings in his audience if someone examined an X-ray of the room. All that would be visible would be the bones of those present. All the organic matter, the living forces at work within the human being would be overlooked. The living forces at work in the Earth do not show up in the eyes and instruments of geologists, but only the supersensible sight of the most delicate instrument of all, the human being. We all know from biology



that the various differentiated organs of the human body are distributed around it: the pineal gland is separated from the kidneys, the heart from the spleen, the eyes from ears, etc. Similarly the Earth:

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*[page 61, 62] And the earth is differentiated in the same way. Our earth is certainly not a being that sends up the same emanations to its inhabitants wherever they may be. All kinds of different emanations come up out of the earth in different regions. There are various forces, magnetic, electrical and so on, but also a great deal more in the living realm which rise up out of the earth and influence human beings in manifold ways at different places on its surface. The influences on people vary depending on the geographical formations.*

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Geography as we know it is like faint X-ray of the Earth regions to which whose living forces the ahrimanic beings are attracted. Steiner explains how certain pre-Columbian migrations from Europe to America were made by humans attracted to what could be learned about medicine on the American continent. As an example of how the forces emanating from the ground differ, he tells us that the ones, "which rise up out of the earth and take hold of the human double, are of the very best kind in the island of Ireland." (Page 168)

We have all heard the stories about Leif Erickson sailing to North America from Norway before the tenth century, but have you ever wondered, as I have, "Why didn't people continue to sail to America between that time and Columbus' time some 500 or so years later?" In the Lecture 2, Steiner explains that the pause in journeying to America came about to protect the peoples from developing a relationship with the ahrimanic double while still at the *intellectual soul* level of development. It is only since Columbus' re-discovery of America which coincided with the advent of the *consciousness soul* that we are able to attain a right relationship with the double.

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*[page 64, 65] During the centuries preceding the fourteenth century people had to be protected against the double. The double had to disappear from people's view and has only been permitted to reappear now in our age when human beings must bring order into their relationship with it. For the double*

*to disappear from people's view a very significant arrangement had to be carried out which it was only possible to set in train in the following way. Gradually from the ninth, the tenth century onwards the situation was created in Europe that caused Europeans to lose a certain contact which they had previously had, a contact that had been important for people of an earlier time, during the seventh, the sixth post-Christian centuries. Beginning from the ninth century and reaching a culmination in the twelfth all traffic with America, such as was possible with the ships of the time, was discontinued.*

*This will no doubt sound rather strange to you, and you are likely to exclaim that history has never told you of such a thing! Well, in many ways history is a legend. For in centuries of European development long ago ships did indeed set off from Norway, from what was then Norway, to America. Of course it had a different name then and was not called America.*

*People knew about the region in America where especially those magnetic forces rise up which bring human beings into a relationship with the double. The most noticeable relations with the double emanate from that part of the earth which is covered by the American continent. And in those early centuries people sailed in Norwegian boats to America where they then studied diseases. Coming from Europe, people went to America to study the diseases caused by the earth's magnetism. That is where we can find the mysterious origin of ancient European medicine. That is where it was possible to observe the course of diseases, which would not have been possible in Europe where people were more susceptible to the influences of the double.*

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Amazingly, Europe's forgetting about America was due to the Catholic Church which expunged from the records any mention of this land we now call America. (Page 65) It was, in fact, the Irish monks such as Columban and St. Gall who put up spiritual walls to insulate Europe from the influences which might else have come to Europe from the Americas. (Page

66, 67) Not surprisingly, America was re-discovered during the onset of the age of materialism in the fifteenth century, and its early exploration was dominated by a strong desire for gold.

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*[page 67, 68] Only when the age of materialism began was America rediscovered. Then America was discovered under the influence of the greed for gold, under the influence of a purely materialistic culture with which people have to reckon in the fifth post-Atlantean era and with which they must establish an appropriate relationship.*

*These are the things that are genuine history. And they are what throw light on what is real. The earth has to be described as a living being. It has geographical differentiations in the way the most varied forces stream up out of all kinds of different terrestrial regions. That is why human beings must not be separated off according to terrestrial region but must take on from one another whatever each region can uniquely produce in the way of what is good and great. And that is why the world view of spiritual science is mindful of the need to create something that can be truly accepted by all nations in all regions. Human beings must progress through a mutual exchange of their spiritual riches. It is this that is crucial.*

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One of the prominent geographical structures in North America is its long ranges of mountains from north-south. The Rockies in particular which extend northward close to the north magnetic pole. In such regions of the Earth, the influence of the arhimanic double is particularly strong.

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*[page 69] There is one specific part of the earth's underlying ground which has the greatest kinship with those forces. When people go there they enter into that sphere of influence, but when they go away again they are no longer influenced in that way. These are geographical forces; this is not a matter of ethnicity or nationality but purely of geography. The region where that which streams upwards from below has the greatest influence on the double and where, because of this kinship with the double it reflects back to the earth as well,*

*this is the region where most of the mountain ranges do not cross from west to east but run mainly from north to south, where the magnetic North Pole is nearby for this, too, is connected with those forces. This is the region where, through the prevailing external conditions, above all a kinship is developed with the mephistophelian-ahrimanic nature. This kinship has many effects on the further development of the earth. So people must not go along blindly with the earth's development, for they must see and understand these conditions.*

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Steiner at this point in Lecture 2 launches into what could seem like a lambasting of historians and the press for missing the reality of the underlying events, but he says he was not criticizing, but characterizing how those involved recorded those events.

"Medicine can only endure if it is a spiritual science." (Page 73) Certainly medicine is not a spiritual science today — no where close. Drugs and invasive surgery are usually the first resorts to healing people, not the last resort. What if the drugs administered to fight these diseases merely feed the ahrimanic demons something it could not get directly from human being itself? Medicine was once a spiritual science, and will have to become one again. (Page 74) The underground practitioners of spiritual science will one day arise as the early Christians did from their catacombs into the light of day. Once they did, the Romans were converted to Christianity without any Christian firing a shot.

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*[page 75] The Christians of those times actually had to descend into physical catacombs while up above them all the things went on which those distinguished Romans considered right and proper while those fantastical Christians were down below. But once a few centuries had passed things had changed. The Roman world had been swept away and what had been down below in the catacombs had risen to the surface. What had once dominated culture had been torn up by its roots.*

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We record and pay tribute to one's *physical* birthday, but rarely to one's *spiritual* birthday, the day one dies and is born into the spiritual world. In this next passage Steiner allows those present at the lecture in St. Gallen to join him in taking note of what I would call Stinde's "spiritday." I mention that my own mother's spiritday was appropriately on Mother's Day, 2000.

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*[page 76] At this moment I am thinking once again about Sophie Stinde, who worked so faithfully at the Goetheanum, because the anniversary of her physical death is approaching again, her supersensible birthday into spiritual life.*

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If we attempt to model our lives out of the classical teachings of the Greeks such as Plato, Aristotle, et al, we will find a huge gap due to their obliviousness to things that we are aware of today. This is a consequence of the course of human evolution which shifted dramatically between the Greco-Latin Age and the current age which began in 1453. The things humans of that time were kept unaware of are the very things we must be aware of today. Those ancient Greeks soared to great heights of intellectual achievement as befit their placement in the intellectual soul age, but today we find ourselves immersed in the middle of the consciousness soul age and we must become aware of things the ancient Greeks had no clue about.

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*[page 80] Throughout the whole period of the fourth post-Atlantean epoch it was in order for human beings to be kept unaware about certain things. But many of the things about which the people of the fourth post-Atlantean epoch, the Greco-Latin epoch, could be kept unaware are the very ones of which the human beings of the fifth post-Atlantean epoch must become more and more conscious. In fact, this fifth post-Atlantean age will anyway be one in which much that was formerly outside consciousness will have to enter into the consciousness of human souls.*

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What our task is becomes clear: we must prepare ourselves for the approaching age<sup>(3)</sup> by developing spiritual capacities to accompany our intellectual inheritance from the Greeks and the consciousness soul capabilities we are currently developing.

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*[page 81] This part of humanity will certainly represent the best basis for what is to come in the sixth post-Atlantean age, the age that will follow our present one, but in the fifth post-Atlantean age during which it is making these preparations, this part of humanity will have little inclination to turn its attention strongly to matters of the physical plane. It will be concerning itself a great deal with bringing the life of heart and soul on to a higher level and putting certain spiritual matters in order. And because of this others, who are rather less suited to such spiritual life, will be enabled to seize certain conditions of power for themselves.*

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As Steiner talks about developing our spiritual capacities, I search around me for examples of how this might already be happening. Something that has puzzled me in recent years has been a certain technique of film-making where isolated facts of multiple sets of people are shown in a haphazard fashion without any discernible pattern. The various groups of people seem to have no connection with each other, and I feel frustrated by being unable to perceive a connection between them. Slowly as the film progresses, I am able to grasp the connections and to discern the underlying pattern which will tie all the pieces together by the end of the movie. Movie-makers more and more, it seems to me, have been incorporating into their movies techniques which equip us for our experiences in the spiritual world to come.

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*[page 83] There is also another fact that those who know about it regard as very important, so that because of its importance they must bring it into connection with various others. I have mentioned this in lectures from time to time. (4) When you have stepped across the threshold to the spiritual world and are making spiritual observations there, you find that single facts, always individual facts, appear before your soul. It then transpires that facts which at first*



*sight appear to the spiritual eye to have nothing to do with one another are actually connected when you grasp their meaning. Such facts illumine and clarify each other and then enable you to press on further into the essence of the spiritual world in the profoundest sense.*

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What is evil? This is a subject that Steiner clarified for me and which has helped me to understand the world much better since that time. "Evil is a good out of its time." Think of a weed. People consider it an evil plant, don't they? And yet what is a weed? It's a plant where and when you don't want it to be. A plant out of its time.

What is terrorism? Those activists who are murdering innocent people of all ages in various parts of the world — what are they doing? What effects do these acts of violence have on those who are killed precipitously and what effects do they have on the world we live in? In these next passages Steiner discusses acts of terrorism which plagued his time during the Great War.

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*[page 85] The situation is that the souls who have passed violently through the gate of death retain something on account of having lost their life in that way here in the physical world; they have retained certain possibilities of being able to make use of forces which they have had here, for instance the force of the intellect. . . . These people, these activists who murder people, are only doing it in order to draw attention to the misery in the world; it is a means of incitement and so on. But if you analyze the matter and try to bring it into the context of social laws you notice immediately that none of this has any meaning. It becomes meaningful, however, if you know that souls sent up into the spiritual world by such means understand things up there which they ought not to understand yet and which souls who have died in the normal way even shy away from. . . . if you analyze the matter and look at the individuals who have been dispatched to their death in this way you realize that they must have been*

*selected on purpose, though not on the basis of criteria applying to the physical world but rather on the basis of criteria applying to the spiritual world.*

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By first murdering people using killers(5) and activists and then using skilled mediums to obtain information from their souls, secret brotherhoods can dominate large masses of people. This happens through a normal process that is souped-up or supercharged and the result is a good which arrives out of its time or pure evil.

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*[page 89, 90] Indeed, it is actually an important task for a number of people who are now passing through the gate of death to use — when they have become mature enough for certain secrets — the normal forces in connection with those secrets rather than learn about them through a foreshortened experience by using forces brought into play by a violent death. These human souls do indeed have the task of finding out about these forces and inspiring people who are here on the earth with them, people who are not mediums but who should find out about them in a normal and proper way through Inspiration. In normal life one has to wait for this. When things that ought to come later make their appearance as spiritual premature births by the means I have described — through criminal occult activity — when this happens those whose intentions towards humanity are not good, in other words those who are black or grey magicians, can gain possession of such secrets.*

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We live in a materialistic world for which the idea of a spiritual world is null and void, a non-starter, nil, zip, nada, nothing, a big ZERO. But our chore in this fifth post-Atlantean age is to develop our knowledge of spiritual science to the point where we can say with confidence to those materialists enthralled by ahrimanic powers and beings, as Faust did to Mephistopheles, "In your Naught I find my All." Inside of the materialism's *Big Zero*, we can find spiritual science's *Infinity* — which I represent diagrammatically in Figure 1. (Page 94, 95)

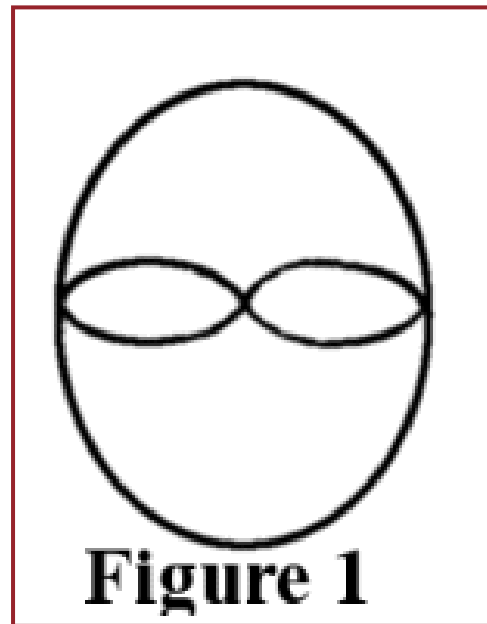


Figure 1

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*[page 95] The attitude of mind must develop in which one can look into what the materialistic view sees as 'naught' and there see the spiritual world.*

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Steiner closes Lecture 3 with a discussion of two ways in which people make progress today: (1) by noticing the importance of coincidences and (2) by noticing the manner in which spiritual insights are coming to people today.

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*[page 98, 99 (1) ] Suppose you read of a particular person having died at a specific place and at a specific time. A number of things will suggest themselves to you if you ask yourself what would have happened if that person had died three months earlier or three months later. This is, of course, merely a question concerning supposed possibilities. But if you ask yourself such a question you can be sure that it can awaken forces in you through which you will reach different insights. Or perhaps you are traveling on a train and have a very important conversation with someone, a conversation that means a great deal to you; or something similar. A materialist will of course regard such things as pure coincidence. But someone who wants to find his way gradually*

*into being able to look behind the scenery of existence, such a person will pay attention to such things. He will ponder these things, not by forcing them into conceptual forms but by sensing the feelings they generate. He will concern himself with these things because they are like hints of the forces at play between things that happen, forces that are more than merely mechanical or mathematical.*

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The second way reminds me of a caveat from Harry Boyd, "When you are swimming in a sewer, the best thing you can do is keep your mouth shut!" People are reluctant to talk about experiences which defy the cold rational logic of the materialistic world with its mechanical and mathematical precision. It is these very experiences which reveal the presence of the spiritual world and its salubrious effect upon our daily experience. Even the most recalcitrant atheist is tempted at times of inspiration like Steiner describes below to say, quietly, "Thank God!"

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*[page 99 (2) ] The second, which I want to keep on and on mentioning, is that despite today's materialism much that is spiritual is being revealed to human beings. But people are embarrassed to say too much about spiritual experiences they may be having. When someone opens up a little and begins to tell you things because he has developed trust in you, you will hear about how one person did this or another did that. If a person tells you really honestly and candidly why he founded this newspaper or why he did something else, he is telling you a dream, something like a dream; he is describing these things as suggestions coming from the spiritual world. You will find this happening everywhere, much more than you would imagine. Many more things are put into practice out of spiritual impulses than you would think. Only people are embarrassed to admit to this because others do not take them seriously if they talk about such things.*

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In Lecture 4, he continues his rolling back the curtain to reveal what is "behind the scenes of external events." He is talking to an audience in whose minds the tragic events unfolding in the Great War are ever present,

just as the events unfolding in our lives since September 11, 2001 have been in ours. He could be talking to us today:

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*[page 100] I want to broach a subject that so much needs to be discussed, a subject that the present tragic events in human life are forcing us to face, a subject that could be defined briefly with the words: Humanity urgently needs to find its way once more to knowledge and awareness of how what takes place here in the world on the physical plane is linked with a concrete spiritual world. Humanity urgently needs to become aware that a spiritual world is working down into every detail of existence in the physical world.*

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We are living in momentous times in this nascent millennium. Things all about us are in transition, and we must come to grasp what is transiting because the transition is not only here in the physical world, but also the spiritual world. People who not do give serious consideration to the events of the spiritual world will come into serious problems due their presupposition that only the material world is worth learning about.

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*[page 102] We are impelled by our sympathy for people who must have these ideas and who are doomed to take terrible things upon themselves if they do not have them.*

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Christians who profess to believe in God, to pray to God every day, and to have a personal relationship with God are often abhorred to hear someone who professes to be a Christian who talks about the hierarchy of spiritual beings. It's as if their very monotheism were threatened by the thought of other spiritual beings such as Angels, Archangels, etc. Out of their awareness, people such as this have established a personal relationship with their personally assigned Angel (traditionally called Guardian Angel), which is good, but they refer to this Angel as God, which is not good.

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*[page 103] Let us be clear about what this means. When a person's only relationship with the spiritual world is the one that is regarded today in religious circles as the usual one, the*

*one cultivated by a Church that fancies itself as enlightened, then that person only has a specific relationship with the spiritual world, a relationship which, although it is one of feeling, only concerns the protecting Angelos, the angel being with whom he does have a real relationship. And such a person then refers to that angel-being, the only being he can relate to and have certain feelings for, as his god. If he is a Christian he calls this angel-being Christ. He mistakes the angel-being for Christ. It is perhaps difficult to imagine this, but it is so. Protestant theologians who fancy themselves to be enlightened warn strongly against polytheism so that people should gain a direct relationship with the one being, Christ. But however much they talk to people about Christ, what they are saying about Christ refers solely to the individual's relationship with his own angel-being. Thus in our time monotheism is in danger of becoming the worship by each human being of his own individual angel.*

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One consequence of this prevalent way of thinking of one God is similar to what is happening in the world today: each country wants to have its own god.

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*[page 103, 104] In fact the monotheists of today each pray only to their own angel, but as the words resound together which each is speaking to his own angel in an egoistic relationship with his own angel-being, they think that they are talking of a god whom they all share. If this were to develop further, people as individual human beings would begin to develop more and more what we already see nations manifesting in a terrible way. Although still speaking theoretically of the One God, they do not seriously want to recognize this divinity, especially now, for each nation wants to have its own god.*

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We see today numerous voices in the mass media saying things like, "We must get rid of sweat shops," or "We must have minimum wage standards for the whole world," etc. It seems as if so-called liberals today, who are in



no way distinguishable from socialists of Steiner's time, are wanting to apply the standards of the most industrialized nation of the world to the least industrialized ones.

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*[page 105, 106] Humanity today wants to apply the same yardstick to everything and invent theories according to which people all over the globe may be awarded the same standard of earthly happiness. Today's socialist thinks that certain ideas apply equally to human life in England, America, Russia or Asia. If every state were to arrange its affairs as socialism prescribes then the happiness which people everywhere dream about would automatically ensue. That is what people think.*

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But this will not work, but will only cause endless confusion and chaos.  
(Page 106)

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*[page 106] Only those who can build a bridge from their soul to the objective facts can work in a beneficial way to shape earthly existence.*

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People who perceive a lacking in their own souls project that lack onto the peoples of the under-developed countries and strive to get their dream from own soul implemented in the external world. This will not work. When they recognize their own projection and switch to working on their own soul in a real way to fill that lack, then the reality of the external world will reveal itself to them. What was previously felt as a lack, will be found to be a fullness when viewed from a spiritual perspective.

The next event Steiner takes us behind the scenes of is one I call the EAT-O-TWIST Event. Let me explain this to those of you this may be new to. EAT-O-TWIST is an acronym for the process Everything Always Turns Out The Way It's Supposed To which I created about 25 years ago to help remind me of a spiritual truth I stumbled upon. This was several years before I heard of Rudolf Steiner or read any of his books and lectures. I incorporated EAT-O-TWIST into Matherne's Rule #10 which says facetiously "EAT-O-TWIST! never breaks. You'll use it from now on." Yes, it was intended to be amusing. Cannot a spiritual truth be amusing? Especially if

it helps people to begin using it. One day after Del and I had begun using it, I shared with her that I was discouraged about something and she said, "Remember, EAT-O-TWIST." I gave her this look which said, "Oh yeah! Well, not this time!" and she looked right back at me and said, "EAT-O-TWIST never breaks!" That made me immediately change my supposing about what would happen in the situation which had me discouraged, and Matherne's Rule #10 was born. You can read the [EAT-O-TWIST story](#) on the website, but for now, I simply want to explain that the "supposing" part of the acronym refers to whatever internal images, words, thoughts, sounds, and feeling you might have about something in your world at any moment. Wait long enough, hold those supposings in you long enough and watch what happens: your outside world will reflect those supposings. As Del said, "EAT-O-TWIST never breaks!"

What I didn't consciously know 25 years ago when I promulgated EAT-O-TWIST is that the process it embodies had only come into full force about one hundred years earlier. It came to the Earth as spiritual wisdom in 1879 following a 38-year-long battle in the spiritual world between the forces of darkness and light. When the forces of light under the leadership of Michael the Archangel won, the forces of darkness were thrown out and "the heavens are now free of them while the earth is full of them." (Page 107)

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*[page 107, 108] But now that those spirits of darkness are moving about amongst human beings here on earth, they are once again working to confuse people. Their aim now is to make sure that people fail to enter into the right relationship with the spiritual truths, so that the healing purpose of those truths is kept away from human beings.*

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The battle is won and heaven is free of the confusion caused by these dark spirits but the Earth is full of it. These dark spirits are aided by the secret brotherhoods who wish to keep these truths from being taken seriously by humankind.

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*[page 108] On the other there are the closed secret brotherhoods of a nasty kind whose very aim is not to let the wisdom enter into humanity, so that people will remain stupid*

*and foolish as far as the spiritual world is concerned while those within the closely guarded brotherhoods carry on their machinations from there.*

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EAT-O-TWIST contains a supposition that would be very healthy for human beings to have beginning in 1879, but any supposition can be poisoned by a presupposition. If you suppose life works a certain way, and you hear someone employ in their speech a presupposition that holds the opposite to be true, your original supposition will immediately dissolve and be replaced by the opposite supposition. Unless you consciously recognize the presupposition, you have no defense against its doing its work on you. You may not even notice that the presupposition had any effect upon you, which is what makes the whole process so insidious and so hard to detect when it happens to you. If you wish to learn to recognize presuppositions in speech patterns, Richard Bandler and John Grinder have written a book *The Structure of Magic* which has a detailed list of **presupposition speech patterns**.

When some spiritual truth becomes available, people feel as if a light has been turned on — but when the forces of darkness attack, the light goes out. These forces typically attack by using presuppositions to instill fear, and then people turn away from the spiritual truth because they have unconsciously introjected the presuppositions and created misconceptions from them.

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*[page 108] You will feel as though a kind of light has been turned on regarding what is happening behind these matters when I tell you of certain truths, truths that, like ripe plums dropping from a tree, are meant to drop down out of the spiritual world into the human realm but are being prevented from spreading also because people have presuppositions and misconceptions about them and are afraid of them.*

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I don't like unripe plums: they are hard, they are bitter and unpleasant, but wait till the plum gets soft and ripe and there is no finer, juicier, or more delicious fruit on the face of the Earth in my opinion. Clear thinking is

like a ripe plum which it is important for us to eat during this time on Earth. Without that clear thinking we will miss the ripe fruits of the spiritual world which are dropping down today.

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*[page 109] Never before has there been a time when clear thinking has been as necessary for human evolution as are eating and drinking for the preservation of the physical body. For if people think without clarity now in our time and on into the future, they will not be able to see in the right light those ripe truths that are to drop down from the spiritual world.*

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What are some of those ripe truths? One is the importance of the Mystery of Golgotha to the evolution of the Earth. A second is the return of Christ to Earth in the etheric plane since the early twentieth century. A third is the EAT-O-TWIST Event in 1879 which we mentioned above. In a nutshell people born before 1879 were insulated from the full force of EAT-O-TWIST. If they supposed there was no spiritual world waiting for them after they died, they were protected from that being the case. Those born after 1879 lost that protection from their suppositions because EAT-O-TWIST began to operate with its full force. The effects of this change can *not* be over emphasized. It affects every human being today since everyone reading this is under 126 years old, so far as I know. Note that "suppose" is equivalent to "regard as" in the passage below, so Steiner is talking about EAT-O-TWIST.

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*[page 110] This profoundly incisive event has the effect, especially, that in their souls human beings become increasingly similar to their thoughts, to what they regard as their understanding of things. This may be a strange truth for the people of today, but it is a truth nevertheless. It is important and essential to see certain things in the right light, with clear thoughts, with valid thoughts, with thoughts imbued through and through with reality. To see Darwinism correctly, for example as I endeavoured to present it yesterday in the public lecture, this is good. But to see it as the basis for the only valid view of the world, to see it as meaning that only one thing is correct, namely, that the human being is descended from the animals, to have the living thought about oneself 'I*

*am descended from the animals, I have originated only out of the same forces that also form the animals' — all this leads souls nowadays to resemble their own inner pictures.*

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Specifically this means when one enters the spiritual world, EAT-O-TWIST works in full force. What one supposed before one died is lived out — there is no longer any shield from one's materialistic misconceptions or presuppositions. Is it important to know this?

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*[page 110] It is important to know this! When a soul like this has laid aside its body it undergoes the misfortune of having to see itself as resembling its own inner pictures. Those who believe while in the physical body that only animal forces have played a part in their development are building for themselves a consciousness after death with which they will have to perceive themselves as animals. For now that the event of 1879 has properly brought to fulfilment the character of the fifth post-Atlantean age, the thoughts which human beings make for themselves serve to make human souls become transformed into these thoughts.*

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Clearly one cannot wait until one dies to discover the truth about the spiritual world, because by then the spiritual world will consist of what one supposed it would be *before one died*. There is no way to sugar-coat this truth. Steiner was speaking in 1917 when people who were born before 1879 were still alive. We are currently living "in the future" that he refers to in the passage below. We *must* become aware of our true connections with the spiritual world today.

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*[page 111] Harmony with oneself coupled with knowledge that allows the human being to be human after death, this will only come about in the future if human beings become aware, while they are here in the physical body, of their true connections with the spiritual world.*

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It is almost an anthem of the materialists that "we humans are what we eat", but it is rarely stated as such. But ask a materialist if the human being is different from that of an animal which eats the same things as we do, or different from the ape from which we are supposedly descended, and they'll likely say, "Very little difference except for some increased brain size in relation to body weight." If one supposes "we are what we eat," then what happens when we die and everything formed from what we ate rots and decays in the grave? If people know very little, they could be materialists and yet never think about such things — obtaining some protection from their ignorance.

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*[page 114] But if materialism triumphs, then people will increasingly believe: All that is left of the dead person is decaying in the urn or in the grave. This thought is a real force. It is an untruth. If those left behind think that the dead person is no longer alive and that he is no longer here, then this is an erroneous thought, but this erroneous thought is nevertheless real and actual in the souls of the people who think it. And the dead person perceives this real thought; he perceives it as something very significant for himself. It is not unimportant, but in fact profoundly important, if those who remain behind here cultivate in their living inner soul life the thought of the dead person continuing to live in the spiritual world, or if they merely give way to the lament: 'He's dead, that's all, he is decaying.' These two things are not equally valid for they are actually very essentially different.*

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Consider the difference if one lights a candle while thinking of person as spiring in the other world, alive and spiring, and one talks in one's head to the other person in the second person, present tense. If one talks as if the person were alive, one acknowledges that the person is present in spirit and is, in fact, spiring at the moment one is living. This creates a direct communication which benefits both oneself and the other person. Exactly how it does this will be elaborated further down.

In my Catholic youth, I made fun of my mother when she lit candles for her departed relatives. "As if that could do any good for them," I thought. It is amazing how different the world becomes as one studies it carefully from youth into adulthood. And amazing how many people drop their study



of the world when they leave high school or college — it's as if education were for them something that must be forced upon them by their parents. It's apparent they need a parent to learn about the world, but the time of parents is gone, as is the time of prophets, those super-parents who were needed by ancient humans to tell them what they had to do in order to establish a right relationship with the spiritual world.

Another isolated fact which will fit in later: Steiner was speaking in Zurich at the same time that Carl Gustav Jung was living in Zurich developing, practicing, and teaching his analytical psychology. Steiner thought it was good because these Jungian analysts were confronting directly matters of soul and spirit, even looking for causes of hysterical symptoms in the soul realm. Searching for the subconscious causes only in the personal history of the person, such as some sexual aberration, however, is not enough, in fact, it is the least consequential aspect of the matter. (Page 116)

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*[page 116] One thing above all, though, is certainly true, and that is that countless subconscious elements do indeed haunt human beings today, and they are much harassed by these; and the diseases of civilization are caused by them.*

*What is this? Consider what I have already said. The thought of the dead person who is no longer here lives in the soul; it lives somehow, without the soul thinking about it much; it lives only because the soul is today still without thought, and the soul is rather sensitive with regard to such thoughtless thoughts. When this happens the dead person is forced by eternal universal laws to live with this thought; the dead person haunts the soul of the living person who has remained behind.*

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This requires a bit of explication as the translation seems to leave some ambiguities as to Steiner's meaning. Let's suppose Molly and Sam loved each other dearly for many years. Sam dies and Molly is still alive and mourning her loss. Sam is spiring, but has difficulty because Molly is living and she is supposing that Sam's body is decaying in his grave. She talks about him in the third person to her other friends, "Sam's dead now. I loved him, so. I miss him." and so on(6). What does Sam do? He stays around to haunt Molly, not out of malice, but out of a wish to get her to

believe he is spiriting. He wants her to begin talking to him in the second person, present tense, the way we talk to people who are alive and in our presence. This is how we should talk when we communicate with loved ones who are spiriting if we would help them and ourselves progress best in our respective worlds.

For you to do otherwise is to subject both your departed loved ones and yourself to various neuroses and diseases of the type that analytical psychology deals with. This is the elaboration I promised you of the benefits of talking to one's loved ones as if they were still alive. Fact is they are alive in the spirit and immediately at hand to listen to your words or your thoughts at all times. Consider how your loved one would have felt when alive if you ignored them when they were present and talked about them in the third person as if they were not there? That's exactly how deceased loved ones feel if you do that to them today.

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*[page 116] The only way to counteract this is by knowing that the dead person lives. People on the physical plane will be more and more driven into soul illnesses by their lack of belief that the dead are alive. As a rule it is not youthful sexual aberrations that bring about these diseases, but thoughts that do not believe. For in our time thoughts are called upon to become real forces. They are called upon to become real forces, but not only forces that work for themselves; they work for themselves when after death the soul increasingly resembles what it imagined itself to be while it was in the body. But these thoughts become real forces in a higher sense as well in that they even bind beings, in this case those who have died, in a wrong way to those who are still alive.*

*The only way to counteract this is by maintaining as far as one can a connection with the one who has died in that one regards him as continuing to live. This saves the relationship with the dead person from becoming a disaster not only for oneself who has remained behind but also in some ways for the dead person who is necessitated by an eternal, wisdom-filled law to haunt the one who has remained behind in a way that does not come to the consciousness of that person but manifests purely in symptoms of disease.*

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In the movie *Ghost*, when Molly finally begins to talk to Sam in the second person, present tense, Sam is able to continue his journey into the spiritual world and all the neurotic symptoms that Molly exhibited disappear. To us movie-goers Molly did not seem neurotic *because* we were allowed to see the spiritual truths behind's Molly behaviors so that we saw them as normal instead of neurotic. Take the case of Oda Mae Brown's behavior in the bank or in the street with the nuns, her behavior certainly seemed neurotic to the people around her.

As shown in the movie above, the real remedy for Molly's symptoms was for her to learn about the truth of the spiritual world from which Sam was enthralled to her until she did.

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*[page 117] So what is the real remedy for many of the symptoms which psychoanalysts are encountering today? The remedy is to spread knowledge about the spiritual world. This is the universal remedy, the universal therapy, and not those individual treatments that are bestowed upon individual patients.*

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But do people want knowledge about the spiritual world today? No, what they want is pat answers to problems, things to do which can be applied in every corner of the globe. They want people and books to tell them what to do. If they wish to become creative, they want a book to tell them, "Here's five ways to be creative."

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*[page 122] People want abstract programs nowadays, they want to hear stated in five sentences what should be done all over the world; they want delegates to be sent from every state on earth who will meet in a world tribunal and vote on everything that is to happen all over the earth in accordance with an accepted norm. Yet the important thing to realize is that knowledge of the spiritual world is what is required of human beings, a continuous effort to make contact with the spiritual world.*

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It is clear to all that we are living in an age of materialism, but what is now becoming clear is that *opposites coincide* — that is, the appearance of an extreme in one area of the world leads to its opposite arising in another area of the world. And by world, I refer to both the material world [and the] spiritual world.

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*[page 131] We know that materialism has been reaching its zenith since about the middle of the nineteenth century. However, the reality is that opposite poles always coincide. The zenith of materialism in human evolution has to coincide with its opposite, namely, an inwardness in human evolution that leads to Christ being indeed seen in the etheric realm.*

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We have been approaching the zenith of materialism, but it is still slightly increasing and will continue to do so for another 500 years. If anyone spreads some doctrine that materialism is fizzling out, they are either already misled or have some personal interest in misleading you.

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*[page 131, 132] Those unfortunate, pitiable, 'clever' individuals who spread the doctrine . . . are more less serving those who have an interest in putting about something that is untrue, namely, that materialism has fizzled out. This is an untruth, for materialism is, on the contrary, still on the increase, and it will flourish best when people delude themselves into believing that they are no longer materialists. Materialism is on the increase, and it will continue being on the increase for another four to five hundred years.*

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Our environment when we spirit during the time between passing through the gate of death and a new birth is largely determined for us today by how much we absorb of spiritual concepts before we die. If we absorb little or no spiritual concepts we are relegated to wandering lost about the face of the Earth, and we become forces of destruction because the human body, which separates us from our surroundings (matter is

impenetrable, but spirit is not) protects us from destructive acts, does not accompany us into the spiritual world. One look at the evenings news tells us that there are many forces of destruction at large on the Earth already.

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*[page 134] So, our environment over there is determined by whether or not we absorb spiritual concepts here. It has to be said with much pity that many of those who have resisted or been prevented from absorbing spiritual concepts here during life find themselves wandering about on the earth even when they are dead, for they remain bound up with the earthly sphere. And once the human soul is no longer separated from its surroundings by a body that would prevent it from acting in a destructive way, this human soul becomes a focus of destruction within the earthly sphere.*

*It has to be said that this is quite a normal situation. Under today's conditions, souls who enter the spiritual world after death, having wanted to know absolutely nothing about spiritual concepts and feelings, become focuses of destruction because they are detained in the earthly sphere. Only those souls who have already here been filled with a degree of connection with the spiritual world pass through the gate of death in such a way that they are taken up into the spiritual world in the right way and removed from the earthly sphere; they can spin the threads in the right way that link them with those who have remained behind, threads which are continually spun. We must not forget that the spiritual threads linking the dead souls with those of us here who have been connected with them are not sundered by death; they remain and even become much more intimate after death than they were here. What I have been describing must be accepted as a serious and important truth.*

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Paradoxically the most dangerous of the brotherhoods or societies are those who vociferously spread the gospel that materialism has already been overcome because, deep down and in secret, their aims really are for power. They obtain this power by inculcating in their members materialistic

beliefs which ensure that these members will remain attached to Earth in the human realm after death. It is from these attached souls that these societies extract their power.

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*[page 136] These materialists are not materialists because they do not believe in the spirit; these materialistic initiates are not so stupid. They know very well what are the implications of the spirit. But they cause the souls to remain within matter even after death in order to make use of them for their own purposes. They create a clientele of dead souls that remain within the sphere of the earth. These dead souls possess forces that can be guided in various ways which make it possible to gain quite specific powers over those who are not party to such things.*

*This is quite simply something that certain brotherhoods set in train. And this is seen clearly only by those who are not prepared to believe in anything that is obscure or nebulous, and who do not allow themselves to be persuaded either that such brotherhoods do not exist or that what they do is harmless. These things are not at all harmless; they are very harmful, for the intention is to make human beings go further and further into materialism. What these initiates want is for these human beings to believe that although spiritual forces do exist they are nothing but forces of nature.*

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If you find yourself in such a society and the initiates tells you that there are higher forces in nature than electricity and magnetism and they merely tapping those forces, chances are they are tapping the forces of the dead and not telling you. What is your defense against these things? Steiner puts it bluntly, "The only defense against these things is knowing about them. If you know about them you are protected." What you have encountered is "brothers of the left-hand path." These brothers led seances in the latter part of the nineteenth century — one can only guess what form of activity they use during the nascent twenty-first century.



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*[page 138, 139] What they intended and indeed expected — was that during spiritualist seances people should say: 'Higher forces of nature do indeed exist.' But the brothers of the left-hand path were then disappointed when most people said instead: 'The spirits of the dead appear during the seances.' This was a bitter disappointment for the initiates, for it was exactly what they did not want. Belief in the dead was the very thing which they wanted to take away from human beings. People were to be deprived not of the workings of the dead, not of the way the forces of the dead worked, but of the thought, that very significant thought, that these things do come from the dead.*

*As you can see, this is a higher form of materialism, a materialism that not only denies the existence of the spirit but that wants to imprison the spirit in matter. Materialism still manifests in ways that make it possible to deny its existence. People can say that materialism has gone and that what we are talking about is spirit. But they all speak about the spirit in a vague way. Making all nature into spirit in a way that leads to psychism as the end result is a very good way of being a materialist. But what really matters is the ability to see into the concrete spiritual world, into concrete spirituality.*

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These societies or brotherhoods have another goal, which is to make the appearance of Christ in the etheric plane during the first third of the twentieth century pass by unnoticed. Since we are some 70 plus years distant from that event, and it is basically unknown outside of anthroposophical circles, one can say that they have been successful in their goal, up until now. In the place of Christ they wish to install another being which has this distinct difference from Christ: it has never been incarnated as a human being in the flesh upon Earth.

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*[page 141, 142] For the brotherhoods will give the name of 'Christ', the actual name of 'Christ', to that other being whom they want to make into the ruler. It will therefore be crucial to learn to distinguish between the true Christ, who this time will also be an individuality not incarnated in the flesh, and that*

*other being who differs from the true Christ in that he has never been incarnated throughout earthly evolution but whom those brotherhoods now want to install in the place of Christ who, they intend, shall pass by unnoticed.*

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If you have ever heard of eastern or western lodges and wondered about the difference between them, Steiner lays it out for you in this next passage.

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*[page 144] The western lodges have the dead who are imprisoned in matter; the eastern lodges of the left-hand path have demonic spirits, that is, spirits who do not belong to earthly evolution but who creep into earthly evolution by putting on ether bodies laid aside by human beings.*

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When these beings invade a living human, the human is unconscious of the origin of the effects they create. The various therapies that lay the cause to sexual repression as a child, etc, are masking the true cause which is this: the person is experiencing an impulse from a spiritual being. Steiner says it is sad that such efforts are made to keep people in the dark about the true source of the problem.

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*[page 145] This is why it is so sad when efforts keep being made to persuade people that when the unconscious, the so-called unconscious, works in them it is the result of repressed love or something similar, whereas in fact the impulse of very conscious spirituality is being brought in to move about amongst humanity from all sides which, though, remains relatively unconscious if one does not make efforts in one's consciousness to be aware of it.*

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One of the things logic seeks to teach its students is that contradiction is not allowed: one thing cannot be itself and something else. Contradiction is simply not allowed in the pristine halls of Logic. Reality is not so pristine — it does not fit neatly into our logical maps of the world. In nature we see a

unified system because everything has been screened out except what comes in through our senses. We wear, as it were, "nature-colored glasses", and make logical deductions about nature, which are accepted as truths until they proven wrong and replaced by other equally suspect, but accepted truths.

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*[page 160, 161] Behind the tapestry of nature, however, there lies something else which receives its direction from quite another quarter. This, though, is excluded from our observation of nature.*

*So what we call nature is indeed a unified system because everything else has been screened out. It is as though we perceive nature through the filter of our senses. Everything that is contradictory is filtered out and the nature we have before us is thus a unified system. Once we cross the threshold, however, and include reality in our explanation of nature — the elemental beings, influences of human souls that can be directed towards nature — then we can no longer talk of nature as being a unified system. For then we also have to include the workings of individualities who either obstruct one another or support and strengthen one another.*

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What is our task as human beings during this fifth post-Atlantean period? "We must come to grips with evil," Steiner tells us. Instead praying to be "delivered from evil" as the Lord's Prayer exhorts, we might pray to have evil delivered to us so that we may come to grips with it.

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*[page 162, 163] I have given a general description of the task of the fifth post-Atlantean period by saying that it will be up to humanity during this period to come to grips with evil as an impulse in world evolution. We have talked variously about what this means. It is essential that the forces which manifest as evil if they appear at the wrong place must be taken in hand by human endeavor in the fifth post-Atlantean period in such a way that humanity can achieve something with these*

*forces of evil that will be beneficial for the future of the whole of world evolution. Because of this the task of this fifth post-Atlantean period is an especially difficult one.*

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Evil is a good arriving out of its time. When such a good out of its time arrives on Earth, we are exhorted by Steiner to take this good and find ways to apply it in proper ways for this time. This can only be done by someone who is fully conscious of the nature of the good which is arriving out of its time.

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*[page 163] When little by little the powers of evil make their appearance, human beings may naturally be much more inclined to give in to this evil in every field instead of taking up the fight to bring what seems evil to them into the service of world evolution in the sense of what is good. Yet this is what must come about: to a certain degree evil must be placed at the service of world evolution in the good sense. Failing this it will be impossible to enter into the sixth post-Atlantean period, which will have an entirely different task. Although human beings will still be linked with the earth, the task will be to enable them to look continuously into the spiritual world and live in spiritual impulses.*

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How will we learn to convert evil into good? We will need a lot of help, and that help will come from an ever-present source of spiritual power that we have at our disposal: we have only to ask for it.

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*[page 165] But something even more significant will occur for the development of the fifth post-Atlantean period when human souls recognize that in Christ they have the I helper they need to transform the forces of evil into good.*

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Our task, he tells us, is to grasp the spiritual world with our reason in the remainder of this fifth post-Atlantean age. Through Steiner's 6,000 lectures disseminated in his over 300 books, he offers opportunities for us to exert

our reason and grasp the spiritual world — its existence and mode of operation. Thus he provides us with the means to achieve the results he says are so necessary for humankind if we are to move into the sixth post-Atlantean age. And he avers of a certainty that the spiritual world will be revealed to us: that is a direct result of the battle won by the forces of Michael the Archangel in 1879.

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*[page 164] The spirit will be revealed, that is certain. Because the spirits of darkness were overcome in 1879, more and more spiritual wisdom will be able to flow down from the spiritual worlds, for those spirits would only have been able to prevent this if they had remained up above in the realms of spirit. They can no longer prevent spiritual wisdom from flowing down, but what they can do is create confusion and bring obscurity to human souls.*

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In addition, he tells us we must become warriors for the spirit. That we are the best warriors when we strive toward the spirit in freedom and light. If Steiner's great corpus of works is imagined as a building, then the foundation of that building was laid in his book, *The Philosophy of Freedom*. One must ever return to that book for new insights. In recent months I have worked with Tom Last to help him share his multi-ordinal view of the contents of this book. The good news is that we, you and I, are no longer to be led around like children, especially by nefarious societies and brotherhoods, it is time for us to step out in freedom and light.

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*[page 165] There is one thing connected with this feature of the fifth post-Atlantean period, one thing which one should inscribe anew into one's soul every day, one thing which one should I not forget even though human beings are particularly prone, to forget this particular thing. This is that in this fifth post-Atlantean period the human being must be a warrior for the spirit; human beings must experience how their forces ebb away if they do not continuously hold them in check for the purpose of winning through to the spiritual world. In this fifth post-Atlantean period human beings stand on their freedom to the highest degree! This is something they have to go through with. The idea of human freedom is the yardstick against*

*which must be measured everything that human beings meet with during this fifth post-Atlantean period. For were their forces to weaken, this could cause everything to turn out for the worst. In this fifth post-Atlantean period human beings are not in the situation of being led like children. If there are certain brotherhoods whose ideal it is to lead human beings like children, as they were led in the third post-Atlantean period, and in the fourth, then these brotherhoods are not doing what is right; they are not doing what actually ought to be done for the evolution of humanity.*

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Steiner presents information in his books and lectures with a matter-of-fact attitude which seems strange at first, and then as one reads more of his works, it begins to seem new and refreshing. He may exhort, but he never asks the reader to do something simply because he wants them to. He always allows us the choice, in complete freedom, to decide how to live our lives. He lectures, he writes and allows us to use this information as we wish. Contrast his approach with that of your Sunday preacher.

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*[page 165, 166]Anyone who speaks about the spiritual world must do so in a way that leaves people free to accept or reject what he is saying. Someone speaking about the spiritual world in this fifth post-Atlantean period must constantly remind himself of this. Because of this certain things can only be said in this fifth post-Atlantean period, and the actual saying of these things is now just as important as anything else was in other periods. I will give you an example of what I mean.*

*In our time, the most important thing is to bring forward truths-put plainly, to give lectures about truths. What people then do about this is up to their freedom. One should go no further than to lecture on, to communicate truths. Whatever consequences there are should follow as a free decision, just as consequences follow when decisions are made out of the impulses one has on the physical plane. It is exactly the same in the case of things that can only be guided from the spiritual world itself.*

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We mentioned earlier about Ireland being a special place with respect to the forces arising from the Earth. We know it is called "The Island of Saints" known for St. Patrick who is said to have banished the snakes from Ireland. Lacking any historical record of a time before Patrick when there were snakes in Ireland, I wondered as I read the next passage if there were, in fact, *never* any snakes in Ireland. This seems plausible given the identification in the Bible of Lucifer with the snake and that Lucifer was not allowed on Ireland as a necessary condition for Lucifer entering the Garden of Eden.

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*[page 167] Once upon a time humanity was driven out of Paradise because Lucifer had led humanity astray in Paradise. So humanity was scattered across the rest of the world. The rest of the world already existed at the time when humanity was driven out of Paradise. So this legendary, fairy-tale description distinguishes between Paradise with Lucifer in it and the rest of the earth into which humanity was driven. But Ireland is different, for it does not belong to the rest of the earth in the same sense because before Lucifer entered Paradise a likeness of it came into being upon the earth, and this likeness became Ireland.*

*So please understand this: Ireland is that portion of the earth that has no share in Lucifer, that portion to which Lucifer has no connection. The part which had to be separated off from Paradise so that an earthly likeness could arise would have prevented Lucifer from entering into Paradise. So according to this legend Ireland was seen as the separated off part of Paradise which would have prevented Lucifer from entering into Paradise. Only when Ireland had been separated off was it possible for Lucifer to enter Paradise.*

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Consider the large number of Catholic priests which Ireland has produced over the years. How can one account for that? Steiner tells us of a brotherhood in Asia Minor who knew about the special emanations from the ground of Ireland and sent people there to glean the benefit from those forces. Yet today, the Irish are known world-wide to have special qualities of heart and soul.

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*[page 169, 170] They knew that the forces rising up out of the earth through the soil of the island of Ireland work on human beings in such a way that they are little influenced towards becoming intellectual, little influenced towards becoming egoistic, and little influenced towards being able to take decisions firmly. The initiates who sent those colonists knew this very well, and they selected people whose karmic inclinations seemed to make them suitable for being exposed to the influences of the island of Ireland. Today there are still descendants in Ireland of that ancient population transplanted so long ago from Asia Minor who were to develop so as to have not even a trace of intellectuality, not a trace of reason, and not the ability to take firm decisions. On the other hand they were to develop special qualities of heart and soul.*

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Movements of people in those times were initiated by such spiritual conditions as recounted above, but those spiritual realities are not to be found discussed in any history books of today. Historians today, Steiner says, have "the kind of understanding that can be found in the street!"

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*[page 170] So when you hear historians who do not understand this — though of course they have plenty of understanding of the kind that can be found lying in the street — when you hear these historians describing those people of ancient times, you must always be aware that such colonizations were imbued with profound wisdom. They were guided and steered always with an eye to what was to take place in the future, and account was always taken of the special characteristics of the earth's evolution.*

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There is more, much more in these lectures. I have, in effect, held up some of the large nuggets of gold from the mother lodes of riches contained in this eldorado for you to stare at in wonder. Take your own pick-axe and work into these glimmering veins of richness to extract your own golden treasure to use in freedom and light.

## Footnotes

**Footnote 1:** The word Inspiration is capitalized to distinguish it from the ordinary process we know as "inspiration" — Steiner capitalizes Imagination, Inspiration, and Intuition because he means specific soul processes which are described in other places, such as Steiner's books, *The Riddle of Man* and *Riddles of the Soul*. [Return to text directly before Footnote 1]

**Footnote 2:** Here are some of several dozen books by Rudolf Steiner which I have reviewed that contain information about the level of supersensible knowledge known as Inspiration:

*The Mystery of the Trinity,*

*Fruits of Anthroposophy,*

*At Home in the Universe,*

and *Cosmosophy, Volume 1*. [Return to text directly before Footnote 2]

**Footnote 3.** To see the dates of the seven post-Atlantean Ages, check this table: <http://www.doyletics.com/7stable.htm>. [Return to text directly before Footnote 3]

**Footnote 4.** See, for example, *The Archangel Michael* series of lectures and writings by Steiner. [Return to text directly before Footnote 4]

**Footnote 5.** Such as the Order of Assassins or the Indian Order of Thugs, which operated over centuries doing such nefarious work and whose existence is doubtful today. [Return to text directly before Footnote 5]

**Footnote 6.** This example is very close to what happens in the 1990 movie *Ghost*. [Return to text directly before Footnote 6]

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