

MYSTICS  
OF THE  
RENAISSANCE



RUDOLF STEINER

AND  
THEIR RELATION TO MODERN THOUGHT  
INCLUDING  
MEISTER ECKHART, TAULER, PARACELSUS,  
JACOB BOEHME, GIORDANO BRUNO,  
AND OTHERS

BY

Ph.D. (Vienna)

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## FOREWORD

THE matter which I am laying before the public in this book formed the content of lectures which I delivered during last winter at the Theosophical Library in Berlin. I had been requested by Graf in and Graf Brockdorff to speak upon Mysticism before an audience for whom the matters thus dealt with constitute a vital question of the utmost importance. Ten years earlier I could not have ventured to fulfil such a request. Not that the realm of ideas, to which I now give expression, did not even then live actively within me. For these ideas are already fully contained in my *Philosophy of Freedom* (Berlin, 1894. Emil Felber). But to give ex-

pression to this world of ideas in such wise as I do to-day, and to make it the basis of an exposition as is done on the following pages—to do this requires something quite other than merely to be immovably convinced of the intellectual truth of these ideas. **It** demands an intimate acquaintance with this realm of ideas, such as only many years of life can give. Only now, after having enjoyed that intimacy, do I venture to speak in such wise as will be found in this book.

Anyone who does not approach my world of ideas without preconceptions is sure to discover therein contradiction after contradiction. I have quite recently (Berlin, 1900. S. Cronbach) dedicated a book upon the world conceptions of the nineteenth century to that great naturalist, Ernst Haeckel, and closed it

with a defence of his thought-world. **I**n the following expositions, I speak about the Mystics, from Master Eckhart to Angelus Silesius, with a full measure of devotion and acquiescence. Other "contradictions," which one critic or another may further count up against me, I shall not mention at all. **I**t does not surprise me to be condemned from one side as a „Mystic" and from the other as a "Materialist." When I find that the Jesuit Father Muller has solved a difficult chemical problem, and I therefore in this particular matter agree with him unreservedly, one can hardly condemn me as an adherent of Jesuitism without being reckoned a fool by those who have insight.

Whoever goes his own road, as I do, must needs allow many a misunderstanding about himself to pass. That,

however, he can put up with easily enough. For such misunderstandings are, in the main, inevitable in his eyes, when he recalls the mental type of those who misjudge him. I look back, not without humorous feelings, upon many a "critical" judgment that I have suffered in the course of my literary career. At the outset, matters went fairly well. I wrote about Goethe and his philosophy. What I said there appeared to many to be of such a nature that they could file it in their mental pigeon-holes. This they did by saying: "A work such as Rudolf Steiner's *Introduction to Goethe's Writings upon Natural Science* may, without hesitation, be described as the best that has been written upon this question."

When, later, I published an independent work, I had already grown a good bit more stupid. For now a well



meaning critic offered the advice: " Before he goes on reforming further and gives his *Philosophy of Freedom* to the world, he should be pressingly advised first to work himself through to an understanding of these two philosophers [Hume and Kant]." The critic unfortunately knows only so much as he is himself able to read in Kant and Hume; practically, therefore, he simply advises me to learn to see no more in these thinkers than he himself sees. When I have attained that, he will be satisfied with me. Then when my *Philosophy and Freedom* appeared, I was found to be as much in need of correction as the most ignorant beginner. This I received from a gentleman who probably nothing else impelled to the writing of books except that he had not understood innumerable foreign ones. He gravely informs me that I should have

noticed my mistakes if I had "made more thorough studies in psychology, logic, and the theory of knowledge"; and he enumerates forthwith the books I ought to read to become as wise as himself: "Mill, Sigwart, Wundt, Riehl, Paulsen, B. Erdmann." What amused me especially was this advice from a man who was so "impressed" with the way he "understood" Kant that he could not even imagine how any man could have read Kant and yet judge otherwise than himself. He therefore indicates to me the exact chapters in question in Kant's writings from which I may be able to obtain an understanding of Kant as deep and as thorough as his own.

I have cited here a couple of typical criticisms of my world of ideas. Though in themselves unimportant, yet they

seem to me to point, as symptoms, to facts which present themselves to-day as serious obstacles in the path of any one aiming at literary activity in regard to the higher problems of knowledge. Thus I must go on my way, indifferent, whether one man gives me the good advice to read Kant, or another hunts me as a heretic because I agree with Haeckel. And so I have also written upon Mysticism, wholly indifferent as to how a faith-fur and believing materialist may judge of me. I would only like-so that printers' ink may not be wasted wholly without need-to inform anyone who may, perchance advise me to read Haeckel's *Riddle of the Universe*, that during the last few months I have delivered about thirty lectures upon the said work.

I hope to have shown in this book that one may be a faithful adherent of

the scientific conception of the world and yet be able to seek out those paths to the Soul along which Mysticism, rightly understood, leads. I even go further and say: Only he who knows the Spirit, in the sense of true Mysticism, can attain a full understanding of the facts of Nature. But one must not confuse true Mysticism with the "pseudo-mysticism" of ill-ordered minds. How Mysticism can err, I have shown in my *Philosophy of Freedom* (page 131 *et seq.*).

RUDOLF STEINER.

BERLIN, *September, 1901.*

# MYSTICS OF THE RENAISSANCE

# Mystics of the Renaissance

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## INTRODUCTION

THERE are certain magical formulæ which operate throughout the centuries of Man's mental history in ever new ways. In Greece one such formula was regarded as an oracle of Apollo. It runs: "Know Thyself." Such sentences seem to conceal within them an unending life. One comes upon them when following the most diverse roads in mental life. The further one advances, the more one penetrates into the knowledge of things, the deeper appears the significance of these formulas. In many a moment of our brooding and thinking, they flash

out like lightning, illuminating our whole inner being. In such moments there quickens within us a feeling as if we heard the heart-beat of the evolution of mankind. How close do we not feel ourselves to personalities of the past, when the feeling comes over us, through one of their winged words, that they are revealing to us that they, too, had had such moments!

We feel ourselves then brought into intimate touch with these personalities. For instance, we learn to know Hegel intimately when, in the third volume of his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* we come across the words: "Such stuff, one may say, the abstractions that we contemplate when we allow the philosophers to quarrel and battle in our study, and make it out to be thus or so—mere verbal abstractions!

No! No! These are deeds of the world-spirit and therefore of destiny. Therein the Philosophers are nearer to the Master than are those who feed themselves with the crumbs of the spirit; they read or write the Cabinet Orders in the original at once; they are constrained to write them out along with Him. The Philosophers are the *Mystse* who, at the crisis in the inmost shrine, were there and took part." When Hegel said this, he had experienced one of those moments just spoken of. He uttered the phrases when, in the course of his remarks, he had reached the close of Greek philosophy; and through them he showed that once, like a gleam of lightning, the meaning of the Neoplatonic philosophy, of which he was just treating, had flashed upon him. In the instant of this flash, he had become intimate with minds like Plotinus



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and Proklus; and we become intimate with him when we read his words.

We become intimate, too, with that solitary thinker, the Pastor of Zschopau, M. Valentin Weigel, when we read the opening words of his little book *Know Thyself*, written in 1578: "We read in the wise men of old the useful saying, 'Know Thyself,' which, though it be right well used about worldly manners, as thus: 'regard well thyself, what thou art, seek in thine own bosom, judge thyself and lay no blame on others,' a saying, I repeat, which, though thus used of human life and manners, may well and appropriately be applied by us to the natural and supernatural knowing of the whole man; so indeed, that man shall not only consider himself and thereby remember how he should bear himself before people, but that he shall also know his own

nature, inner and outer, in spirit and in Nature; whence he cometh and whereof he is made, to what end he is ordained." So, from points of view peculiar to himself, Valentin Weigel attained to insight which in his mind summed itself up in this oracle of Apollo.

A similar path to insight and a like relation to the saying "Know Thyself" may be ascribed to a series of deep-natured thinkers, beginning with Master Eckhart (1250-1327), and ending with Angelus Silesius (1624-1677), among whom may be found also Valentin Weigel himself.

All these thinkers have in common a strong sense of the fact that in man's knowing of himself there rises a sun which illuminates something very different from the mere accidental, separated personality of the beholder. 'What Spinoza became conscious of in the ethereal

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heights of pure thought, –viz., that "the human soul possesses an adequate knowledge of the Eternal and Infinite Being of God," –that same consciousness lived in them as immediate feeling; and self-knowledge was to them the path leading to this Eternal and Infinite Being. **It** was clear to them that self-knowledge in its true form enriched man with a new sense, which unlocked for him a world standing in relation to the world accessible to him without this new sense as does the world of one possessing physical sight to that of a blind man.

It would be difficult to find a better description of the import of this new sense than the one given by J. G. Fichte in his Berlin Lectures (1813):

"Imagine a world of men born blind, to whom all objects and their relations are known only through the sense of

touch. Go amongst them and speak to them of colours and other relations, which are rendered visible only through light. Either you are talking to them of nothing,-and if they say this, it is the luckier, for thus you will soon see your mistake, and, if you cannot open their eyes, cease your useless talking,-or, for some reason or other, they *will* insist upon giving some meaning or other to what you say; then they can only interpret it in relation to what they know by touch. They will seek to feel, they will imagine they do feel light and colour, and the other incidents of visibility, they will invent something for themselves, deceive themselves with something within the world of touch, which they will call colour. Then they will misunderstand, distort, and misinterpret it."

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The same thing applies to what the thinkers we are speaking of sought after. They beheld a new sense opening in self-knowledge, and this sense yielded, according to their experiences, views of things which are simply non-existent for one who does not see in self-knowledge what distinguishes it from all other kinds of knowing. One in whom this new sense has not been opened, believes that self-knowing, or self-perception, is the same thing as perception through the outer senses, or through any other means acting from without. He thinks: "Knowing is knowing, perceiving is perceiving." Only in the one case the object is something lying in the world outside, in the other this object is his own soul. He finds words merely, or at best, abstract thoughts, in that which for those who see more deeply is the very foundation of

their inner life; namely, in the proposition: that in every other kind of knowing or perception we have the object perceived outside of ourselves, while in self-knowledge or self-perception we stand within that object; that we see every other object coming to us already complete and finished off, while in ourselves we, as actors and creators, are weaving that which we observe within us. This may appear to be nothing but a merely verbal explanation, perhaps even a triviality; it may appear, on the other hand, as a higher light which illuminates every other cognition. One to whom it appears in the first way, is in the position of a blind man, to whom one says: there is a glittering object. He hears the words, but for him the glitter is not there. He might unite in himself the whole sum of knowledge of his time; but if he

does not feel and realise the significance of self-knowledge, then it is all, in the higher sense, a blind knowledge.

The world, outside of and independent of us, exists for us by communicating itself to our consciousness. What is thus made known must needs be expressed in the language peculiar to ourselves. A book, the contents of which were offered in a language unknown to us, would for us be without meaning. Similarly, the world would be meaningless for us did it not speak to us in our own tongue; and the same language which reaches us from things, we also hear from within ourselves. But in that case, it is we ourselves who speak. The really important point is that we should correctly apprehend the transposition which occurs when we close our perception against external things and listen only to that which then

speaks from within. But to do this needs this new sense. If it has not been awakened, we believe that in what is thus told us about ourselves we are hearing only about something external to us; we fancy that somewhere there is hidden something which is speaking to us in the same way as external things speak. But if we possess this new sense, then we know that these perceptions differ essentially from those relating to external things. Then we realise that this new sense does not leave what it perceives outside of itself, as the eye leaves the object it sees; but that it can take up its object wholly into itself, leaving no remainder. If I see a thing, that thing remains outside of me; if I perceive myself, then I myself enter into my perception. Whoever seeks for something more of himself than what is perceived,



shows thereby that for him the real content in the perception has not come to light. Johannes Tauler (1300-1361), has expressed this truth in the apt words: "If I were a king and knew it not, then should I be no king. If I do not shine forth for myself in my own self-perception, then for myself I do not exist. But if for myself I do shine out, then I possess myself also in my perception, in my own most deeply original being. There remains no residue of myself left outside of my perception."

J. G. Fichte, in the following words, vigorously points to the difference between self-perception and every other kind of perception: "The majority of men could be more easily brought to believe themselves a lump of lava in the moon than an 'ego.' Whoever is not at one with himself as to this, under-

stands no thorough-going philosophy and has need of none. Nature, whose machine he is, will guide him in all the things he has to do without any sort of added help from him. For philosophising, self-reliance is needed, and this one can only give to oneself. We ought not to want to see without the eye; but also we ought not to maintain that it is the eye which sees."

Thus the perception of oneself is also the awakening of oneself. In our cognition we combine the being of things with our own being. The communications, which things make to us in our own language, become members of our own selves. An object in front of me is not separated from me, once I have known it. What I am able to receive from it becomes part and parcel of my own being. If, now, I awaken my own

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self, if I become aware of the content of my own inner being, then I also awaken to a higher mode of being, that which from without I have made part of my own being. The light that falls upon me at my awakening falls also upon whatever I have made my own from the things of the outside world. A light springs up within me and illumines me, and with me all that I have cognised of the world. Whatever I might know would remain blind knowledge, did not this light fall upon it. I might search the world through and through with my perception; still the world would not be that which in me it must become, unless that perception were awakened in me to a higher mode of being.

That which I add to things through this awakening is not a new idea, is not an enrichment of the content of my

knowing; it is an uplifting of the knowledge, of the cognition, to a higher level, where everything is suffused with a new glory. So long as I do not raise my consciousness to this level, all knowledge continues to be for me, in the higher sense, valueless. The things are there without my presence. They have their being in themselves. What possible meaning could there be in my linking with their being, which they have outside and apart from me, another spiritual existence in addition, which repeats the things over again within me? If only a mere repetition of things were involved, it would be senseless to carry it out. But, really, a mere repetition is only involved so long as I have not awakened, along with my own self, the mental content of these things upon a higher level. When this occurs, then I have not merely repeated within

myself the being of things, but I have brought it to a new birth on a higher level. With the awakening of my self, there is accomplished a spiritual re-birth of the things of the world.

What the things reveal in this re-birth did not previously belong to them. There, without, stands the tree. I take it up into my consciousness. I throw my inner light upon that which I have thus conceived. The tree becomes in me more than it is outside. That in it which finds entrance through the gate of the senses is taken up into a conscious content. An ideal replica of the tree is within me, and that has infinitely more to say about the tree than what the tree itself, outside, can tell me. Then, for the first time there shines out from within me, towards the tree, what the tree is. The tree is now no longer the isolated being that it is out

there in space. It becomes a link in the entire conscious world that lives in me. It links its content with other ideas that are in me. **I**t becomes a member of the whole world of ideas that embraces the vegetable kingdom; it takes its place, further, in the series of all that lives.

Another example: I throw a stone in a horizontal direction away from me. It moves in a curved line and after some time falls to the ground. I see it in successive moments of time in different places. Through observation and reflection I acquire the following: During its motion the stone is subject to different influences. **I**f it were subject only to the influence of the impulse which I imparted to it, it would go on flying for ever in a straight line, without altering its velocity. But now the earth exerts an

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influence upon it. **It** attracts the stone towards itself. If, instead of throwing the stone, I had simply let it go, it would have fallen vertically to earth; and its velocity in doing so would have constantly increased. From the mutual interaction of these two influences arises that which I actually see.

Let us assume that I could not in thought separate the two influences, and from this orderly combination put together again in thought what I see: in that case, the matter would end with the actual happening. **It** would be mentally a blind staring at what happened; a perception of the successive positions which the stone occupies. But in actual fact, matters do *not* stop there. The whole occurrence takes place twice. Once outside, and then my eye sees it; then my mind causes the whole happening to

repeat itself again, in a mental or conscious manner. My inner sense must be directed upon the mental occurrence, which my eye does not see, and then it becomes clear to that sense that I, by my own inner power, awaken that occurrence as a mental one.

Again, another sentence of J. G. Fichte's may be quoted which brings this fact clearly before the mind. "Thus the new sense is the sense for the spirit; that for which there exists only spirit and absolutely nothing else, and for which also the 'other,' the given being, assumes the form of spirit and transforms itself into spirit, for which therefore *being* in its own proper form has actually disappeared. . . . There has been the faculty of seeing with this sense ever since men have existed, and all that is great and excellent in the



world, which alone upholds humanity, originates in what has been seen by means of this sense. **It** is, however, not the case that this sense has been perceived or known in its difference and its contrast with that other, ordinary sense. The impressions of the two senses melted into one another, life fell apart into these two halves without a bond of union."

The bond of union is created by the fact that the inner sense grasps in its spirituality the spiritual element which it awakens in its intercourse with the outer world. That which we take up into our consciousness from outside things thereby ceases to appear as a mere meaningless repetition. **It** appears as something new over against that which only external perception can give. The simple occurrence of throwing the stone, and my perception thereof, appear in a

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higher light when I make clear to myself the kind of task which my inner sense has to perform in regard to the whole thing. In order to fit together in thought the two influences and their modes of action, an amount of mental content is needed which I must already have acquired when I cognise the flying stone. I therefore apply a spiritual content already stored up within me to something that confronts me in the external world. And this occurrence in the external world fits itself into the spiritual content already present. **It** reveals itself in its own special individuality as an expression of this content.

Through the understanding of my inner sense, there is thus disclosed to me the nature of the relation that obtains between the content of this sense and the things of the external

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world. Fichte would say that without the understanding of this sense, the world falls apart for me into two halves: into things outside of me, and into pictures of these things within me. The two halves become united when the inner self understands itself and consequently recognises clearly what sort of illumination it throws upon things in the cognitive process. And Fichte could also venture to say that this inner sense sees only Spirit. For it perceives how the Spirit enlightens the sense-world by making it part and parcel of the spiritual world. The inner sense causes the outer sense-world to arise within itself as a spiritual being on a higher level. An external object is completely known when there is no part of it which has not thus undergone a spiritual re-birth. Thus every external object fits itself into a

spiritual content, which, when it has been grasped by the inner sense, shares the destiny of self-knowledge. The spiritual content, which belongs to an object through its illumination from within, merges itself wholly, like the very self, into the world of ideas, leaving no remainder behind.

These developments contain nothing which is susceptible or even in need of logical proof. They are nothing but the results of inner experience. Whoever calls into question this content, shows only that he is lacking in this inner experience. It is impossible to dispute with him; as little could one discuss colour with a blind man.

**I**t must not, however, be contended that this inner experience is made possible only through the special endowment of a few chosen people. It is a common

property. Every one can enter upon the path to this experience who does not of his own will shut himself against it. This closing up of oneself against it, is, however, common enough. And in dealing with objections raised in this direction, one always has the feeling that it is not so much a matter of people being unable to attain this inner experience, as of their having hopelessly blocked the entrance to it with all kinds of logical spiders' webs. It is almost as if some one looking through a telescope and discovering a new planet should yet deny its existence because his calculations have shown that there can be no planet in that position.

But with all this there is still in most people the clearly marked feeling that all that really lies in the being of things cannot be completely given in what the

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outer senses and the analysing understanding can cognise. They then believe that the remainder so left over must be just as much in the external world as are the things of our perceptions themselves. They think that there must be something which remains unknown to cognition. What they ought to attain by again perceiving with the inner sense, on a higher plane, the very object which they have already cognised and grasped with the understanding, -this they transfer as something inaccessible and unknown into the external world. Then they talk of the limits of knowledge which prevent our reaching the "thing-in-itself." They talk of the unknown "being" of things. That this very "being" of things shines out when the inner sense lets its light fall upon the things, is what they will not recognise. The famous "Ignora-

bimus" speech of the scientist, Du Bois-Reymond, in the year 1876, furnished a particularly blatant example of this error. We are supposed to be able to get in every direction only so far as to be able to see in all natural processes the manifestations of "matter." What "matter" itself is, we are supposed to be unable to know. Du Bois-Reymond contends that we shall never succeed in penetrating to wherever it is that "matter" leads its ghostly life in space. The reason why we cannot get there lies, however, in the fact that there is nothing whatsoever to be looked for there. Whoever speaks like Du Bois-Reymond must have a feeling that the knowledge of Nature yields results which point to a something further and other which Nature-knowledge itself cannot give. But he refuses to follow the road,- the road

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of inner experience, which leads to this other. Therefore he stands at a complete loss before the question of "matter" as before a dark riddle. In him who treads the path of inner experience, objects attain to a new birth; and that in them which remains unknown to outer experience then shines forth.

In such wise the inner being of man obtains light not only as regards itself but also as regards external things. From this point of view an endless perspective opens out before man's knowledge. Within him shines a light whose illumination is not restricted to that which is within him. It is a sun which lights up all reality at once. Something makes its appearance in us which links us with the whole world. No longer are we simply isolated, chance human beings, no longer this or that individual. The



entire world reveals itself in us. **It** unveils to us its own coherence; and it unveils to us how we ourselves as individuals are bound up with it. From out of self-knowledge is born knowledge of the world. And our own limited individuality merges itself spiritually into the great interconnected world-whole, because in us something has come to life that reaches out beyond this individuality, that embraces along with it everything of which this individuality forms a part.

Thinking which does not block up its own road to inner experience with logical preconceptions always comes, in the long run, to a recognition of the entity that rules in us and connects us with the entire world, because through this entity we overcome the opposition of "inner" and "outer" in regard to man. Paul

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Asmus, the keen-sighted philosopher, who died young, expressed himself as follows about this position (*cp.* his book *Das Ich und das Ding an Sich*, p. 14 *et seq.*):- "Let us make it clear by an example: imagine a piece of sugar; it is square, sweet, impenetrable, etc., etc., these are one and all qualities which we understand; one thing, however, hovers before us as something totally different, that we do not understand, that is so different from ourselves that we cannot penetrate into it without losing ourselves; from the mere surface of which thought starts back afraid. This one thing is the unknown bearer of all these qualities; the thing-in-itself, which constitutes the inmost self of the object. Thus Hegel rightly says that the entire content of our perception is related as mere accident to this obscure subject, while we,

without penetrating into its depths, merely attach determinations to what it is in itself,- which ultimately, since we do not know the thing itself, remain merely subjective and have no objective value. Conceptual thought, on the other hand, has no such unknowable subject, whose determinations might be mere accidents, but the objective subject falls within the concept. If I cognise anything, then it is present in its entire fulness in my conception; I am at home in the inmost shrine of its being, not because it has no proper being-in-itself of its own, but because it compels me to re-think its concept, in virtue of that necessity of the concept which hovers over us both and appears subjectively in me and objectively in the concept itself. Through this re-thinking there reveals itself to us at the same time, as

Hegel says,- just as this is our own subjective activity—the true nature of the object." So can speak only a man who is able to illuminate the life of thought with the light of inner experience.

In my *Philosophy of Freedom* (Berlin, 1894, Verlag Emil Felber), starting from other points of view, I have also pointed out the root-fact of the inner life (p. 46): "It is therefore unquestionable: in our thinking we hold the world-process by one corner, where we must be present, if it is to come about at all. And that is just the very thing we are here concerned with. That is just the reason why things seem to confront me so mysteriously: that I am so without any share in their coming into existence. I simply find them there; in thinking, however, I know how it is done. Hence one can find no more original starting

point for a consideration of the world-process than that of thought."

For one who looks thus upon the inner life of man, it is also obvious what is the meaning of human cognition within the whole world-process. **It** is not a mere empty accompaniment to the rest of the world happenings. It would be such if it represented merely an ideal repetition of what is outwardly present. But in cognition something is accomplished which accomplishes itself nowhere in the outer world: the world-process sets before itself its own spiritual being. The world-process would be to all eternity a mere half-thing, if it did not attain to this confrontation. Therewithal man's inner experience finds its place in the objective world-process; and without it that process would be incomplete.

**It** is 'apparent that only the life which

is ruled by the inner sense, man's highest spiritual life in its most proper sense,-it is this life only which can thus raise man above himself. For only in this life does the being of things unveil itself before itself. The matter lies quite differently in regard to the lower perceptive power. For instance, the eye which meditates the seeing of an object is the theatre of a process which, in contrast to the inner life, is exactly like any other external process. My organs are members of the spacial world like other things, and their perceptions are processes in time like any others. Further, their being only appears when they are sunk into the inner life. I thus live a double life; the life of an object among other objects, which lives within its own embodiment and perceives through its organs what lies outside this embodi-

ment; and above this life a higher life, that knows no such inside and outside, that extends, stretching and bridging over both the outside world and itself. I shall therefore be forced to say: at one time I am an individual, a limited "self"; at another time I am a general, universal "Self." This, too, Paul Asmus has expressed in excellent words (*cp.* his book: *Die indogermanischen Religionen in den Hauptpunkten. ihrer Entwicklung*, p. 29 of Vol. 1.):

"The activity of merging ourselves in something else, is what we call 'thinking'; in thinking, the ego has fulfilled its concept, it has given itself up as a single thing; therefore, in thinking do we find ourselves in a sphere which is alike for all, for the principle of separateness which is involved in the relation of our 'self' to that which is other than

itself has vanished in the activity of the self-cancelling of the single 'self,' and there remains then only the='Selfhood' common to all"

Spinoza has exactly the same thing in view when he describes, as the highest activity of knowing, that which" advances from an adequate conception of the real nature of some of the attributes of God to an adequate knowledge of the nature of things." This advancing is no other than the illumination of things with the light of inner experience. Spinoza describes in glowing colours the life in this inner experience: "The highest virtue of the soul is to know God, or to obtain insight into things in the third-the highest - mode of knowing. This virtue is the greater, the more the soul knows things by this method of knowing; thus he who can grasp things in this mode of knowing



attains the highest human perfection and consequently becomes filled with the highest joy, accompanied, moreover, by the conceptions of himself and of virtue. Thus there arises from this mode of knowing the highest peace of soul that is possible."

He who knows things in this way, transforms himself within himself; for his single separated "self" becomes at such moments absorbed by the universal "Self"; all beings appear not to a single limited individual in subordinated importance, they appear to "themselves." On this level there remains no difference between Plato and me; what separated us belongs to a lower level of cognition. We are separated only as individuals; the individual which works within us is one and the same. But about this fact it is impossible to argue

with one who has no experience of it. He will everlastingly emphasise: Plato and you are two. That this duality, that all multiplicity, is reborn as unity in the outbursting life of the highest level of knowledge: that cannot be proved, that must be experienced. Paradoxical as it may sound, it is the truth: the idea which Plato conceived and the like idea which I conceive are not two ideas. It is one and the same idea. And there are not two ideas: one in Plato's head and one in mine; but in the higher sense Plato's head and mine interpenetrate each other; all heads interpenetrate which grasp one and the same idea; and this idea is only once there as a single idea. It is there; and the heads all go to one and the same place in order to have this idea in them.

The transformation that is brought

about in the whole being of man when he learns to see things thus, is indicated in beautiful words by the Hindu poem, the Bhagavad-Gita, about which Wilhelm von Humboldt said that he was thankful to the fate which had allowed him to live long enough to become acquainted with this work. In this poem, the inner light declares: "An eternal ray from myself, having attained a distinct existence in the world of personal life, draws around itself the five senses and the individual soul, which belong to nature. When the spirit, shining from above, embodies itself in space and time, or when it quits embodiment, it seizes upon things and carries them away with it, as the zephyr seizes the perfumes of the flowers and bears them away with it. The inner light rules the ear, touch, taste and smell, as also the emotions:

it knits together the link between itself and the objects of the senses. The ignorant know not when the inner light shines forth or is extinguished, nor when it is married to objects; only he who partakes of the inner light can know thereof."

So strongly does the Bhagavad-Gita insist upon the transformation of the man, that it says of the wise man that he can no longer err, no longer sin. If, apparently, he errs or sins, then he must illuminate his thoughts or his actions with a light wherein that no longer appears as error or as sin which to the ordinary consciousness appears as such. "He who has raised himself and whose knowledge is of the purest kind, he kills not, nor does he stain himself, even though he should have slain another." This points only to the same basic mood

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of the soul flowing from the highest knowledge, of which Spinoza, after having described it in his *Ethics*, breaks out into the passionate words: "Here is concluded that which I aimed to bring forward in regard to the power of the soul over its affections or in regard to the freedom of the soul. Hence it is clear how very greatly the wise man is superior to the ignorant, and how much more powerful than he who is ruled only by his lusts. For the ignorant is not merely driven hither and thither by external causes in many ways and never attains to the true peace of soul, but he also lives in ignorance of himself, of God and of things, and when his suffering ceases, his existence ceases also; while on the other hand, the wise man, as such, feels hardly any disturbance in his spirit and ever enjoys the true peace of the soul.

Even if the road which I have outlined as leading thereto appears very difficult, still it can be found. And well may it be difficult, because it is so seldom found. For how could it be possible, if salvation lay close at hand and could be found without great trouble, that it should be neglected by almost all? Yet all that is noble is as difficult as it is rare."

Goethe has indicated in monumental form the point of view of the highest knowledge in the words: "If I know my relation to myself and to the outer world, I call it truth. And thus every one can have his own truth, and yet it is always one and the same." Each has his own truth: because each is an individual, separate being, beside and along with others. These other beings act upon him through his organs. From the individual standpoint at which he

is placed, and according to the constitution of his power of perception, he builds up his own truth for himself in intercourse with the things around him. He acquires his relation to things. If, then, he enters into self-knowledge, if he learns to know his relation to himself, then his special separate truth is merged in the universal Truth; and this universal Truth is in all the same.

The understanding of the raising of the individual, of the single self, into the Universal Self in the personality, is regarded by deeper natures as the secret which reveals itself in the inmost heart of man as the root-mystery of life. And Goethe has found an apt expression for this: "And so long as thou hast not that, this: Die and Become! Then thou art but a melancholy guest upon this dark earth."

Not a mere repetition in thought, but a real part of the world-process, is that which goes on in man's inner life. The world would not be what it is if the factor belonging thereto in the human soul did not play its part. And if one calls the highest which is attainable by man the Divine, then one must say that this Divine is not present as something external, to be repeated pictorially in the human mind, but that this Divine is awakened in man. Angelus Silesius has found the right words for this: "I know that without me God can live no instant; if I become nothing, He must of necessity give up the ghost." "Without me God may make no single smallest worm: if I do not sustain it with Him, then it must straightway perish." Only he can make such an assertion who presupposes that in man something



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comes to light, without which external being cannot exist. **If** everything pertaining to the "worm" were there present without man, then one could not possibly say that it must perish if man did not sustain it.

The innermost kernel of the world comes to life as spiritual content in self-knowledge. The experience of self-knowledge means for man working and weaving within the kernel of the world. He who is permeated with self-knowledge naturally carries out his own action in the light of self-knowledge. Human action is-~~in~~ general-determined by motives. Robert Hamerling, the poet-philosopher, has rightly said (*Atomistik des Willens*, p. 213):

"A man can indeed do what he wills - but he cannot will whatever he pleases, because his will is determined

by motives. He cannot will whatever he pleases? Look again at these words more closely. Is there any sensible meaning in them? Freedom of the will ought then to consist in being able to will something without reason, without motive. But what does willing mean other than the 'having a reason' for preferring to do or endeavour to attain this, rather than that? To will something without reason, without motive, would mean to will something 'without willing it.' The concept of motive is inseparably bound up with that of willing. Without a definite motive the will is an empty potentiality: only through a motive does it become active and real. **It** is therefore quite correct that man's will is in so far not free as its direction is always determined by the strongest motive."

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For all action that is not accomplished in the light of self-knowledge, the motive, the reason for action, must needs be felt as a constraint. But the matter is otherwise when the reason or motive is taken up into self-knowledge. Then this reason becomes a part of the self. The willing is no longer determined; it determines itself. The law-abidingness, the motives of willing, now no longer rule over the one who wills, but are one and the same with this willing. To illuminate the laws of one's action with the light of self-observation means to overcome all constraint of motive. By so doing, will transfers itself into the realm of freedom.

It is not all human action which bears the marks of freedom. Only such action is free action which in its every part is lighted up with the glow of self-observa-

tion. And because self-observation raises the individual self up to the Universal Self, therefore free action is that which flows from the Universal Self. The old controversy whether man's will is free or subject to a universal law, to an unalterable necessity, is a problem wrongly stated. All action is bound which is done by a man as an individual; all action free which is accomplished after his spiritual re-birth. Man, therefore, is not, in general, either free or bound. He is both the one and the other. He is bound before his re-birth; and he can become free through this re-birth. The individual upward development of man consists in the transformation of unfree willing into will possessing the character of freedom. The man who has realised the law-abidingness of his action as his own, has overcome the constraint of this law-

abidingness and therewith of un-freedom. Freedom is not from the outset a fact of human existence, but a goal thereof.

With the attainment of free action, man resolves a contradiction between the world and himself. His own deeds become deeds of universal being. He feels himself in the fullest harmony with this universal being. He feels every discord between himself and another as the outcome of a not yet fully awakened self. But such is the fate of the self, that only in its separation from the whole can it find its contact with this whole. Man would not be man if he were not shut off as an individual self from everything else; but also he is not man in the highest sense if he does not, as such a shut-off and isolated self, widen himself out again into the Universal Self. It belongs through and through to

## INTRODUCTION

the nature of man that it should overcome an inherent contradiction which has lain therein from the beginning.

Anyone who regards spirit as, in the main, logical understanding, may well feel his blood run cold at the idea that objects should be supposed to undergo their re-birth in spirit. He will compare the fresh, living flower, outside there in its fulness of colour, with the cold, faded, schematic thought of the flower. He will feel himself particularly ill at ease with the conception that the man who draws his motives from the solitude of his own self-consciousness is more free than the original, naive personality which acts from its immediate impulses, from the fulness of its own nature. To one who sees only one-sided logic, another man who sinks himself into his own inner being will appear like a mere walking

scheme of concepts, like a mere ghost in contrast with the man who remains in his own natural individuality.

Such objections to the re-birth of things in spirit are especially to be heard from those whose power of perception fails in the presence of things with a purely spiritual content; although they are well provided with healthy organs of sense-perception and with impulses and passions full of life. As soon as they are called upon to perceive the purely spiritual, the power to do so fails them; they can deal only with mere conceptual husks, when even they are not limited to empty words. They remain, therefore, in what concerns spiritual content, men of "dry, abstract understanding." But the man who in things purely spiritual possesses a gift of perception like that in things of the senses, finds life assuredly not the

poorer when he has enriched it with its spiritual content. If I look out upon a flower, why should its rich colours lose aught whatever of their freshness, because not only does my eye see the colours, but my inner sense also perceives the spiritual being of the flower? Why should the life of my personality become poorer, because I do not follow my passions and impulses in spiritual blindness, but illuminate them throughout with the light of higher knowledge? Not poorer, but fuller, richer, is that life which is given back again in the spirit.



## MEISTER ECKHART

THE world of Meister Eckhart's conceptions is aglow through and through with the feeling that things become re-born as higher entities in the spirit of man. Like the greatest Christian theologian of the Middle Ages, St. Thomas Aquinas, who lived from 1225 till 1274, Meister Eckhart belonged to the Dominican Order. Eckhart was an unqualified admirer of St. Thomas; and this will seem the more intelligible when we fix our gaze upon Eckhart's whole manner of conceiving things. He believed himself to be as completely in harmony with the teachings of the Christian Church as he assumed a like agreement on the part

of St. Thomas. Eckhart had neither the desire to take aught away from the content of Christianity, nor the wish to add anything to it; but he desired to bring forward this content anew in his own way. It forms no part of the spiritual needs of a personality such as he was to set up new truths of this or the other kind in the place of old ones. Such a personality has grown completely intertwined with the content which it has received from tradition; but it craves to give to this content a new form, a new life.

Eckhart desired, without doubt, to remain an orthodox Christian. The Christian truths were his own; only he desired to regard these truths in another way from that, for instance, in which St. Thomas Aquinas had done. St. Thomas accepted two sources of know-

ledge: Revelation, in matters of faith, and Reason, in those of research. Reason recognises the laws of things, that is, the spiritual in nature. Reason can raise itself above nature and grasp in the spirit from one side the Divine Being underlying nature. But it does not attain in this way to merging itself in the full being of God. A still higher truth-content must come to meet it. That is given in the Holy Scripture, which reveals what man cannot attain to through himself. The truth-content of the Scripture must be accepted by man; Reason can defend it, Reason can seek to understand it as well as possible through its powers of knowing; but never can Reason engender that truth from within the spirit of man. Not what the spirit perceives is the highest truth, but what has come to this spirit from without.

St. Augustine declares himself unable to find within himself the source for that which he should believe. He says: "I would not believe in the Gospel, did not the authority of the Catholic Church move me thereto." That is in the same spirit as the Evangelist, who points to the external testimony: "**That...** which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life; . . . that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us." But Meister Eckhart would rather impress upon man the words of Christ: "**It** is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you"; and he explains these words by saying: "Just as if he had said: Ye have set too much joy

upon my present appearance, therefore the full joy of the Holy Ghost cannot come to you."

Eckhart thinks that he is speaking of no God other than that God of whom Augustine, and the Evangelist, and Thomas, speak, and yet this testimony as to God is not his testimony, their witness is not his. "Some people want to see God with the same eyes they see a cow withal, and want to love God as they would love a cow. So they love God for the sake of outer riches and inner comfort; but such folk do not rightly love **God**.... Simple folk fancy they should behold God as though He stood there and they here. But it is not so. God and I are one in the act of knowing (*im Erkennen*)," What underlies such expressions in Eckhart's mouth is nothing else than the experience

of the inner sense; and this experience shows him things in a higher light. He therefore believes himself to have no need of an external light in order to attain to the highest insight: "A Master says: God became man, whereby the whole human race is uplifted and made worthy. Thereof may we be glad that Christ our brother of His own strength rose above all the choirs of angels and sitteth at the right hand of the Father. That Master spake well; but, in truth, I would give little for it. What would it help me, had I a brother who was a rich man, and I therewithal a poor man? What would it help me, had I a brother who was a wise man, and I were a fool? . . . The Heavenly Father begetteth His Only-Begotten Son in Himself and in me. Wherefore in Himself and in me? I am one with Him; and

He has no power to shut me out. In the self-same work, the Holy Ghost receives its being and proceeds from me, as from God. Wherefore? I am in God, and if the Holy Ghost takes not its being from me, neither does it take it from God. In no wise am I shut out."

When Eckhart recalls the saying of St. Paul: "Put ye on Jesus Christ," he means to imply in this saying the meaning: Sink yourselves into yourselves, dive down into self-contemplation: and from out the depths of your being, God will shine forth to meet you; He illumines all things for you; you have found Him within you; you have become united with God's Being. "God became man, that I might become God."

In his booklet upon *Loneliness*, Eckhart expresses himself as follows upon the relation of the outer perception to the

inner: "Here thou must know that the Masters say that in every man there are two kinds of man: the one is called the outer man, and yet he acts through the power of the soul. The other man is called the inner man, that is, that which is within the man. Now thou must know that every man who loveth God maketh no more use of the powers of the soul in the outer man than so far as the five senses absolutely require; and that which is within turns not itself to the five senses, save in so far as it is the guide and conductor of the five senses, and shepherds them, so that they follow not after their craving to bestiality." One who speaks in such wise of the inner man can no longer direct his gaze up on a Being of things lying outside himself; for he sees clearly that from no kind or species of the outer world can this Being come to him.



An objector might urge: What can it matter to the things of the outer world, what you add to them out of your own mind? Do but rely upon your own senses. They alone give you information of the outer world. Do not adulterate, by a mental addition, what your senses give you in purity, without admixture, as the image of the outer world. Your eye tells you what colour is; what your mind knows about colour, of that there is nothing whatever in colour itself. To this, from Meister Eckhart's standpoint, the answer would have to be: The senses are a physical apparatus; therefore what they have to tell us about objects can concern only that which is physical in the objects. And this physical factor in the objects communicates itself to me in such wise that in myself a physical process is set going.

Colour, as a physical process of the outer world, sets up a physical process in my eye and brain. Thereby I perceive colour. But in this manner I can perceive of colour only so much as is physical, sensuous. Sense-perception cuts out everything non-sensuous from objects. Objects are thus by sense-perception stripped of everything about them which is non-sensuous. If I then advance to the spiritual, the ideal content, I in fact only reinstate in the objects what sense-perception has shut out therefrom. Thus sense-perception does not exhibit to me the deepest Being of objects, it rather separates me from that being. But the spiritual, the ideal conception, seizing upon them again, unites me with that being. It shows me that objects are inwardly of exactly the same spiritual (*geistigen*) nature as I myself.

The barrier between myself and the outer world falls through this spiritual conception of things. I am separated from the external world in so far as I am a thing of the senses among other things of the senses. Colour and my eye are two different entities. My brain and a plant are two different things. But the ideal content of the plant and of colour belong together with the ideal content of my brain and eye alike to a single ideal entity.

This way of looking at things must not be confused with the very widespread anthropomorphising conception of the world, which imagines that it grasps the objects of the outer world by ascribing to them qualities of a physical nature, which are supposed to resemble the qualities of the human soul. This view asserts: When we meet another human

being, we perceive in him only sensuous characteristics. I cannot see into my fellow-man's inner life. I infer from what I see and hear of him, his inner life, his soul. Thus the soul is never anything which I can directly perceive; I perceive a soul only within myself. My thoughts, my imaginations, my feelings, no man sees. Now just as I have such an inner life, alongside of the life which can be outwardly perceived, so, too, all other beings must have such an inner life.

Thus concludes one who occupies the standpoint. of the anthropomorphising conception of the world. What I perceive externally in the plant, must equally be the outer side of something inward, of a soul, which I must add in my imagination to what I actually perceive. And since for me there exists but one single inner

world, namely, my own, therefore I can conceive of the inner world of other beings only as resembling my own inner world. Along this line of argument one comes to a sort of universal ensouling of all nature (Pan-psychism).

This view depends, however, on a failure to recognise what the awakened inner sense really gives us. The spiritual (*geistig*) content of an external object, which reveals itself to me in my inner self, is not anything added in or by thought to the outer perception. **It** is just as little this as is the spirit of another man. I perceive this spiritual content through the inner sense just in the same way as I perceive its physical content through the external senses. And what I call my inner life in the above sense (*i.e.*, thoughts, feelings, etc.), is not at all in the higher sense, my spirit (*Geist*).

This so-called inner life is only the outcome of purely sensuous processes, and belongs to me only as a purely individual personality, which is nothing more than the result of its physical organisation. **If** I transfer this inner life to outer things, I am, as a matter of fact, thinking in the air.

My personal soul-life, my thoughts, memories, and feelings, are in me, because I am a nature-being organised in such and such a way, with a perfectly definite sense-apparatus, with a perfectly definite nervous system. I have no right to transfer this my human soul to other things. I should only be entitled to do so if I happened to find anywhere a similarly organised nervous system. But my individual soul is not the highest spiritual element in me. This highest spiritual element must first be awakened

through the inner sense; and this awakened spiritual element in me is also one and the same with the spiritual element in all things. The plant appears immediately in its own proper spirituality to this spiritual element,-I have no need to endow it with a spirituality like unto my own.

All talk about the unknown" thing-in-itself" loses any kind of meaning with this conception of the world; for it is just that very "thing-in-itself" which reveals itself to the inner sense. All such talk originates simply in the fact that those who talk thus are unable to recognise in the spiritual contents of their own inner being the "things-in-themselves." They think that they know in their own inner selves mere shadows and schemes without being,-"mere concepts and ideas" of things. But as

they still have a sort of premonition of the "thing-in-itself," they therefore believe that this "thing-in-itself" is concealing itself, and that there are limits set to man's power of knowing. One cannot prove to such as are entangled in this belief, that they must grasp the "thing-in-itself" in their own inner being, for even if one were to put it before them, they would still never recognise or admit this "thing-in-itself." But it is just this recognition with which we are concerned.

All that Meister Eckhart says is saturated with this recognition. "Of this take a comparison: A door opens and shuts upon a hinge. If, now, I compare the outer plank of this door to the outer man, I must then compare the hinge to the inner man. . . . Now, when the door opens and shuts, the outer plank moves to and fro, while yet the hinge



remains constantly immovable and is in no way changed thereby. **In** like manner it is here also." As an individual sense-being, I can investigate things in all directions—the door opens and shuts,—if I do not spiritually give birth within me to the perceptions of the senses, then do I know nothing of their nature—the hinge does not move!

The illumination brought about through the inner sense is, according to Eckhart's view, the entrance of God into the soul. The light of knowledge which flames up through this entrance, he calls the "little spark of the soul." The point in man's inner being at which this "spark" flames up is "so pure, so lofty, and so noble in itself, that no creature can be therein, but only God alone dwells therein with His purely Divine Nature." Whosoever has kindled this "spark" in

himself, no longer sees only as sees the ordinary man with his outer senses, and with his logical understanding which orders and classifies the impressions of the senses, but he sees how things are in themselves. The outer senses and the classifying understanding separate the individual man from other things; they make of him an individual in space and time, who also perceives the other things in space and time. The man illuminated by the "spark" ceases to be a single separated being. He annihilates his separateness. All that brings about the difference between himself and things ceases to be. That he, as a single being, is that which perceives, no longer comes into consideration. Things and he himself are no longer separated. Things, and with them, God, see themselves in him. "This spark is in very deed God,

IN that it is a single oneness and bears within it the imagery of all creatures, image without image, and image upon Image."

Eckhart proclaims in the most magnificent words the extinction of the isolated being: "It is therefore to be known, that according to things it is one and the same to know God and to be known by God. Therein do we know God and see, that He makes us to see and to know. And as the air, which enlighteneth, is nothing other than what it enlightens; for the air giveth light, because it is enlightened; even so do we know that we are known, and that He maketh us to know Himself."

On this foundation Meister Eckhart builds up his relation to God. It is a purely spiritual one, and cannot be modelled according to any image bor-

rowed from human individual experience. Not as one separated individual loves another can God love his creation: not as an architect builds a house can God have created it. All such thoughts vanish before the inner vision. It belongs to God's very being that He should love the world. A God who could love or not love at pleasure, is imagined according to the likeness of the individual man. "I speak in good truth and in eternal truth and in everlasting truth, that God must needs ever pour Himself forth in every man who has reached down to his true root to the utmost of possibility, so wholly and completely that in His life and in His being, in His nature and in His Godhead, He keeps nothing back; He must ever pour all forth in fruitful wise." And the inner illumination is something that the soul must

necessarily find when it sinks itself deep into the basis of its being.

From this it is already obvious that God's communication to humanity cannot be conceived after the fashion of the revelation of one human being to another. This communication may also be cut off, for one man can shut himself off from another; but God *must*, by virtue of His very nature, reveal Himself. "It is a sure and certain truth, that it is a necessity for God to seek us, exactly as if His very Godhead depended upon it. God can as little dispense with us as we with Him. Even though we turn away from God, yet God can never turn away from us." Consequently, man's relation to God cannot be conceived of as though something image-like, something taken from the individual human being, were contained therein.

Eckhart is thus conscious that it belongs to the perfectness of the Root-Being of the world to find Itself in the human soul. This Root-Being indeed would be imperfect, incomplete, if it lacked that part of its unfoldment which comes to light in the soul. What happens in man belongs to the Root-Being; and if it did not happen, then the Root-Being would be but a part of Itself. In this sense, man can feel himself as a necessary part of the Being of the universe. This Eckhart expresses by describing his feelings towards God as follows; "I thank not God that He loveth me, for He may not do otherwise; whether He will it or no, His nature yet compelleth Him. . . . Therefore will I not pray to God to give me anything, nor will I praise Him for that which He hath given me. . . ."

But this relationship of the soul to the

Root-Being must not be conceived of as if the soul in its individual nature were declared to be identical with this Root-Being. The soul which is entangled in the sense-world, and so in the finite, has as such not yet got within itself the content of the Root-Being. The soul must first develop that content within itself. **It** must annihilate itself as an isolated being; and Meister Eckhart most aptly characterises this annihilation as *Entwerdung* (un-becoming or involution). "When I come to the root of the God-head, none ask me whence I come and where I have been, and none doth miss me, for here there is an *Entioerdung*:" Again, the following phrase speaks very clearly about this relation: "I take a cup of water and lay therein a mirror and set it under the disc of the sun. The sun casts out its shining light on the mirror

and yet doth not pass away. The reflecting of the mirror in the sun is sun in the sun, and yet the mirror remains what it is. SO is it about God. God is in the soul with His very nature and being and Godhead, and yet He is not the soul. The reflecting of the soul in God, is God in God, and yet the soul is still that which it is."

The soul which gives itself up to the inner illumination knows in itself not only what this same soul was before its illumination; but it also knows that which this soul only became through this illumination. "We must be united with God in being; we must be united with God uniquely; we must be united with God wholly. How shall we be united with God in being? That must happen in the beholding and not in the *Wesung*.



His being may not become our being, but it shall be our life." Not an already existent life—a *Wesung*—is to be known in the logical sense; but the higher knowing—the beholding—shall itself become life; the spiritual, the ideal must be so felt by the beholder, as ordinary daily life is felt by individual human nature.

From such starting points, Meister Eckhart also builds up a pure conception of Freedom. In its ordinary life the soul is not free; for it is interwoven with the realm of lower causes, and accomplishes that to which it is impelled by these lower causes. But by "beholding" or "vision" it is raised out of the domain of these causes, and acts no longer as a separated individual soul. The root of being is laid bare in this soul, and that can be moved to action by naught save by itself. "God does not compel the

will; rather He sets the will free, so that it wills not otherwise than what God Himself wills; and the spirit desires not to will other than what God wills: and that is not its un-freedom: it is its true and real freedom. For freedom is that we are not bound, but free and pure and unmixed, as we were in our first out-pouring, as we were set free in the Holy Ghost."

It may be said of the illuminated man that he is himself the being which from within itself determines what is good and what is evil. He can do naught absolutely, but accomplish the good. For he does not serve the good, but the good realises and lives itself out in him. "The righteous man serveth neither God, nor the creature; for he is free, and the nearer he is to righteousness, the more he is Freedom's very self." What then, for

Meister Eckhart, can evil be? It can be only action under the influence of the lower mode of regarding things;—the acting of a soul which has not passed through the state of *Enttuerdung* (un-becoming). Such a soul is selfish in the sense that it wills only itself. It could not bring its willing outwardly into accord with moral ideals. The soul having vision cannot in this sense be selfish. Even if it willed itself, it yet could will only the lordship of the ideal; for it has made itself into this very ideal. It can no longer will the ends of the lower nature, for it has no longer aught in common with this lower nature. To act in conformity with moral ideals implies for the soul which has vision, no compulsion, no deprivation.

"The man who standeth in God's will and in God's love, to him it is a craving

to do all good things that God willeth, and leave undone all evil things that are contrary to God. And it is impossible for him to leave undone anything that God will have done. Even as walking is impossible to one whose legs are bound, just so it would be impossible for a man who standeth in God's will to do aught unvirtuous."

Eckhart moreover expressly guards himself against the idea that, with this view of his, free license is given for anything and everything that the individual may will. The man possessing vision is indeed to be recognised by the very fact that as a separated individual he no longer wills anything. "Certain men say: If I have God and God's freedom, then I may just do whatever I please. Such understand wrongly this saying. So long as thou canst do aught that is con-

trary to God and His commandment, so long thou hast not God's love; even though thou mayest well deceive the world, as if thou hadst." Eckhart is convinced that to the soul which dives down into its own root, the most perfect morality will shine forth from that root to meet it; that there all logical conception, and all acting in the ordinary sense, ceases, and an entirely new ordering of human life makes its appearance.

"For all that the understanding can grasp, and all that desiring can desire, is verily not God. Where understanding and desiring end, there it is dark, there shineth God. There that power unfolds in the soul which is wider than the wide heavens. . . . The bliss of the righteous and the bliss of God is one bliss; for there is the righteous full of bliss, where God is full of bliss."

## THE FRIENDSHIP OF GOD

IN Johannes Tauler (1300-1361), Heinrich Suso (1295-1365), and Johannes Ruysbroeck (1293-1381), one makes acquaintance with men whose life and work exhibit in a very striking manner those "motions of the soul" to which such a spiritual path as that of Meister Eckhart is calculated to give rise in natures of depth and power. While Eckhart seems like a man who, in the blissful experiencing of spiritual re-birth, speaks of the nature of Knowledge as of a picture which he has succeeded in painting; these others, followers of his, appear rather like pilgrims, to whom their inner re-birth has shown a new road which they

fain would tread, but whose goal seems to vanish before them into the illimitable distance. Eckhart dwells more upon the glories of his picture; they upon the difficulties of the new path.

To understand the difference between personalities like Eckhart and Tauler, one must see quite clearly how a man stands towards his higher cognitions. Man is interwoven with the sense-world and the laws of nature by which that sense-world is ruled. He is himself a product of that world. He lives because its forces and its materials are at work in him; nay, he perceives this sense-world and judges of it by laws, according to which both he himself and that world are alike built up. If he turns his eyes upon an object, not only does the object, present itself to him as a complex of interacting forces, ruled by nature's laws,

but the eye, with which he sees the object is itself a body built up according to just such laws and of just such forces; and the seeing, too, takes place by similar laws and forces. If we had reached the goal of natural science, we should be able to follow out this play of the forces of nature according to natural laws right up into the highest regions of thought-formation, - but in the very act of doing this, we raise ourselves *above* this play of forces. For do we not stand above and beyond all the "uniformities which make up the laws of nature," when we over-see the whole and recognise how we ourselves fit into nature? We *see* with our eyes according to laws of nature. But we know also the laws, according to which we see.

We can take our stand upon a higher summit and overlook at once both



ourselves and the outer world in their mutual interplay. Is there not here a something working in us, which is higher than the sensuous-organic personality working with Nature's forces and according to Nature's laws? In such activity does there still remain any wall of division between our inner selves and the outer world? That which here judges and gains for itself insight is no longer our separated personality; it is rather the general world-being, which has torn down the barrier between the inner and outer worlds and now embraces both alike. As true as it is that, judged by the outer appearance, I still remain the same separated individual when I have thus torn down this barrier, so true is it also that, judged according to essential being, I am no longer this separated unit. Henceforth there lives in

me the feeling that there speaks in my soul the All-Being, which embraces both myself and the entire world.

This is what Tauler felt, when he said: "Man is just as if he were three men-his animal man as he is according to the senses; then his rational man and lastly, his highest, godlike man. . . . The one is the outer, animal, sensuous man; the other is the inner, understanding man, with his understanding and reasoning powers; the third man is spirit, (*Gemiith-lit.* emotional, feeling nature), the very highest part of the soul." How far this third man is above the first and second, Eckhart has expressed in the words: "The eye through which I see God, that is the same eye with which God sees me. My eye and God's eye, that

<sup>1</sup> Cp. W. Preger: *Geschichte der Deutschen Mystik*, vol. iii, p. 161.

is one eye and one knowing and one feeling."

But in Tauler another feeling is active as well as this. He has fought his way through to a real vision of the spiritual, and does not constantly confuse, as do the false materialists and the false idealists, the sensibly-natural with the spiritual. If, with his disposition, Tauler had become a scientist, he would have insisted upon explaining all that is natural, including the *whole* of man, both the first and the second, purely upon natural lines. He would never have transferred purely spiritual forces into nature itself. He would never have talked of a "purposefulness" in nature conceived of according to men's notions. He knew that there, where we perceive with our senses, no "creative ideas" are to be found. Far rather he was most

keenly conscious of the fact that man is a purely natural being. And as he felt himself to be, not a scientist, but a devotee of moral life, he therefore felt most keenly the contrast which reveals itself between this natural being of man and that vision of God which arises naturally and within nature, but as spirituality. And just in that very contrast the meaning of life presented itself to his eyes. Man finds himself as a single being, a creature of nature. And no science can reveal to him anything else about this life than that he is such a creature of nature. As a creature of nature he cannot get outside of the sphere of natural creation. **In** it he must remain. And yet his inner life leads him outside and beyond it. He must have confidence in that which no science of outer nature can give him or show to him.

If he calls only this nature Being or "that which is," then he must be able to reach out to the vision which recognises as the higher, Non-being, or "that which is not." Tauler seeks for no God who is present in the same sense as a natural force; he seeks no God who has created the world in the sense of human creation. In him lives the clear insight that the conception of creation even of the Fathers of the Church is only idealised human creating. It is clear to him that God is not to be found as nature's working and her laws are found, by science. Tauler is well aware that we must not add in thought anything to nature as God. He knows that whoever thinks God, in his sense, no longer thinks thought-content, as does one who has grasped nature in thought. Therefore, Tauler seeks not to think God, but to

think divinely, to think as God thinks. The knowledge of nature is not *enriched* by the knowledge of God, but *transformed*. The knower of God does not know a different thing from the knower of nature, but he knows in a different way. Not one single letter can the knower of God add to the knowledge of nature; but through his whole knowing of nature there shines a new light.

What root-feelings will take possession of a man's soul who contemplates the world from this point of view, will depend upon how he regards that experience of the soul which brings about spiritual re-birth. Within this experience, man is wholly a natural being, when he considers himself in his interaction with the rest of nature; and he is wholly a spiritual being when he considers the conditions into which this re-birth has

brought him. Thus we can say with equal truth, the inmost depth of the soul is still natural; as also it is already divine. Tauler emphasised the former in accordance with his own tendency of thought. However far we may penetrate into our souls, we still remain separated individual human beings, said he to himself. But yet in the very depths of the soul of the individual being there gleams forth the All-Being.

Tauler was dominated by the feeling: Thou canst not free thyself from separateness, nor purify thyself from it. Therefore the All-Being in its purity can never make its appearance within thee, it can only shed its light into the depths of thy soul. Thus in its depths only a mere reflection, a picture of the All-Being comes into existence. Thou canst so transform thy separated personality that

it reproduces the All-Being as a picture; but this All-Being itself does not shine forth in thee. Starting from such conceptions, Tauler came to the idea of a Godhead that never merges wholly into the human world, never flows quite completely into it. More, he attaches importance to his not being confused with those who maintain that man's inmost being is itself divine. He says: "The Union with God is taken by foolish men in a fleshly sense, and they say that they shall be transformed into divine nature; but such is false and an evil heresy. For even in the very highest, most inward Union with God, God's nature and God's being still remain lofty, yea, higher than the loftiest; that passeth into a divine abyss, where never yet was creature."

Tauler wishes, and rightly, to be called a good Catholic in the sense of his age



and of his priestly calling. He has no desire to oppose any other conception to Christianity. He desires only to deepen and spiritualise that Christianity through his way of looking at it. He speaks as a pious priest of the content of Holy Writ. But this same scripture still becomes in the world of his conceptions a means for the expression of the inmost experiences of his soul. "God worketh all his works in the soul and giveth them to the soul; and the Father begetteth His only begotten Son in the soul, as truly as He begetteth Him in eternity, neither more, nor less. What is born when one says: God begetteth in the soul? Is it a likeness of God, or a picture of God, or is it somewhat of God? Nay: it is neither picture nor likeness of God, but the same God and the same Son whom the Father begetteth in eternity and naught else than

the blissful divine word, that is the second person in the Trinity, Him the Father begetteth in the soul, . . . and thereof the soul hath thus great and special dignity." The stories of scripture become for Tauler the garment in which he clothes the happiness of the inner life. "Herod, who drove out the child and sought to slay him, is a likeness of the world, which yet seeketh to kill this child in a believing man, therefore one should and must flee therefrom, if we do desire to keep that child alive in us, but that child is the enlightened believing soul of each and every man."

As Tauler directs his gaze mainly upon the natural man, he is comparatively less concerned to tell us what happens when the higher man enters into the natural

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Preger: *History of German Mysticism*, vol. iii., p. 219 *et seq.*

man, than to discover the paths which the lower forces of the personality must follow if they are to be transmuted into the higher life. As a devotee of the moral life, he desires to show to men the roads to the All-Being. He has unconditional faith and trust that the All-Being shines forth in man, if man will so order his life that there shall be in him a shrine for the Divine. But this All-Being can never shine forth while man shuts himself up in his mere natural separated personality. Such a man, separated off in himself, is merely one member of the world: a single creature, in Tauler's language. The more man shuts himself off within this his being as a member of the world, so much the less can the All-Being find place in him. "If man is in reality to become one with God, then all energies and powers even of the inner

man must die and become silent. The will must turn away even from the Good and from all willing, and become void of willing." "Man must escape from all his senses and turn inwards all his powers, and come into a forgetting of all things and of himself." "For the true and eternal Word of God is uttered only in the desert, when the man hath gone out from himself and from all things and is quite untrammelled, desolate and alone."

When Tauler stood at his zenith, the problem which occupied the central point of his mental life was: How can man overcome and kill out in himself his separated existence, so as to live in perfect unison with the All-life? For one in this position, all feelings towards the All-Being concentrate themselves into this one thing: Awe before the All-

Being as that which is inexhaustible, endless. He says to himself: whatever level thou hast reached, there remain still higher perspectives, still more exalted possibilities. Thus clear and defined as is to him the direction in which he has to turn his steps, it is equally clear to him that he can never speak of a goal: for a new goal is only the beginning of a new path. Through such a new goal man reaches a certain level of evolution: but evolution itself continues illimitably. And what that evolution may attain upon some more distant level, it can never know upon its present stage. There is no *knowing* the final goal: only a *trusting* in the path, in evolution itself. There is knowing for everything which man has already attained. It consists in the penetration of an already present object by the powers of our

spirit. For the higher life of man's inner being, there is no such knowing. Here the powers of our spirit must first transfer the object itself into the realm of the existent; they must first create for it an existence, constituted as is natural existence.

Natural Science follows the evolution of beings from the simplest up to the most perfected, to man himself. This evolution lies before us as already completed. We know it, by penetrating it with the powers of our spirit. When evolution has reached humanity, man then finds nothing further there before him as its continuation. He himself accomplishes the further unfoldment. Henceforward he *lives* what for earlier stages he only *knows*. He creates, according to the object, that which, for what has gone before, he only copies

in accordance with its spiritual nature. That truth is not one with the existent in nature, but naturally embraces both the existent and the non-existent: of this truth Tauler is filled to overflowing in all his feelings. It has been handed down to us that Tauler was led to this fulfilling by an illuminated layman, a "Friend of God from the Mountains."

We have here a mysterious story. As to where this "Friend of God" lived there exist only conjectures; as to who he was, not even these. He seems to have heard much of Tauler's way of preaching, and to have resolved accordingly to journey to Tauler, who was then working as a preacher in Strassburg, in order to fulfil a certain duty by him. Tauler's relation to the Friend of God, and the influence which the latter exercised upon the former, are to

be found described in a text which is printed along with the oldest editions of Tauler's sermons under the title, "The Book of the Master." Therein a Friend of God, in whom some seek to recognise the same who came into relations with Tauler, gives an account of a "Master," whom some assert to be Tauler himself. He relates how a transformation, a spiritual re-birth, was brought about in a certain "Master" and how the latter, when he felt his death drawing near, called his friend to him and begged him to write the story of his "enlightenment," but yet to take care that no one should ever learn of whom the book speaks. He asks this on the ground that all the knowledge that proceeds from him is yet not really from him. "For know ye that God hath brought all to pass through me, poor worm, and



that what it is, is not mine, it is of God.”

A learned controversy which has connected itself with the occurrence is not of the very smallest importance for the essence of the matter. An effort was made to prove on one side<sup>1</sup> that the Friend of God never existed, but that his existence was fiction and that the books ascribed to him come from another hand (Rulman Merswin). On the other hand Wilhelm Preger has sought with many arguments (in his *History of German Mysticism*) to support the existence, the genuineness of the writings, and the correctness of the facts that relate to Tauler.

I am here under no obligation to throw light by presumptuous investigation upon a relationship as to which anyone, who

<sup>1</sup> Denifle: *Die Dictungen des Gottesfreundes in Oberlande.*

understands how to read the writings-in question, will know that it should remain a secret.

If one says of Tauler, that at a certain stage of his life a transformation took place in him, that will be amply sufficient. Tauler's personality need no longer be in any way considered in this connection, but only a personality "in general." As regards Tauler, we are only concerned with the fact that we must understand his transformation from the point of view set forth in what follows. If we compare his later activity with his earlier, the fact of this transformation is obvious without further search. I will leave

"The writings in question are, among others: *Von eime eigenwilligen ueltunsen manne, der uon eime heiligen welt-priestere gewiset wart uffe demuetiige gehorsamme*, 1338; *Das Buch von den zwei Mannen; Der gejangene Ritter*, 1349; *Die geistliche siege*, 1350; *Von der geistlichen Leiter*, 1357; *Das Meisterbuch*, 1369; *Geschichie von zwei [un]zelinjalizigen Knaben*,

aside all outer circumstances and relate the inner occurrences in the soul of the "Master" under "the influence of the layman." What my reader will understand by the "layman" and the "Master" depends entirely upon his own mentality; what I myself think about it is a matter as to which I cannot know for whom it is of any weight.

A Master is instructing his disciples as to the relationship of the soul to the All-Being of things. He speaks of the fact that when man plunges into the abysmal depths of his soul, he no longer feels the natural, limited forces of the separated personality working within him. Therein the separated man <sup>110</sup> longer speaks, therein speaks God. There man does not see God, or the world; there God sees Himself. Man has become one with God. But the Master knows that

this teaching has not yet awakened to full life in him. He thinks it with his understanding; but he does not yet live in it with every fibre of his personality. He is thus teaching about a state of things which he has not yet completely lived through in himself. The description of the condition corresponds to the truth; yet this truth has no value if it does not gain life, if it does not bring itself forth in reality as actually existent.

The "layman" or "Friend of God" hears of the Master and his teachings. He is no less saturated with the truth which the Master utters than the Master himself. But he possesses this truth not as a matter of the understanding; he has it as the whole force of his life. He knows that when this truth has come to a man from outside, he can himself

give utterance to it, without even in the least living in accordance with it. But in that case he has nothing other in him than the natural knowledge of the understanding. He then speaks of this natural knowledge as if it were the highest, equivalent to the working of the All-Being. **It** is not so, because it has not been acquired in a life that has approached to this knowledge as a transformed, a reborn life. What one acquires only as a natural man, that remains only natural,—even when one afterwards expresses in words the fundamental characteristic of the higher knowledge. Outwards, from within the very nature itself, must the transformation be accomplished.

Nature, which by living has evolved itself to a certain level, must evolve further through life; something new must

come into existence through this further evolution. Man must not only look backwards upon the evolution which already lies behind him-claim as the highest that which shapes itself according thereto in his spirit-but he must look forward upon the uncreate: his knowledge must be a beginning of a new content, not an end to the content of evolution which already lies before it. Nature advances from the worm to the mammal, from the mammal to man, not in a conceptual but in an actual, real process. Man has to repeat this process not in 'his mind alone. The mental repetition is only the beginning of a fresh, real evolution, which, however, despite its being spiritual, is real. Man, then, does not merely know what nature has produced; he continues nature; he translates his knowledge into living ac-

tion. He gives birth within himself to the spirit, and this spirit advances thence onwards from level to level of evolution, as nature itself advances. Spirit begins a natural process upon a higher level.

The talk about the God who contemplates Himself in man's inner being, takes on a different character in one who has recognised this. He attaches little importance to the fact that an insight already attained has led him into the depths of the All-Being; instead, his spiritual nature acquires a new character. **It** unfolds itself further in the direction determined by the All-Being. Such a man not only looks at the world differently from one who merely understands: he lives his life otherwise. He does not talk of the meaning which life already has through the forces and laws of the world: but he gives anew a fresh

meaning to his life. As little as the fish already has in itself what makes its appearance on a later level of evolution as the mammal, as little has the understanding man already in himself what shall be born from him as the higher man. **If** the fish could know itself and the things around it, it would regard the being-a-fish as the meaning of life. **It** would say: the All-Being is like the fish: in the fish the All-Being beholds itself. Thus would the fish speak as long as it remained constant to its understanding kind of knowledge. In reality it does not remain constant thereto. **It** reaches out beyond its knowledge with its activity. **It** becomes a reptile and later a mammal. The meaning which it gives to itself in reality reaches out beyond the meaning which mere contemplation gives to it.



**I**n man also this must be so. He gives himself a meaning in reality; he does not halt and stand still at the meaning he already has, which his contemplation shows him. Knowledge leaps out beyond itself, if only it understands itself aright. Knowledge cannot deduce the world from a ready-made God; it can only unfold itself from a germ in the direction towards a God. The man who has understood this will not regard God as something that is outside of him; he will deal with God as a being who wanders with him towards a goal, which at the outset is just as unknown as the nature of the mammal is unknown to the fish. He does not aim to be the knower of the hidden, or of the self-revealing existent God, but to be the friend of the divine doing and working, which is exalted over both being and non-being.

The layman, who came to the Master, was a "Friend of God" in this sense, and through him the Master became from a contemplator of the being of God, one who is "alive in the spirit," one who not only contemplated, but lived in the higher sense. The Master now no longer brought forth concepts and ideas of the understanding from his inner nature, but these concepts and ideas burst forth from him as living, actualised spirit. He no longer merely edified his hearers; he shook the very foundations of their being. He no longer plunged their souls into their inner being; he led them into a new life. This is recounted to us symbolically: about forty people fell down through his preaching and lay as if dead.

\* \* \*

As a guide to such a new life, we possess a book about whose author nothing is known. Luther first made it known in print. The philologist, Franz Pfeiffer, has recently printed it according to a manuscript of the year 1497, with a modern German translation facing the original text. What precedes the book indicates its purpose and its goal: "Here begins the man from Frankfurt and saith many very lofty and very beautiful things about a perfect life." Upon this follows the "Preface about the man from Frankfurt": "Al-mighty, Eternal God hath uttered this little book through a wise, understanding, truthful, righteous man, his friend, who in former days was a German nobleman, a priest and a custodian in the German House of Nobles at Frankfurt; it teacheth many a lovely

insight into Divine Wisdom, and especially how and whereby one may know the true, righteous friends of God, and also the unrighteous, false, free-thinkers, who are very hurtful to Holy Church."

By "free-thinkers" one may perhaps understand those who live in a merely conceptual world, like the "Master", described above before his transformation by means of the "Friend of God," and by the "true, righteous friends of God," such as possess the disposition of the "layman." One may further ascribe to the book the intention of so working upon its readers as the "Friend of God from the Mountains" did upon the Master. **It** is not known who the author was. But what does that mean? It is not known when he was born and died, or what he did in his outer life.

That the author aimed to preserve eternal secrecy about these facts of his outer life, belongs naturally to the way in which he desired to work. **It** is not the "I" of this or the other man, born at a definite point of time, who is to speak to us, but the "I-ness" in the depths whereof "the separateness of individualities" (in the sense of Paul Asmus' saying') must first unfold itself. "If God took to Himself all men who are or who have ever been, and became man in them, and they became God in Him, and it did not happen to me also, then my fall and my turning away would never be made good, unless it also happened in me too. And in this restoration and making good, I neither can nor may nor should do anything thereto save a mere pure suffering, so that God alone doeth and worketh

, *Vide ante*, page 34.

all things in me, and I suffer Him and all His works and His divine will. But if I will not submit to this, but possess myself with egotism, *i.e.*, with mine, and I, to me, for me, and the like, that hinders God so that He cannot work His work in me purely alone and without hindrance. Therefore my fall and my turning away remain thus not made good." The "man from Frankfurt" aims to speak not as a separated individual; he desires to let God speak. That he yet can do this only as a single, distinct personality he naturally knows full well; but he is a "Friend of God," that means a man who aims not at presenting the nature of life through contemplation, but at pointing out the beginning of a new evolutionary pathway through the living spirit.

The explanations in the book are

various instructions as to how one comes to this pathway. The root-thought returns again and again: man must strip off everything that is connected with that which makes him appear as a single, separate personality. This thought seems to be worked out only in respect of the moral life; it should be extended, without further ado, to the higher life of knowledge as well. One must annihilate in oneself whatever appears as separateness: then separated existence ceases; the All-Life enters into us. We cannot master this All-Life by drawing it towards us. **It** comes into us, when we reduce the separateness in us to silence. We have the All-Life least of all just then, when we so regard our separated existence as if the Whole already dwelt within it. This first comes to light in the separated existence when

this separated existence no longer claims for itself to be anything. This pretension on the part of the separated existence our text terms "assumption."

Through "assumption" the self makes it impossible for itself that the Universal Self should enter into it. The self then puts itself as a part, as something imperfect, in the place of the whole, of the perfect. "The perfect is a being, that in itself and in its being has conceived and resolved all beings, and without which and apart from which there is no true being, and in which all things have their being; for it is the being of all things and is in itself unchangeable and immovable, and changes and moves all other things. But the divided and the imperfect is that which has sprung from out of this perfect, or becomes, just as a ray or a light that flows forth from the



sun or a light and shines upon something, this or that. And that is called the creature, and of all these divided things none is the perfect. Therefore also is the perfect none of the divided. . . . When the perfect cometh, the divided is despised. But when does it come? I say: When so far as is possible it is known, felt, tasted in the soul; for the defect lies wholly in us and not in it. For just as the sun illuminates the whole world and is just as near to the one as to the other, yet a blind man sees it not. But that is no defect of the sun but of the blind man. . . . If my eye is to see anything, it must become cleansed, or be already cleansed from all other things. . . . Now one might be inclined to say: In so far then as it is unknowable and inconceivable for all creatures, and since the soul is also a

creature, how can it then be known in the soul? Answer: Therefore is it said, the creature shall be known *as a creature.*"

This is as much as to say that all creatures shall be regarded as created and creation and not regard themselves as 1-ness and self-ness, whereby this knowing is made impossible. "For in whatever creature this perfect one shall be known, there all creature-being, created-being, 1-ness, self-ness, and everything of the kind must be lost, be and become naught." The soul must therefore look within itself; there it finds its 1-ness, its self-ness. If it remains standing there, it thereby cuts itself off from the perfect. If it regards its 1-ness only as a thing lent to it as it were, and annihilates it in spirit, it will be seized upon by the stream of the All-Life, of

Perfection. "When the creature assumes to itself somewhat of good, as Being, Life, Knowledge, Power, in short, aught of that which one calls good and thinks that it is that, or that it belongs to it or comes from it, so often and so much as that happens, does the creature turn away." "The created soul of man has two eyes. The one is the possibility of seeing in eternity; the other of seeing in time and in creation." "Man should therefore stand and be quite free without himself, that is without self-ness, I-ness, me, mine, for me and the like, so that he as little seeks and thinks of himself and what is his in all things as if it did not exist; and he should therefore also think little of himself, as if he were not, and as if another had done all his deeds."

One must also take account of the fact in regard to the writer of these sentences, that the thought-content, to which he gives a direction by his higher ideas and feelings, is that of a believing priest in the spirit of his own time. We are here concerned not with the thought-content, but with the direction, not with the thoughts but with the way of thinking. Anyone who does not live as he does in Christian dogmas, but in the conceptions of natural science, finds in his sentences other thoughts; but with these other thoughts he points in the same direction. And this direction is that which leads to the overcoming of the self-hood, by the Self-hood itself. The highest light shines for man in his Ego. But this light only then imparts to his concept-world the right reflection, when he becomes aware that

it is not his own self-light, but the universal world-light.

Hence there is no more important knowledge than self-knowledge; and there is equally no knowledge which leads so completely out beyond itself. When the "self" knows itself aright, it is already no longer a "self." In his own language, the writer of the book in question expresses this as follows: "For God's ,own-ness' is void of this and that, void of self-ness and I-ness; but the nature and own-ness of the creature is that it seeketh and willeth itself and its own and 'this' and 'that'; and in all that it does or leaves undone, it seeketh to receive its own benefit and profit.

"When, now, the creature or the man loseth his own-ness and his self-ness and himself, and goeth out from himself, then God entereth in with His Own-ness, that

is with his Self-hood." 1 Man soars upwards, from a view of his "Ego" which makes the latter appear to him as his very being, to a view such that it shows him his Ego as a mere organ, in which the All-Being works upon itself. In the concept-sphere of our text, this means: "If man can attain thereto that he belongeth unto God just as a man's hand belongeth to him, then let him content himself and seek no further." 2 That is not intended to mean that when man has reached a certain stage of his evolution he shall stand still there, but that, when he has got as far as is indicated in the above words, he should not set on foot further investigations into the meaning of the hand, but rather make use of the hand, in order

1 Chap. xxiv, *Book of the Mall from Frankfurt*.

a *Ibid.* • Chap. liv,

that it may render service to the body to which it belongs.

HEINRICH Suso and JOHANNES Rtrvs-BROEK possessed a type of mind which may be characterised as genius for feeling. Their feelings are drawn by something like instinct in the same direction in which Eckhart's and Tauler's feelings were guided by their higher thought-life. Suso's heart turns devoutly towards that Root-Being which embraces the individual man just as much as the whole remaining world, and in whom forgetting himself, he yearns to lose himself as a drop of water in the mighty ocean. He speaks of this his yearning towards the All-Being, not as of something that he desires to embrace in thought ; he speaks of it as a natural impulse, that makes

his soul drunken with desire for the annihilation of its separated existence and its re-awakening to life in the all-efficiency of the endless life. "Turn thine eyes to this being in its pure naked simplicity, so that thou mayest let fall this and that manifold being. Take being in itself alone, that is unmoved with not-being; for all not-being denies all being. A thing that is yet to become, or that has been, is not now in actual presence.' ,

"Now, one cannot know mixed being or not-being except by some mark of being as a whole. For if one will understand a thing, the reason first encounters being, and that is a being that worketh all things. **It** is a divided being of this or that creature,-for divided being is all mingled with something of other-ness, with a possibility of receiving something.



Therefore the nameless divine being must so be a *whole* being in itself, that it sustaineth all divided beings by its presence."

Thus speaks Suso in the autobiography which he wrote in conjunction with his pupil Elsbet Staglin. He, too, is a pious priest and lives entirely in the Christian circle of thought. He lives therein as if it were quite unthinkable that anybody with his mental tendency could live in any other world. But of him also it is true that one can combine another concept-content with his mental tendency. This is clearly borne out by the way in which the content of the Christian teaching has become for him actual inner experience, and his relation to Christ has become a relation between his own spirit and the eternal truth in a purely ideal, spiritual way.

He composed a "*Little Book of Eternal Wisdom.*" In this he makes the "Eternal Wisdom." speak to its servant, in other words to himself: "Knowest thou me not? How art thou so cast down, or hast thou lost consciousness from agony of heart, my tender child? Behold it is I, merciful Wisdom, who have opened wide the abyss of fathomless compassion which yet is hidden from all the saints, tenderly to receive thee and all repentant hearts; it is I, sweet Eternal Wisdom, who was there poor and miserable, so as to bring thee to thy worthiness; it is I, who suffered bitter death, that I might make thee to live again! I stand here pale and bleeding and lovely, as I stood on the lofty gallows of the cross between the stern judgment of my Father and thee. **It** is I, thy brother; look, it is I, thy spouse! I have therefore wholly

forgotten all thou hast done against me, as if it had never been, if only thou turnest wholly to me and separatest thyself no more from me."

All that is bodily and temporal in the Christian conception has become for Suso, as one sees, a spiritual-ideal process in the recesses of his soul. From some chapters of Suso's biography mentioned above, it might appear as if he had let himself be guided not by the mere action of his own spiritual power, but through external revelations, through ghostly VISIONS. But he expresses his meaning quite clearly about this. One attains to the truth through reasonableness, not through any kind of revelation. "The difference between pure truth and two-souled visions in the matter of knowledge I will also tell you. An immediate beholding of the bare Godhead,

that is right pure truth, without all doubt; and every vision, so that it be reasonable and without pictures and the more like it be unto that bare beholding, the purer and nobler it is."

Meister Eckhart, too, leaves no doubt that he puts aside the view which seeks to be spiritual in bodily-spacial forms, in appearances which one can perceive by any senses. Minds of the type of Suso and Eckhart are thus opponents of such a view, as that which finds expression in the spiritualism which has developed during the nineteenth century.

JOHANNES RUYSBROEK, the Belgian mystic, trod the same path as Suso. His spiritual way found an active opponent in Johannes Gerson (born 1363), who was for some time Chancellor of the

University of Paris and played a momentous role at the Council of Constance. Some light is thrown upon the nature of the mysticism which was practised by Tauler, Suso and Ruysbroek, if one compares it with the mystic endeavours of Gerson, who had his predecessors in Richard de St. Victor, Bonaventura, and others.

Ruysbroek himself fought against those whom he reckoned among the heretical mystics. As such he considered all those who, through an easy-going judgment of the understanding, hold that all things proceed from one Root-Being, who therefore see in the world only a manifoldness and in God the unity of this manifoldness. Ruysbroek does not count himself among these, for he knew that one cannot attain to the Root-Being by the contemplation of things, but only by raising oneself from

this lower mode of contemplation to a higher one.

Similarly, he turned against those who seek to see without further ado, in the individual man, in his separated existence (in his creature-being), his higher nature also. He deplored not a little the error which confuses all differences in the sense-world, and asserts light-mindedly that things are different only in appearance, but that in their being they are all alike. This would amount, for a way of thinking like Ruysbroek's, to the same thing as saying: That the fact that the trees in an avenue seem to our seeing to come together does not concern us. In reality they are everywhere equally far apart, therefore our eyes ought to accustom themselves to see correctly. But our eyes see aright. That the trees run together depends

upon a necessary law of nature; and we have nothing to reproach our seeing with, but on the contrary to recognise in spirit why we see them thus.

Moreover, the mystic does not turn away from the things of the senses. As things of the senses, he accepts them as they are, and it is clear to him that through no judgment of the understanding can they become otherwise. But in spirit he passes beyond both senses and understanding, and then only does he find the unity. His faith is unshakable that he can develop himself to the beholding of this unity. Therefore does he ascribe to the nature of man the divine spark which can be brought to shine in him, to shine by its own light.

People of the type of Gerson think otherwise. They do not believe in this

self-shining. For them, what man can behold remains always a something external, that from some side or other must come to them externally. Ruysbroek believed that the highest wisdom must needs shine forth for mystic contemplation. Gerson believed only that the soul can illuminate the content of an external teaching (that of the Church). For Gerson, Mysticism was nothing else but possessing a warm feeling for everything that is revealed in this teaching. For Ruysbroek, it was a faith, that the content of all teaching is also born in the soul. Therefore Gerson blames Ruysbroek in that the latter imagines that not only has he the power to behold the All-Being with clearness, but that in this beholding there expresses itself an activity of the All-Being. Ruysbroek simply could not



be understood by Gerson. Both spoke of two wholly different things. Ruysbroek has in his mind's eye the life of the soul that lives itself into oneness with its God; Gerson, only a soul-life that seeks to love the God whom it can never actually live in itself. Like many others, Gerson fought against something that was strange to him only because he could not grasp it in experience.

## CARDINAL NICHOLAS OF CUSA

A GLORIOUSLY shining star in the sky of the thought-life of the Middle Ages is Nicholas Chrysippus of Cusa (at Trevis, 1401-1464). He stands upon the summit of the knowledge of his time. In mathematics he accomplished remarkable work. In natural science he may be described as the forerunner of Copernicus, for he took up the standpoint that the earth is a moving celestial body like others. He had already broken away from a view upon which even a hundred years later the great astronomer, Tycho Brahe, based himself, when he hurled against the teaching of Copernicus the sentence: "The earth is a

gross, heavy mass inapt for movement; how, then, can Copernicus make a star of it and run it about in the air?" The same man who thus not only embraced all the knowledge of his time, but also extended it further, possessed in addition, in a high degree, the power of awakening this knowledge in the inner life, so that it not only illuminates the external world, but also mediates for man that spiritual life, which from the profounder depths of his soul he needs must long after.

If we compare Nicholas with such spirits as Eckhart or Tauler, we obtain a remarkable result. Nicholas is the scientific thinker, striving to lift himself from research about the things of the world on to the level of a higher perception; Eckhart and Tauler are the faithful believers, who seek the higher life

from within the content of this faith. Eventually Nicholas arrives at the same inner life as Meister Eckhart; but the inner life of the former has a rich store of knowledge as its content.

The full significance of this difference becomes clear when we reflect that for the student of science the danger lies very near at hand of misunderstanding the scope of that species of knowing which enlightens us regarding the various special departments of knowledge. He can very readily be misled into believing that there really is only one single kind or mode of knowledge; and then he will either over- or under-rate this knowledge which leads us to the goal in the various special sciences. **I**n the one case he will approach the subject-matter of the highest spiritual life as he would a problem in physics, and proceed to deal with

it by means of concepts such as he would apply to gravitation or electricity. Thus, according as he believes himself to be more or less enlightened, the world will appear to him as a blindly working machine, or an organism, or as the teleological structure of a personal God: perhaps even as a form which is ruled and pervaded by a more or less clearly conceived "World-Soul." In the other case he notes that the knowledge, of which alone he has any experience, is adapted only to the things of the sense-world; and then he will become a sceptic, saying to himself: We can know nothing about things which lie beyond the world of the senses. Our knowledge has a limit. For the needs of the higher life we have no choice but to throw ourselves blindly into the arms of faith untouched by knowledge. And for a learned theo-

logian like Nicholas of Cusa, who was also a scientist, this second danger lay peculiarly near at hand. For he emerged, along the lines of his learned training, from Scholasticism,-the way of conceiving things which was dominant in scientific life within the Mediaeval Church; a mode of thought that St. Thomas Aquinas (1227-1274), the "Prince of Scholastics," had brought to its highest perfection. We must take this mode of conceiving things as the background, when we desire to portray the personality of Nicholas of Cusa.

Scholasticism is, in the highest degree, a product of human sagacity; and in it the logical capacity celebrated its highest triumphs. Anyone who is striving to work out concepts in their sharpest, most clear-cut outlines, ought to go to the Scholastics for instruction. They

afford us the High School for the technique of thinking. They possess an incomparable skill in moving in the field of pure thinking. It is easy to undervalue what they were able to achieve in this field; for it is only with difficulty accessible to man as regards most departments of knowledge. The majority rise to its level only in the domains of numbers and calculation, and in reflecting upon the connection of geometrical figures.

We can count by adding in thought a unity to a number, without needing to call to our help sense-conceptions. We calculate also, without such conceptions, in the pure element of thought. In regard to geometrical figures, we know that they never perfectly coincide with any sensible perception. There is no such thing within sensible reality as an

"ideal" circle. Yet our thinking concerns itself with the purely ideal circle. For things and processes which are more complicated than forms of number and space, it is more difficult to find the ideal counterparts. This has even led so far that it has been contended, from various sides, that in the separated departments of knowledge there is only so much of real science as there is of measuring and counting.

The truth about this is that most men are not capable of grasping the pure thought-element where it is no longer concerned with what can be counted or measured. But the man who cannot do that for the higher realms of life and knowledge, resembles in that respect a child, which has not yet learned to count otherwise than by adding one pea to another. The thinker who said there



was just so much real science in any domain as there was mathematics in it, was not very much at home in the matter. One ought rather to demand that everything which cannot be measured or counted should be handled just as ideally as the forms of number and space. And the Scholastics in the fullest way did justice to this demand. They sought everywhere the thought-content of things, just as the mathematician seeks it in the field of what is measurable and countable.

In spite of this perfected logical art, the Scholastics attained only to a one-sided and subordinate conception of Knowledge. Their conception is this: that in the act of knowing, man creates in himself an image of what he is to know. **It** is obvious, without further discussion, that with such a conception of the knowing process all reality must

be located outside of the knowing. For one can grasp, in knowing, not the thing itself, but only an image of that thing.

Also, in knowing himself man cannot grasp himself, but again, what he does know of himself is only an image of himself. It is entirely from out of the spirit of Scholasticism that an accurate student thereof<sup>1</sup> says: "Man has in time no perception of his ego, of the hidden ground of his spiritual being and life, . . . he will never attain to beholding himself; for either, estranged for ever from God, he will find in himself only a fathomless, dark abyss, an endless emptiness, or else, made blessed in God, he will find on turning his gaze inwards just that very God, the sun of whose mercy is shining within him, whose image

<sup>1</sup> K. Werner, in his book upon *Frank Suarcz and the Scholasticism of the Last Centuries*, p. 122.

and likeness shapes itself in the spiritual traits of his nature."

Whoever thinks like this about all knowing, has only such a conception of knowing as is applicable to external things. The sensible factor in anything **always** remains external for us; therefore we can only take up into our knowledge pictures of whatever is sensible in the world. When we perceive a colour or a stone, we are unable, in order to know the being of the colour or the stone, to become ourselves the colour or the stone. Just as little can the colour or the stone transform itself into a part of our own being. **It** may, however, be questioned whether the conception of such a knowing-process, wholly directed to what is external in things, is an exhaustive one.

For Scholasticism, all human knowing does certainly in the main coincide with

this kind of knowing. Another admirable authority on Scholasticism, characterises the conception of knowledge with which we are concerned in this direction of thought in the following manner: "Our spirit, allied in earth-life with the body, is primarily focussed upon the surrounding bodily world, but ordered in the direction of the spiritual therein: the beings, natures, forms of things, the elements of existence, which are related to our spirit and offer to it the rungs for its ascent to the super-sensuous; the field of our knowledge is therefore the realm of experience, but we must learn to understand what it offers, to penetrate to its meaning and thought, and thereby unlock for ourselves the world of thought."

'Otto Willman, in his *History of Idealism*, vol. ii., p. 395.

The Scholastic could not attain to any other conception of knowledge, for the dogmatic content of his theology prevented his doing so. If he had directed the gaze of his spiritual eye upon that which he regards as an image only, he would then have seen that the spiritual content of things reveals itself in this supposed image; he would then have found that in his own inner being the God not alone images Himself, but that He lives therein, is present there in His own nature. He would have beheld in gazing into his own inner being, not a dark abyss, an endless emptiness, but also not merely an image of God; he would have felt that a life pulses within him, which is the very life of God itself; and that his own life is verily just God's life.

This the Scholastic dared not admit.

The God must not, in his opinion, enter into him and speak forth from him; God must only be in him as an image. In reality, the Godhead must be external to the self. Accordingly, also, it could not reveal itself from within through the spiritual life, but must reveal itself from outside, through supernatural communication. What is aimed at in this, is just exactly what is least of all attained thereby. **It** is sought to attain to the highest possible conception of the Godhead. In reality, the Godhead is dragged down and made a thing among other things; only that these other things reveal themselves to us naturally, through experience; while the Godhead is supposed to reveal Itself to us supernaturally. A difference, however, between the knowledge of the divine and of the created is attained in this way: that as

regards the created, the external thing is given in experience, so that we have knowledge of it; while as regards the divine, the object is not given to us in experience; we can reach it only in faith.

The highest things, therefore, are for the Scholastic not objects of knowledge, but mainly of faith. **It** is true that the relation of knowledge to faith must not be so conceived, according to the Scholastic view, as if in a certain domain only knowledge, and in another only faith reigned. **For** "the knowledge of that which is, is possible to us, because it, itself, springs from a creative element; things are for the spirit, because they are from the spirit; they have something to tell us, because they have a meaning which a higher intelligence has placed in them." <sup>1</sup> Because God has created

<sup>1</sup> Otto Willman, *History of Idealism*, vol. ii., p. 383.

the world according to thoughts, we too are able, when we grasp the thoughts of the world, to seize also upon the traces of the Divine in the world, through scientific reflection. But what God is, according to His own being, we can learn only from that revelation which He has given to us in supernatural ways, and in which we must believe. 'What we ought to think about the highest things, must be decided not by any human knowledge, but by faith; and "to faith belongs all that is contained in the writings of the New and of the Old Testament, and in the divine traditions."'

**I**t is not our task here to present and establish in detail the relation of the content of faith to the content of knowledge. In truth, all and every faith-

† Joseph Kleutgen, *Die Theologie der Vorzeit*, vol. I, P. 39.



content originates from some actual inner human experience that has once been undergone. Such an experience is then preserved, as far as its outer form goes, without the consciousness of how it was acquired. And people maintain in regard to it that it came into the world by supernatural revelation. The content of the Christian faith was simply accepted by the Scholastics. Science, inner experience, had no business to claim any rights over it. As little as science can create a tree, just so little dared Scholasticism to create a conception of God; it was bound to accept the revealed one ready-made and complete, just as natural science has to accept the tree ready-made. That the spiritual itself can shine forth and live in man's inner nature, could never, never be admitted by the Scholastic. He therefore

drew the frontier of the rightful power of knowledge at the point where the domain of outer experience ceases. Human knowledge must not dare to beget out of itself a conception of the higher beings; it is bound to accept a revealed one. The Scholastics naturally could not admit that in doing so they were accepting and proclaiming as "revealed" a conception which in truth had really been begotten at an earlier stage of man's spiritual life.

Thus, in the course of its development, all those ideas had vanished from Scholasticism which indicated the ways and means by which man had begotten, in a natural manner, his conceptions of the divine. In the first centuries of the development of Christianity, at the time of the Church Fathers, we see the doctrinal content of theology growing

bit by bit by the assimilation of inner experiences. In Johannes Scotus Eri-gena, who stood at the summit of Christian theological culture in the ninth century, we find this doctrinal content being handled entirely as an inner living experience. With the Scholastics of the following centuries, this characteristic of an inner, living experience disappears altogether: the old doctrinal content becomes transposed into the content of an external, supernatural revelation.

One might, therefore, understand the activity of the mystical theologians, Eckhart, Tauler, Suso and their associates, in the following sense: they were stimulated by the doctrines of the Church, which were contained in its theology, but had been misinterpreted, to bring to birth afresh from within themselves,

as inner living experience, a similar content.

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Nicholas of Cusa sets out to mount from the knowledge one acquires in the isolated sciences up to the inner living experiences. There can be no doubt that the excellent logical technique which the Scholastics have developed, and for which Nicholas himself was educated, forms a most effective means of attaining to these inner experiences, even though the Scholastics themselves were held back from this road by their positive faith. But one can only understand Nicholas fully when one reflects that his calling as a priest, which raised him to the dignity of Cardinal, prevented him from coming to a complete breach with the faith of the Church, which found an expression

appropriate to the age in Scholasticism. We find him so far along the road, that a single step further would necessarily have carried him out of the Church. We shall therefore understand the Cardinal best if we complete the one step more which he did not take; and then, looking backwards, throw light upon what he aimed at.

The most significant thought in Nicholas's mental life is that of "learned ignorance." By this he means a form of knowing which occupies a higher level as compared with ordinary knowledge. In the lower sense, knowledge is the grasping of an object by the mind, or spirit. The most important characteristic of knowing is that it gives us light about something outside of the spirit, that therefore it directs its gaze upon something different from itself. The

spirit, therefore, is concerned in the knowing-process with things thought of as outside itself. Now what the spirit develops in itself about things is the being of those things. The things are spirit. Man sees the spirit so far only through the sensible encasement. What lies outside the spirit is only this sensible encasement; the being of the things enters into the spirit. **If**, then, the spirit turns its attention to this being of the things, which is of like nature with itself, then it can no longer talk of knowing; for it is not looking at anything outside of itself, but is looking at something which is part of itself; is, indeed, looking at itself. **It** no longer knows; it only looks upon itself. **It** is no longer concerned with a "knowing," but with a "not-knowing." No longer does man "grasp" something through the mind;

he "beholds without conceiving" his own life. This highest stage of knowing is, in comparison with the lower stages, a "not-knowing."

But it is obvious that the essential being of things can only be reached through this stage of knowing. Thus Nicholas of Cusa in speaking of his "learned not-knowing" is really speaking of nothing else but "knowing" come to a new birth, as an inner experience. He tells us himself how he came to this inner experience. "I made many efforts to unite the ideas of God and the world, of Christ and the Church, into a single root-idea; but nothing satisfied me until at last, on my way back from Greece by sea, my mind's vision, as if by an illumination from above, soared up to that perception in which God appeared to me as the supreme Unity of all con-

traditions." To a greater or less extent this illumination was due to influences derived from the study of his predecessors. One recognises in his way of looking at things a peculiar revival of the views which we meet with in the writings of a certain Dionysius. The above-mentioned Scotus Erigena translated these writings into Latin, and speaks of their author as the "great and divine revealer."

The works in question are first mentioned in the first half of the sixth century. They were ascribed to that Dionysius, the Areopagite, named in the Acts of the Apostles, who was converted to Christianity by St. Paul. When these writings were really composed may here be left an open question. Their contents worked powerfully upon Nicholas as they had already worked upon Scotus



Erigena, and as they must also have been in many ways stimulating for the way of thinking of Eckhart and his colleagues. This "learned not-knowing" is in a certain way preformed in these writings. Here we can only indicate the essential trait in the way of conceiving things found in these works. Man primarily knows the things of the sense-world. He forms thoughts about its being and action. The Primal Cause of all things must lie higher than these things themselves. Man therefore must not seek to grasp this Primal Cause by means of the same concepts and ideas as things. If he therefore ascribes to the Root-Being (God) attributes which he has learned to know in lower things, such attributes can be at best auxiliary conceptions of his weak spirit, which drags down the Root-Being to itself, in order to conceive it.

In truth, therefore, no attribute whatsoever which lower things possess can be predicated of God. It must not even be said that God "is." For "being" too is a concept which man has formed from lower things. But God is exalted above "being" and "not-being." The God to whom we ascribe attributes, is therefore not the true God. We come to the true God, when we think of an "Over-God" above and beyond any God with such attributes. Of this "Over-God" we can know nothing in the ordinary sense. In order to attain to Him, "knowing" must merge into "not-knowing."

One sees that at the root of such a view there lies the consciousness that man himself is able to develop a higher knowing, which is no longer mere knowing-in a purely natural manner-on the basis of what his various sciences have yielded

him. The Scholastic view declared knowledge to be impotent to such a development; and, at the point where knowledge is supposed to cease, it called in to the help of knowledge a faith basing itself upon external revelation. Nicholas of Cusa was thus upon the road to develop out of knowledge itself that which the Scholastics had declared to be unattainable for knowledge.

We thus see that, from Nicholas of Cusa's point of view, there can be no question of there being only one kind or mode of knowing. On the contrary, for him, knowing clearly divides itself into two, first into such knowing as mediates our acquaintance with external objects, and second into such as is itself the object of which one gains knowledge. The first mode of knowing is dominant in the sciences, which teach us about

the things and occurrences of the outer world; the second is in us when we ourselves live in the knowledge we have acquired. This second kind of knowing grows out of the first. Now, however, it is still one and the same world with which both these modes of knowing are concerned; and it is one and the self-same man who is active in both. Hence the question must arise, whence comes it that one and the self-same man develops two different kinds of knowledge of one and the same world.

Already, in connection with Tauler, the direction could be indicated in which the answer to this question must be sought. Here in Nicholas of Cusa this answer can be still more definitely formulated. In the first place, man lives as a separated (individual) being amidst other separated beings. In addition to

the effects which the other beings produce on each other, there arises in his case the (lower) knowledge. Through his senses he receives impressions from other beings, and works up these impressions with his inner spiritual powers. He then turns his spiritual gaze away from external things, and beholds himself as well as his own activity. In so doing self-knowledge arises in him. But so long as he remains on this level of self-knowledge, he does not, in the true sense of the word, behold himself. He can still believe that some hidden being is active within him, whose manifestations and effects are *only* that which appears to him to be his own activities. But now the moment may come in which, through an incontrovertible inner experience, it becomes clear to the man that he experiences, in what he perceives or

feels within himself, not the manifestation or effect of any hidden power or being, but this very being itself in its most essential and intimate form. Then he can say to himself: In a certain way I find all other things ready given, and I myself, standing apart from and outside of them, add to them whatever the spirit has to tell about them. But what I thus creatively add to the things in myself, therein do I myself live; that is myself, my very own being. But what is that which speaks there in the depths of my spirit? **It** is the knowledge which I have acquired of the things of the world. But in this knowledge there speaks no longer an effect, a manifestation; that which speaks expresses itself wholly, holding back nothing of what it contains. In this knowledge, there speaks the world in all its immediacy.

But I have acquired this knowledge of things and of myself, as one thing among other things. From out my own being I myself speak, and the things, too, speak.

Thus, in truth, I am giving utterance no longer only to my own being; I am also giving utterance to the being of things themselves. My "ego" is the form, the organ in which the things express themselves about themselves. I have gained the experience that in myself I experience my own essential being; and this experience expands itself in me to the further one that in myself and through myself the All-Being Itself expresses Itself, or in other words, knows Itself. I can now no longer feel myself as a thing among other things; I can now only feel myself as a form in which the All-Being lives out Its own life.

**I**t is thus only natural that one and the same man should have two modes of knowing. Judging by the facts of the senses, he is a thing among other things, and, in so far as he is that, he gains for himself a knowledge of these things; but at any moment he can acquire the higher experience that he is really the form in which the All-Being beholds Itself. Then man transforms himself from a thing among other things into a form of the All-Being—and, along with himself, the knowledge of things transforms itself into the expression of the very being of things. But as a matter of fact this transformation can only be accomplished through man. That which is mediated in the higher knowledge does not exist as long as this higher knowledge itself is not present. Man becomes only a real being in the creation of this higher



knowledge; and only through man's higher knowledge can things also bring their being forth into real existence.

If, therefore, we demand that man shall add nothing to things through his inner knowledge, but merely give expression to whatever already exists in the things outside of himself, that would really amount to a complete abnegation of all higher knowledge. From the fact that man, in respect of his sensible life, is merely one thing among others, and that he only attains to the higher knowledge when he himself accomplishes with himself, as a being of the senses, the transformation into a higher being, it follows that he can never replace the one kind of knowledge by the other. His spiritual life consists, on the contrary, in a ceaseless oscillation between these two poles of knowledge-between know-

ing and seeing. If he shuts himself off from the seeing, he abandons the real nature of things: if he seeks to shut himself off from sense-perception, he would shut out from himself the things whose nature he seeks to know. It is these very same things which reveal themselves alike in the lower knowing and the higher seeing; only in the one case they reveal themselves according to their outer appearance; in the other according to their inner being. Thus it is not due to the things themselves that, at a certain stage, they appear only as external things; but their doing so is due to the fact that man must first of all raise and transform himself to the level upon which the things cease to be external and outside.

In the light of these considerations, some of the views which natural science

has developed during the nineteenth century appear for the first time in the right light. The supporters of these views tell us that we hear, see, and touch the objects of the physical world through our senses. The eye, for instance, transmits to us a phenomenon of light, a colour. Thus we say that a body emits red light, when with the help of the eye we experience the sensation "red." But the eye can give us this same sensation in other cases also. If the eyeball is struck or pressed upon, or if an electric spark is allowed to pass through the head, the eye has a sensation of light.

It is thus evident that even in the cases in which we have the sensation of a body emitting red light, something may really be happening in that body which has no sort of resemblance to the colour we sensate. Whatever may be

actually happening "outside of us" in space, so long as what happens is capable of making an impression on the eye, there arises in us the sensation of light. Thus what we experience *arises in us*, because we possess organs constituted in a particular manner. 'What happens outside in space, remains outside of us; we know only the effects which the external happenings call up in us. Hermann Helmholtz (1821- 1893) has given a clearly outlined expression to this thought:

"Our sensations are simply effects which are produced in our organs by external causes, and the manner in which such an effect will show itself depends, naturally enough, altogether upon the kind of apparatus upon which the action takes place. In so far as the quality of our sensation gives us information as

to the peculiar nature of the external action which produces the sensation, so far can the sensation be regarded as a sign or symbol of this external action, but not as an image or reproduction of it. For we expect in a picture some kind of resemblance to the object it represents; thus in a statue, resemblance of form; in a drawing, resemblance in the perspective projection of the field of view; in a painting, resemblance of colour in addition. A symbol, however, is not required to have any sort of resemblance to that which it symbolises. The necessary connection between the object and the symbol is limited to this: that the same object coming into action under the same conditions shall call up the same symbol, and that therefore different symbols shall always correspond to different ob-

jects. When berries of a certain kind in ripening produce together red colouration and sugar, then red colour and a sweet taste will always find themselves together in our sensation of berries of this form." \*

Let us follow out step by step the line of thought which this View makes its own. It is assumed that something happens outside of me in space; this produces an effect upon my sense-organs; and my nervous system conducts the impression thus made to my brain. There another occurrence is brought about. I experience the sensation "red." Now follows the assertion: therefore the sensation "red" is not outside, not ex-

\* Cp. Helmholtz, *Die Thatsachen der Wahrnehmung*, p. 12 *et seq.* I have characterised this kind of conception in detail in my *Philosophie der Freiheit*, Berlin, 1894, and in my *Welt- und Lebensanschauungen im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, vol. ii., p. i., etc.

ternal to me; it is *in* me. All our sensations are merely symbols or signs of external occurrences of whose real quality we know nothing. We live and move in our sensations and know nothing of their origin. In the spirit of this line of thought, it would thus be possible to assert that if we had no eyes, colour would not exist; for then there would be nothing to translate this, to us, wholly unknown external happening into the sensation "red."

For many people this line of thought possesses a curious attraction; but nevertheless it originates in a complete misconception of the facts under consideration. (Were it not that many of the present day scientists and philosophers are blinded even to absurdity by this line of thought, one would need to say less about it. But, as a matter

of fact, this blindness has ruined in many respects the thinking of the present day.) In truth, since man is but one object or thing among other things, it naturally follows that if he is to have any experience of them at all, they must make an impression upon him somehow or other. Something that happens outside the man must cause something to happen within him, if in his visual field the sensation "red" is to make its appearance.

The whole question turns upon this: 'What is without? what within? Outside of him something happens in space and time. But within there is undoubtedly a similar occurrence. For in the eye there occurs such a process, which manifests itself to the brain when I perceive the colour "red." This process which goes on "inside" me, I cannot perceive directly, any more than I can directly



perceive the wave motions "outside" which the physicist conceives of as answering to the colour "red." But really it is only in this sense that I can speak of an "inside" and an "outside" at all. Only on the plane of sense-perception can the opposition between "outside" and "inside" hold good.

The recognition of this leads me to assume the existence "outside" of a process in space and time, although I do not directly perceive it at all. And the same recognition further leads me to postulate a similar process within myself, although I cannot directly perceive that either. But, as a matter of fact, I habitually postulate analogous occurrences in space and time in ordinary life which I do not directly perceive; as, for instance, when I hear piano-playing next door, and assume that a human being

in space is seated at the piano and is playing upon it. And my conception, when I speak of processes happening outside of, and within me, is just the same. I assume that these processes have qualities analogous to those of the processes which do fall within the province of my senses, only that, because of certain reasons, they escape my direct perception.

If I were to attempt to deny to these processes all the qualities which my senses show me in the domains of space and time, I should in reality and in truth be trying to think something not unlike the famous knife without a handle, whose blade was wanting. Therefore, I can only say that space and time processes take place "outside" me; these bring about space and time processes "within" me; and both are

necessary if the sensation "red" is to appear in my field of vision. And, III so far as this "red" is not in space and time, I shall seek for it equally in vain, whether I seek "without" or "within" myself. Those scientists and philosophers who cannot find it "outside," ought not to want to find it "inside" either. For it is not "inside," in exactly the same sense in which it is not "outside." To declare that the total content of that which the sense-world presents to us is but an inner world of sensation or feeling, and then to endeavour to tack on something "external" or "outside" to it, is a wholly impossible conception.

Hence, we must not speak of "red," "sweet," "hot," etc., as being symbols, or signs, which as such are only aroused within us, and to which "outside" of us something totally different corresponds. For

that which is really set going within us, as the effect of some external happening, is something altogether other than what appears in the field of our sensations. **If** we want to call that which is within us a symbol, then we can say: These symbols make their appearance within our organism, in order to mediate to us the perceptions which, as such, in their immediacy, are neither within nor outside of us, but belong, on the contrary, to that common world, of which my "external" world and my "internal" world are only parts. In order to be able to grasp this common world, I must, it is true, raise myself to that higher plane of knowledge, for which an "inner" and an "outer" no longer exist. (I know quite well that people who pride themselves on the gospel that our entire world of experience builds itself up out

of sensations and feelings of unknown origin will look contemptuously upon these remarks; as, for instance, Dr. Erich Adikes in his book, *Kant contra Haeckel*, observes condescendingly: "At first people like Haeckel and thousands of his type philosophise gaily away without troubling themselves about theory of knowledge or critical self-reflection." Such gentlemen have no inkling of how cheap their own theories of knowledge are. They suspect the lack of critical self-reflection only in others. Let us leave to them their "wisdom.")

Nicholas of Cusa expresses some very telling thoughts bearing directly upon this very point. The clear and distinct way in which he holds apart the lower and the higher knowledge enables him, on the one side, to arrive at a full and corn-

plete recognition of the fact that man as a sense-being can only have in himself processes which, as effects, must necessarily be altogether unlike the corresponding external processes; while, on the other side, it guards him against confusing the inner processes with the facts which make their appearance in the field of our perceptions, and which, in their immediacy, are neither outside nor inside, but altogether transcend this opposition of "in" and "out."

But Nicholas was hampered in the thorough carrying through of these ideas by his "priestly garments." So we see how he makes a fine beginning with the progress from "knowing" to "not-knowing." At the same time we must also note that in the domain of the higher knowledge, or "ignorance," he unfolds practically nothing but the content of

the theological teaching which the Scholastics also give us. Certainly he knows how to expound this theological content in a most able manner. He presents us with teachings about Providence, Christ, the creation of the world, man's salvation, the moral life, which are kept thoroughly in harmony with dogmatic Christianity. **It** would have been in accordance with his mental starting point, to say: I have confidence in human nature that after having plunged deeply into the science of things in all directions, it is capable of transforming from within itself this "knowing" into a "not-knowing," in such wise that the highest insight shall bring satisfaction. In that case, he would not simply have accepted the traditional ideas of the soul, immortality, salvation, God, creation, the Trinity, and so forth, as he actually

did, but he would have represented his own.

But Nicholas personally was, however, so saturated with the conceptions of Christianity that he might well believe himself to have awakened in himself a "not-knowing" of his own, while yet he was merely bringing to light the traditional views in which he was brought up. But he stood upon the verge of a terrible precipice in the spiritual life of man. He was a *scientific* man. Now science, primarily, estranges us from the innocent harmony in which we live with the world so long as we abandon ourselves to a purely naive attitude towards life. In such an attitude to life, we dimly feel our connection with the world-whole.

We are beings like others, forming links in the chain of Nature's workings.



But with knowledge we separate ourselves off from this whole; we create within us a mental world, wherewith we stand alone and isolated over against Nature. We have become enriched; but our riches are a burden which we bear with difficulty; for it weighs primarily upon ourselves alone. And we must now, by our own strength, find the way back again to Nature. We have to recognise that we ourselves must now fit our wealth into the stream of world activities, just as previously Nature herself had fitted in our poverty. All evil demons lie in wait for man at this point. His strength can easily fail him. Instead of himself accomplishing this fitting in, he will, if his strength thus fails, seek refuge in some revelation coming from without, which frees him again from his loneliness, which leads back once more

the knowledge that he feels a burden, into the very womb of being, into the Godhead. Like Nicholas of Cusa, he will believe that he is travelling his own road; and yet in reality he will be only following the path which his own spiritual evolution has pointed out for him.

Now there ~~are—in~~ the main-three roads which one can follow, when once one has reached the point at which Nicholas had arrived: the one is positive faith, forcing itself upon us from without; the second is despair; one stands alone with one's burden, and feels the whole universe tottering with oneself; the third road is the development of the deepest, most inward powers of man. Confidence, trust in the world must be one of our guides upon this third path; courage, to follow that confidence whithersoever it may lead us, must be the other.

## **AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM AND THEOPHRASTUS PARACELSUS**

BOTH Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim (1487- 1535) and Theophrastus Paracelsus (1493-1541) followed the same road along which points Nicholas of Cusa's way of conceiving things. They devoted themselves to the study of Nature, and sought to discover her laws by all the means in their power and as thoroughly as possible. In this knowledge of Nature, they saw the true basis of all higher knowledge. They strove to develop this higher knowledge from within the science or knowledge of Nature by bringing that knowledge to a new birth in the spirit.

Agrippa von Nettesheim led a much varied life. He sprang from a noble family and was born in Cologne. He early studied medicine and law, and sought to obtain clear insight into the processes of Nature in the way which was then customary within certain circles and societies, or even among isolated investigators, who studiously kept secret whatever of the knowledge of Nature they discovered. For these purposes he went repeatedly to Paris, to Italy, and to England, and also visited the famous Abbot Trithemius of Sponheim in Würzburg. He taught at various times in learned institutions, and here and there entered the service of rich and distinguished people, at whose disposal he placed his abilities as a statesman and a man of science. If the services that he rendered are not always described by his

biographers as unobjectionable, if it is said that he made money under the pretence of understanding secret arts and conferring benefits on people thereby, there stands against this his unmistakable, unresting impulse to acquire honestly the entire knowledge of his age, and to deepen this knowledge in the direction of a higher cognition of the world.

We may see in him very plainly the endeavour to attain to a clear and definite attitude towards natural science on the one hand, and to the higher knowledge on the other. But he only can attain to such an attitude who is possessed of a clear insight as to the respective roads which lead to one and to the other kind of knowledge. As true as it is on the one hand that natural science must eventually be raised into the region of the spirit, if it is to pass over into

higher knowledge; so, also, it is true on the other, that this natural science must, to begin with, remain upon its own special ground, if it is to yield the right basis for the attainment of a higher level. The "spirit in Nature" exists only for spirit. So surely as Nature in this sense is spiritual, so surely too is there *nothing* in Nature, of all that is perceived by my bodily organs, which is immediately spiritual. There exists nothing spiritual which can appear to my eye as spiritual.

Therefore, I must not seek for the spirit as such in Nature; but that is what I am doing when I interpret any occurrence in the external world immediately as spiritual; when, for instance, I ascribe to a plant a soul which is supposed to be only remotely analogous to that of man. Further, I again do the same when I ascribe to spirit itself an existence in

space and time: as, for instance, when I assert of the human soul that it continues to exist in time without the body, but yet after the manner of a body; or again, when I even go so far as to believe that, under any sort of conditions or arrangements perceivable by the senses, the spirit of a dead person can show itself.

Spiritualism, which makes this mistake, only shows thereby that it has not attained to a true conception of the spirit at all, but is still bent upon directly and immediately "seeing" the spirit in something grossly sensible. It mistakes equally both the real nature of the sensible and also that of the spirit. It de-spiritualises the ordinary world of sense, which hourly passes before our eyes, in order to give the name of spirit immediately to something rare, surprising, uncommon. **It** fails to under-

stand that that which lives as the "spirit in nature" reveals itself to him who is able to perceive spirit in the collision of two elastic balls, for instance; and not only in occurrences which are striking from their rarity, and which cannot all at once be grasped in their natural sequence and connection.

But the spiritist further drags the spirit down into a lower sphere. Instead of explaining something that happens in space, and that he perceives through his senses only, in terms of forces and beings which in their turn are spacial and perceptible to the senses, he resorts to "spirits," which he thereby places exactly on a level with the things of the senses. At the very root of such a way of viewing things, there lies a lack of the power of spiritual apprehension. We are unable to perceive spiritual things spiritually;



we therefore satisfy our craving for the spiritual with mere beings perceptible to the senses. Their own inner spirit reveals to such men nothing spiritual; and therefore they seek for the spiritual through the senses. As they see clouds flying through the air, so they would fain see spirits hastening along. Agrippa von Nettesheim fought for a genuine science of Nature, which shall explain the phenomena of Nature, not by means of spirits phenomenalising in the world of the senses, but by seeing in Nature only the natural, and in the spirit only the spiritual.

Of course, Agrippa will be entirely misunderstood if one compares *his* natural science with that of later centuries which dispose of wholly different experiences. In such a comparison, it might easily seem that he was still actually and

entirely referring to the direct action of spirits, things which only depend upon natural connections or upon mistaken experience. Such a wrong is done to him by Moriz Carriere when he says, not in any malicious sense, it is true:

"Agrippa gives a huge list of things which belong to the Sun, the Moon, the Planets and the fixed stars, and receive influences from them; for instance: to the Sun are related Fire, Blood, Laurel, Gold, Chrysolite; they confer the gifts of the Sun: Courage, Cheerfulness, and Light. . ." Animals have a natural sense, which, higher than human understanding, approaches the spirit of prophecy. . ." Men can be bewitched to love and hate, to sickness and health. Thieves can be bewitched so that they cannot steal at some particular place, merchants, that they cannot do business,

mills, that they cannot work, lightning flashes, that they cannot strike. This is brought about through drinks, salves, images, rings, incantations; the blood of hyenas or basilisks is adapted to such a purpose-it reminds one of Shakespeare's witches' cauldron." No; it does not remind one of that, if one understands Agrippa aright. He believed - it goes without saying-in many facts which in his time everybody regarded as unquestionable. But we still do the same to-day. Or do we imagine that future centuries will not relegate much of what we now regard as "undoubted fact" to the lumber-room of "blind" superstition?

I am convinced that in our knowledge of facts there has been a real progress. When once the "fact" that the earth is round had been discovered, all previous conjectures were banished into the do-

main of "superstition"; and the same holdsgood of certain truths of astronomy, biology, etc. The doctrine of natural evolution constitutes an advance, as compared with all previous "theories of creation," similar to that marked by the recognition of the roundness of the earth as contrasted with all previous speculations as to its form. Nevertheless, I am vividly conscious that in our learned scientific works and treatises there is to be found many a "fact" which will seem to future centuries to be just as little of a fact as much that Paracelsus and Agrippa maintain; but the really important point is not *what* they regarded as "fact," but *how*, in what spirit, they interpreted their "facts."

In Agrippa's time, there was little understanding or sympathy for the "natural magic" he represented, which

sought in Nature the natural—the spiritual only in the spirit; men clung to the "supernatural magic," which sought the spiritual in the realm of the sensible, and which Agrippa combated. Therefore the Abbot Trithemius of Sponheim was right in giving him the advice to communicate his views only as a secret teaching to a few chosen pupils who could rise to a similar idea of Nature and spirit, because one "gives only hay to oxen and not sugar as to singing birds." It may be that Agrippa himself owed to this same Abbot his own correct point of view. In his *Steganography*, Trithemius has produced a book in which he handled with the most subtle irony that mode of conceiving things which confuses nature with spirit.

In this book he apparently speaks of

nothing but supernatural occurrences. Anyone reading it as it stands must believe that the author is talking of conjurations of spirits, of spirits flying through the air, and so on. If, however, one drops certain words and letters under the table, there remain—as Wolfgang Ernst Heidel proved in the year 1676—letters which, combined into words, describe purely natural occurrences. (In one case, for instance, in a formula of conjuration, one must drop the first and last words entirely, and then cancel from the remainder the second, fourth, sixth, and so on. **I**n the words left over, one must again cancel the first, third, fifth letters and so on. One next combines what is then left into words; and the conjuration formula resolves itself into a purely natural communication.)

How difficult it was for Agrippa to work himself free from the prejudices of his time and to rise to a pure perception is proved by the fact that he did not allow his "Occult Philosophy" (*Philosophia Occulta*), already written in 1510, to appear before the year 1531, because he considered it unripe. Further evidence of this fact is given by his work "On the Vanity of the Sciences" (*De Vanitate Scientiarum*) in which he speaks with bitterness of the scientific and other activities of his time. He there states quite clearly that he has only with difficulty wrenched himself free from the phantasy which beholds in external actions immediate spiritual processes, in external facts prophetic indications of the future, and so forth.

Agrippa advances to the higher knowledge in three stages. He treats as the

first stage the world as it is given for the senses, with its substances, its physical, chemical and other forces. He calls Nature, in so far as it is looked at on this level, "elementary Nature." On the second stage, one contemplates the world as a whole in its natural interconnection, as it orders things according to measure, number, weight, harmony, and so forth. The first stage proceeds from one thing to the next nearest. It seeks for the causes of an occurrence in its immediate surroundings. The second stage regards a single occurrence in connection with the entire universe. **It** carries through the idea that everything is subject to the influence of all other things in the entire world-whole. In its eyes this world-whole appears as a vast harmony, in which each individual item is a member. Agrippa terms the



world, regarded from this point of view, the "astral" or "heavenly" world. The third stage of knowing is that wherein the spirit, by plunging deep into itself, perceives immediately the spiritual, the Root-Being of the world. Agrippa here speaks of the world, of soul and spirit.

The views which Agrippa develops about the world, and the relation of man to the world, present themselves to us in the case of Theophrastus Paracelsus, in a similar manner, only in more perfected form. **It** is better, therefore, to consider them in connection with the latter.

Paracelsus characterises himself aptly, when he writes under his portrait: "None shall be another's slave, who for himself can remain alone." His whole attitude towards knowledge is given in these words. He strives everywhere to

go back himself to the deepest foundations of natural knowledge, in order to rise by his own strength to the loftiest regions of cognition. As Physician, he will not, like his contemporaries, simply accept what the ancient investigators, who then counted as authorities, -Galen or Avicenna, for instance, asserted long ago; he is resolved to read for himself directly in the book of Nature. "The Physician must pass Nature's examination, which is the world, and all its workings. And the very same that Nature teaches him, he must command to his wisdom, but seek for nothing in his wisdom, only and alone in the light of Nature." He shrinks from nothing, in order to learn to know Nature and her workings in all directions. For this purpose he made journeys to Sweden, Hungary, Spain, Portugal, and the East.

He can truly say of himself: "I have followed the Art at the risk of my life, and have not been ashamed to learn from wanderers, executioners and sheep-shearers. My doctrine was tested more severely than silver in poverty, fears, wars and hardships."

What has been handed down by ancient authorities has for him no value, for he believes that he can attain to the right view only if he himself experiences the upward climb from the knowledge of Nature to the highest insight. This living, personal experience puts into his mouth the proud utterance: "He who will follow truth, must come into my monarchy. . . . After me; not I after you, Avicenna, Rhases, Galen, Mesur! After me; not I after you, O ye of Paris, ye of Montpellier, ye of Swabia, ye of Meissen, ye of Cologne, ye of Vienna and

of what lies on the Danube and the Rhine; ye islands in the sea, thou Italy, thou Dalmatia, thou Athens, thou Greek, thou Arab, thou Israelite; after me, not I after you! Mine is the Monarchy."

It is easy to misunderstand Paracelsus because of his rough exterior, which sometimes conceals a deep earnestness behind a jest. Does he not himself say: "By nature I am not subtly woven, nor brought up on figs and wheat-bread, but on cheese, milk and rye-bread, wherefore I may well be rude with the over-clean and superfine; for those who were brought up in soft clothing and we who were bred in pine needles do not easily understand one another. When in myself I mean to be kindly, I must therefore often be taken as rude. How can I not be strange to one who has never wandered in the sun?"

In his book about Winkelmann, Goethe has described the relation of man to Nature in the following beautiful sentence: "When the healthy nature of man acts as a whole; when he feels himself as one with a great, beautiful, noble and worthy whole; when the sense of harmonious well-being gives him a pure and free delight; then would the Universe, if it could be conscious of its own feeling, burst forth in joy at having attained its goal, and contemplate with wondering admiration the summit of its own becoming and being." With a feeling such as finds expression in these sentences, Paracelsus is simply saturated. From out of its depths the riddle of humanity takes shape for him. Let us watch how this happens in Paracelsus's sense.

At the outset, the road by which

Nature has travelled to attain her loftiest altitude is hidden from man's power of comprehension. She has climbed, indeed, to the summit; but the summit does not proclaim: I feel myself as the whole of Nature; it proclaims, on the contrary: I feel myself as this single, separated human being. That which in reality is an achievement of the whole universe, feels itself as a separated, isolated being, standing alone by itself. This indeed is the true being of man, *viz.*, that he must needs feel himself to be something quite different from what, in ultimate analysis, he really is. And if that be a contradiction, then must man be called a contradiction come to life.

Man is the universe in his own particular way; he regards his oneness with the universe as a duality: he is

the very same that the universe is; but he is the universe as a repetition, as a single being. This is the contrast which Paracelsus feels as the Microcosm (Man) and the Macrocosm (Universe). Man, for him, is the universe in miniature. That which makes man regard his relationship to the world in this way, that is his spirit. This spirit appears as if bound to a single being, to a single organism: and this organism belongs, by the very nature of its whole being, to the mighty stream of the universe. It is one member, one link in that whole, having its very existence only in relation with all the other links or members thereof. But spirit appears as an outcome of this single, separated organism, and sees itself at the outset as bound up only with that organism. It tears loose this organism from the mother earth

out of which it has grown. So, for Paracelsus, a deep-seated connection between man and the universe lies hidden **in** the basic foundations of being, a connection which is hidden through the presence of "spirit." That spirit which leads us to higher insight by making knowledge possible, and leads on this knowledge to a new birth on a higher level-this has, as its first result for us men, to veil from us our own oneness with the whole.

Thus the nature of man resolves itself for Paracelsus in the first place into three factors: our sensuous-physical nature, our organism which appears to us as a natural being among other natural beings and is of like nature with all other natural beings; our concealed or hidden nature, which is a link in the chain of the whole universe, and therefore is not shut **up**



within the organism or limited to it, but radiates and receives the workings of energy upon and from the entire universe; and our highest nature, our spirit, which lives its life in a purely spiritual manner. The first factor in man's nature Paracelsus calls the "elementary body"; the second, the ethereal-heavenly, or "astral body"; and the third he names "the SouL"

Thus in the "astral" phenomena, Paracelsus recognises an intermediate stage between the purely physical and the properly spiritual or soul-phenomena. Therefore these astral activities will come into view when the spirit or soul, which veils or conceals the natural basis of our being, suspends its activity. In the dream-world we see the simplest phenomena of this realm. The pictures which hover before us in dreams, with

their remarkably significant connection with occurrences in our environment and with states of our inner nature, are products of our natural basis or root-being, which are obscured by the brighter light of the soul. For example, when a chair falls over beside my bed and I dream a whole drama ending with a shot fired in a duel; or when I have palpitation of the heart and dream of a boiling cauldron, we can see that in these dreams natural operations come to light which are full of sense and meaning, and disclose a life lying between the purely organic functions and the concept-forming activity which is carried on in the full, clear consciousness of the spirit. Connected with this region are all the phenomena belonging to the domain of hypnotism and suggestion; and in the latter are we not compelled

to recognise an interaction between human beings, which points to some connection or relation between beings in Nature, which is normally hidden by the higher activity of the mind? From this starting point we can reach an understanding of what Paracelsus meant by the "astral" body. **I**t is the sum total of those natural operations under whose influence we stand, or may in special circumstances come to stand, or which proceed from us, without our souls or minds coming into consideration in connection with them, but which yet cannot be included under the concept of purely physical phenomena. The fact that Paracelsus reckons as truths in this domain things which we doubt to-day, does not come into the question, from the point of view which I have already described.

Starting from the basis of these views as to the nature of man, Paracelsus divides him into seven factors or principles, which are the same as those we also find in the wisdom of the ancient Egyptians, among the Neoplatonists and in the Kabbalah. In the first place, man is a physical-bodily being, and therefore subject to the same laws as every other body. He is, in this respect, therefore, a purely "elementary" body. The purely physical-bodily laws combine into an organic life-process, and Paracelsus denotes this organic sequence of law by the terms "*archueus*" or "*spiritus vite*." Next, the organic rises into a region of phenomena resembling the spiritual, but which are not yet properly spiritual, and these he classifies as "astral" phenomena. From amidst these astral phenomena, the functions of the

"animal soul" make their appearance. Man becomes a being of the senses.

Then he connects together his sense impressions according to their nature, by his understanding or mind, and the "human soul" or "reasoning soul" becomes alive in him. He sinks himself deep into his own mental productions, and learns to recognise "spirit" as such, and thus he has risen at length to the level of the "spiritual soul." Finally, he must come to recognise that in this spiritual soul he is experiencing the ultimate basis of universal being; the spiritual soul ceases to be individual, to be separated. Then arises the knowledge of which Eckhart spoke when he felt no longer that *he* was speaking within himself, but that in him the Root-Being was uttering Itself. The condition has come about in which the All-Spirit in

man beholds Itself. Paracelsus has stamped the feeling of this condition with the simple words: "And that is a great thing whereon to dwell: there is naught in heaven or upon earth that is not in Man. And God who dwelleth in Heaven, He also is in Man."

With these seven principles of human nature, Paracelsus aims at expressing nothing else than the facts of inner and outer experience. The fact remains unquestioned that, what for human experience subdivides itself into a multiplicity of seven factors, is in higher reality a unity. But the higher insight exists just for the very purpose of exhibiting the unity in all that appears as multiplicity to man, owing to his bodily and spiritual organisation. On the level of the highest insight, Paracelsus strives to the utmost to fuse the unitary Root-

Being of the world with his own spirit. But he knows that man can only cognise Nature in its spirituality, when he enters into immediate intercourse with that Nature. Man does not grasp Nature by peopling it from within himself with arbitrarily assumed entities; but by accepting and valuing it as it is, as Nature. Paracelsus therefore does not seek for God or for spirit in Nature; but Nature, just as it comes before his eyes, is for him wholly, immediately divine. Must one then first ascribe to the plant a soul after the kind of a human soul, in order to find the spiritual?

Hence Paracelsus explains to himself the development of things, so far as that is possible with the scientific means of his age, altogether in such wise that he conceives this development as a sensible-natural process. He makes all things

to proceed from the root-matter, the root-water (Yliaster). And he regards as a further natural process the separation of the root-matter (which he also calls the great Limbus) into the four elements: Water, Earth, Fire and Air. When he says that the "Divine Word" called forth the multiplicity of beings from the root-matter, one must understand this also only in such wise as perhaps in more recent natural science one must understand the relationship of Force to Matter. A "Spirit," in a matter-of-fact sense, is not yet present at this stage. This "Spirit" is no matter-of-fact basis of the natural process, but a matter-of-fact result of that process.

This Spirit does not create Nature, but develops itself out of Nature. Not a few statements of Paracelsus might be interpreted in the opposite sense. Thus



when he says: "There is nothing which does not possess and carry with it also a spirit hidden in it and that lives not withal. Also, not only has *that* life, which stirs itself and moves, as men, animals, the worms in the earth, the birds in the sky and the fishes in water, but all bodily and actual things as well."

But in such sayings Paracelsus only aims at warning us against that superficial contemplation of Nature which fancies it can exhaust the being of a thing with a couple of "stuck-up" concepts, according to Goethe's apt expression. He aims not at putting into things some imaginary being, but at setting in motion all the powers of man to bring out that which in actual fact lies in the thing.

What matters is not to let oneself be misled by the fact that Paracelsus ex-

presses himself in the spirit of his time. **I**t is far more important to recognise what things really hovered before his mind when, looking upon Nature, he expresses his ideas in the forms of expression proper to his age. He ascribes to man, for instance, a dual flesh, that is, a dual bodily constitution. "The flesh must also be understood, that it is of two kinds, namely the flesh that comes from Adam and the flesh which is not from Adam. The flesh from Adam is a gross flesh, for it is earthly and nothing besides flesh, that can be bound and grasped like wood and stone. The other flesh is not from Adam, it is a subtle flesh and cannot be bound or grasped, for it is not made of earth." What is the flesh that is from Adam? **I**t is every thing that man has received through natural development, everything, there-

fore, that has passed on to him by heredity. To that is added, whatever man has acquired for himself in his intercourse with the world around him in the course of time.

The modern scientific conceptions of inherited characteristics and those acquired by adaptation easily emerge from the above-cited thought of Paracelsus. The "more subtle flesh" that makes man capable of his intellectual activities, has not existed from the beginning in man. Man was « gross flesh" like the animal, a flesh that "can be bound and grasped like wood and stone." In a scientific sense, therefore, the soul is also an acquired characteristic of the " gross flesh." What the scientist of the nineteenth century has in his mind's eye when he speaks of the factors inherited from the animal world, is just what Paracelsus

has in view when he uses the expression, "the flesh that comes from Adam."

Naturally I have not the least intention of blurring the difference that exists between a scientist of the sixteenth and one of the nineteenth century. It was, indeed, this latter century which for the first time was able to see, in the full scientific sense, the phenomena of living beings in such a connection that their natural relationship and actual descent, right up to man, stood out clearly before one's eyes. Science sees only a natural process where Linnreus in the eighteenth century saw a spiritual process and characterised it in the words: "There are counted as many species of living beings, as there were created different forms in the beginning." While thus in Linnreus's time, the Spirit had still to be transferred into the spacial world

and have assigned to it the task of spiritually generating the forms of life, or "creating" them: the natural science of the nineteenth century could give to Nature what belonged to Nature, and to Spirit what belonged to Spirit. To Nature is even assigned the task of explaining her own creations; and the Spirit can plunge into itself there, where alone it is to be found, in the inner being of man.

But although in a certain sense Paracelsus thinks according to the spirit of his age, yet he has grasped the relationship of man to Nature in a profound manner, especially in relation to the idea of Evolution, of Becoming. He did not see in the Root-Being of the universe something which in any sense is there as a finished thing, but he grasped the Divine in the process of Becoming.

Thereby he was enabled truly to ascribe to man a self-creative activity. For if the divine root of being is, as it were, given once for all, then there can be no question of any truly creative activity in man. It is not man, living in time, who then creates, but it is God, who is from Eternity, that creates. But for Paracelsus there is no such God from Eternity. For him there is only an eternal happening, and man is one link in this eternal happening. What man forms, was previously in no sense existent. What man creates, is, as he creates it, a new, original creation. If it is to be called divine, it can only be so-called in the sense in which it is a human creation. Therefore Paracelsus can assign to man a role in the building of the universe, which makes him a eo-architect in its creation. The divine root of being is

*without* man, not that which it is *with* man.

"For nature brings nothing to light, which as such is perfect, but man must make it perfect." This self-creative activity of man in the building of the universe is what Paracelsus calls Alchemy. "This perfecting is Alchemy. Thus the Alchemist is the baker, when he bakes bread, the vintager, when he makes wine, the weaver, when he makes cloth." Paracelsus aims at being an Alchemist in his own domain as a Physician. "Therefore I may well write so much here about Alchemy, that ye may well understand it, and experience that which it is and how it is to be understood; and not find a stumbling-block therein that neither Gold nor Silver shall come to thee therefrom. But have regard thereunto, that the Arcana [curative means]

be revealed unto thee. . . . The third pillar of medicine is Alchemy, for the preparation of the medicines cannot come to pass without it, because Nature cannot be made use of without Art."

In the strictest sense, therefore, the eyes of Paracelsus are directed to Nature, in order to overhear from herself what she has to say about that which she brings forth. He seeks to explore the laws of chemistry, so that, in his sense, he may work as an Alchemist. He pictures to himself all bodies as compounded out of three root-substances: Salt, Sulphur, and Mercury. What he thus names, naturally does not coincide with that which later chemistry solely and strictly calls by these names; just as little as that which Paracelsus conceives of as the root-substance is such in the sense of our later chemistry. Different



things are called by the same names at different times. What the ancients called the four elements: Earth, Water, Air, and Fire, we still have to-day. But we call these four "elements" no longer "elements," but states of aggregation and have for them the designations: solid, liquid, gaseous and etheric. The Earth, for instance, was for the ancients not earth, but the "solid."

Again, we can clearly recognise the three root-substances of Paracelsus in contemporary conceptions, though not in present names of like sound. For Paracelsus, dissolution in a liquid and burning are the two most important chemical processes which he utilises. If a body be dissolved or burnt, it breaks up into its parts. Something remains behind as insoluble; something dissolves, or is burnt. What is left behind is to

him of the nature of Salt; the soluble (liquid) of the nature of Mercury ; while he terms Sulphur-like the part that can be burnt.

All this, taken as relating to material things, may leave the man cold who cannot look out beyond such natural processes; whoever seeks at all costs to grasp the spirit with his senses, will people these processes with all sorts of ensouling beings. He, however, who like Paracelsus knows how to regard them in connection with the whole, which permits its secret to become revealed in man's inner being,- he accepts them, as the senses offer them; he does not first re-interpret them; for just as the occurrences of Nature lie before us in their sensible reality, so too do they, in their own way, reveal to us the riddle of existence. That which through their

sensible reality they have to unveil from within the soul of man, stands, for him who strives after the light of higher knowledge, far higher than all supernatural wonders that man can invent or get revealed to him about their suppositious "spirit." There is no "Spirit of Nature," capable of uttering loftier truths than the mighty works of Nature herself, when our soul links itself in friendship with that Nature and listens to the revelations of her secrets in intimate and tender intercourse. Such friendship with Nature was what Paracelsus sought.

## VALENTINE WEIGEL AND JACOB BOEHME

IN the View of Paracelsus, what mattered most was to acquire ideas about Nature which should breathe the spirit of the higher insight that he represented. A thinker related to him, who applied the same mode of conceiving things to his own nature especially, is VALENTINE WEIGEL (1533- 1588). He grew up out of Protestant theology in a like sense to that in which Eckhart, Tauler, and Suso grew up out of Roman Catholic theology. He has predecessors in Sebastian Frank and Caspar Schwenckfeldt. These two, as contrasted with the orthodox Churchmen clinging to external profession,

pointed downwards to the deepening of the inner life. For them it is not that Jesus whom the Gospels preach who is of value, but the Christ who can be born in every man as his deeper nature, and become for him the Saviour from the lower life and the guide to ideal uplifting.

Weigel performed silently and humbly the duties of his office as clergyman in Zschopau. It was only from the writings he left behind, printed first in the seventeenth century, that the world learned anything of the significant ideas which had come to him about the nature of man.'

Weigel feels himself driven to gain a clear understanding of his relation to the

'The following, from among his writings, may be named: *Der gildene Griff, das ist alle Ding oluie Irrthumb zu erkennen, oielen Hochgelehrten unbekandt, und doch alien Menschen nothsuendig zu unssen; Erkenne dich selbst; Vom Ort der Welt.*

teaching of the Church; and that leads him on further to investigate the basic foundations of all knowledge. Whether man can know anything through a confession of faith, is a question as to which he can only give himself an account when he knows *how* man knows. Weigel starts from the lowest kind of knowing. He asks himself: How do I know a sensible object, when it presents itself before me? Thence he hopes to be able to mount upwards to a point of view whence he can give himself an account of the highest knowledge.

In cognition through the senses, the instrument (the sense-organ) and the object, the "counterpart" (*Gegenwurf*) stand opposed. "Since in natural perception there must be two things, as the object or 'counterpart,' which is to be known and seen by the eye; and the eye,

or the perceiver, which sees or knows the object, so do thou hold over against each other: whether the knowledge comes forth from the object to the eye; or whether the judgment, or the cognition, flows out from the eye into the object."<sup>1</sup> Weigel now says to himself: **If** the cognition (or knowledge) flowed from the "counterpart" (or thing) into the eye, then of necessity from one and the same thing a similar and perfect cognition must come to all eyes. But that is not the case, for each man sees according to the measure of his own eyes. Only the eyes, not the "counterpart" (or object) can be in fault, in that various and different conceptions are possible of one and the same thing. To clear up the matter, Weigel compares seeing with reading. **If** the book were not there, I

<sup>1</sup> *Der giddene Griff*, p. 26 et seq.

naturally could not read it; but it might still be there, and yet I could read nothing in it, if I did not understand the art of reading. The book therefore must be there; but, from itself it can give me not the smallest thing; I must draw forth everything I read from within myself. That is also the nature of sensible perception. Colour is there as the "counterpart," but it can give the eye nothing from out of itself. The eye must recognise, from out of itself, what colour is. As little as the content of the book is in the reader, just so little is colour in the eye. If the content of the book were in the reader, he would not need to read it. Yet in reading, this content does not flow out from the book, but from the reader. So is it also with the sensible object. What the sensible thing before him is; that does not flow from outside



into the man, but from within outwards.

Starting from these thoughts, one might say: If all knowledge flows out from man into the object, then one does not know what is in the object, but only what is in man. The detailed working out of this line of thought, brought about the view of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804).<sup>1</sup>

Weigel says to himself: Even if the knowledge flows out from man, it is still only the being of the "counterpart" (or object) which comes to light in this indirect way through man. As I learn the content of the book by reading it, and not by my own content, so also I learn the colour of the "counterpart"

<sup>1</sup>The error in this line of thought will be found explained in my book, *The Philosophy of Freedom*, Berlin, 1894. Here I must limit myself to mentioning that Valentine Weigel, with his simple, robust way of conceiving things, stands far higher than Kant,

through the eye, not any colour to be found in the eye, or in myself. (Thus Weigel arrives by a road of his own at a result that we have already encountered in Nicholas of Cusa. Cp. pages 151-160). **In** this way Weigel attained to clearness as to the nature of sense-perception. He arrived at the conviction that everything which external things have to tell us can only flow forth from our own inner nature itself. Man cannot remain passive when he tries to know sensible objects and seeks merely to allow them to act upon him; but he must assume an active attitude, and bring forth the knowledge from within himself. The counterpart (or object) merely awakens the knowledge in the spirit. Man rises to higher knowledge when his spirit becomes its own "counterpart." One can see from sensible cognition that no cognition can

flow into man from outside. Therefore there can be no such thing as an external revelation, but only an inner awakening.

As now the external counterpart waits till there comes into its presence man, in whom it can express its being, so too must man wait, when he seeks to be his own "counterpart" (or object) until the knowledge of his own being shall be awakened in him. If, in cognition through the senses, man must assume an active attitude in order that he may bring to meet the "counterpart" its own being, so in the higher knowing, man must hold himself passive, because he is himself now the "counterpart." He must admit its being into himself. Therefore the cognition of the spirit appears to him as enlightenment from above. In contrast to cognition through the senses, Weigel therefore terms the higher cognition the

"Light of Mercy." This "Light of Mercy" is, in reality, nothing other than the self-knowledge of the spirit in man, or the re-birth of knowledge on the higher level of beholding.

Now just as Nicholas of Cusa, in following up his road from knowing to beholding, does not really bring about the re-birth of the knowledge he has gained, on the higher level, but only the faith of the Church in which he was brought up appears deceptively before him as such a re-birth, so is it also the case with Weigel. He guides himself to the right road, but loses it again in the very moment in which he steps upon it. He who will travel the road that Weigel points out, can regard the latter as his guide only as far as the starting-point.

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What rings out to meet us from the works of the Master-Shoemaker of G6rlitz, JACOB BOEHME (1575-1624), sounds like the joyous outburst of Nature admiring her own being upon the summit of her evolution. A man appears before us whose words have wings, woven out of the inspiring feeling of having seen knowledge shining within him as Higher Wisdom. Jacob Boehme describes his own state as Piety which strives only to be Wisdom, and as a Wisdom that seeks to live only in Piety: "As I was wrestling and fighting in God's behalf, behold a wondrous light shone into my soul, such as was quite foreign to savage nature; therein I first knew what God and man were, and what God had to do with men."

Jacob Boehme no longer feels himself as a separated being expressing its insights; he feels himself as an organ of

## WEIGEL AND BOEHME

the great All-Spirit, speaking in him. The limits of his personality do not appear to him as the limits of the Spirit that speaks from within him. This Spirit is for him present everywhere. He knows that "the Sophist will blame him" when he speaks of the beginning of the world and its creation: "the while I was not thereby and did not myself see it. To him be it said that in the essence of my soul and body, when I was not yet the 'I,' but when I was still Adam's essence, I was there present and myself squandered away my glory in Adam."

Only in external similes is Boehme able to indicate how the light broke forth in his inner being. When once as a boy he finds himself on the top of a mountain, he sees above him a place where large red stones seem to shut up the mountain; the entrance is open and in

its depth he sees a vessel full of gold. A shudder runs through him; and he goes on his way without touching the treasure. Later on he is apprenticed to a shoemaker in Gorlitz. A stranger steps into the shop and demands a pair of shoes. Boehme is not allowed to sell them in the absence of his master. The stranger departs, but after a while calls the apprentice out of the shop and says to him: "Jacob, thou art little, but thou wilt some day become quite another man, over whom the world will break out into wonder." In riper years, Jacob Boehme sees the reflection of the bright sun in a tin vessel: the view that thus presents itself to him seems to him to unveil a profound secret. Even after the impression of this appearance, he believes himself to be in possession of the key to the riddles of Nature.

He lives as a spiritual anchorite, humbly earning his living by his trade, and between whiles, as though for his own recollection, he notes down the harmonies which resound in his inner being when he feels the Spirit in himself. The zealotry of priestly fervour makes life hard for the man; he, who desires naught but to read the Scripture which the light of his inner nature illuminates for him, is persecuted and tortured by those to whom only the external writ, the rigid, dogmatic confession of faith, is accessible.

One world-riddle remains as a disquieting presence in Jacob Boehme's soul, driving him on to knowledge. He believes himself to be in his spirit enfolded in a divine harmony; but when he looks around him, he sees discord everywhere in the divine workings. To man belongs the light of Wisdom; and yet he is exposed



to error; in him lives the impulse to the good, and yet the discord of evil sounds throughout the whole of human development. Nature is governed by its own great laws; yet its harmony is disturbed by happenings of no purport, and the warfare of the elements. How is this discord in the harmonious world-whole to be understood? This question tortures Jacob Boehme. **It** strides into the centre of the world of his thought. He strives to gain a view of the world as a whole, which shall include the discordant. For how can a conception which leaves the actual present discord unexplained explain the world? The discord must be explained out of the harmony, the evil out of the good itself. Let us restrict ourselves, in speaking of these things, to the good and the evil, wherein the lack of harmony in the narrower sense finds

its expression. For, fundamentally, jacob Boehme also restricts himself to this. He can do so, for Nature and man appear to him as a single entity. He sees in both similar laws and processes. The purposeless seems to him an evil something in Nature, just as evil seems to him something purposeless in man. Similar fundamental forces rule both here and there. To one who has known the origin of evil in man, the source of evil in Nature also lies open and clear.

Now, how can the evil as well as the good flow forth from the very same Root-Being? Speaking in Jacob Boehme's sense, one would give the following answer. The Root-Being does not live out its existence in itself. The multiplicity of the world shares in this existence. As the human body lives its life, not as a single member, but as a multiplicity of

members, so also the Root-Being. And as human life is poured out into this multiplicity of members, so too the Root-Being is poured out into the manifoldness of the things of this world. As true as it is that the entire man has only one life, so true is it that every member has its own life. And as little as it contradicts the whole harmonious life of a man, that his hand should turn itself against his own body and wound it, so little is it impossible that the things of the world, which live the life of the Root-Being in their own way, should turn themselves against each other. Thus the Root-Being, in dividing itself among different lives, confers upon each such life the capacity to turn itself against the whole.

It is not from the good that evil streams forth, but from the way in which the good lives. As the light is only able to shine

when it pierces the darkness, so the good can bring itself to life only when it permeates its opposite. From out of the "fathomless abyss" of darkness there streams forth the light; from the "groundlessness" of the indifferent there is brought to birth the Good. And as in the shadow only the brightening demands a pointing to the light; but the darkness, as a matter of course, is felt as that which weakens the light; so too in the world, it is only the law-abiding character that is sought for in all things; and the evil, the purposeless, is accepted as a matter of course, intelligible in itself. Thus, in spite of the fact that for Jacob Boehme the Root-Being is the All, still nothing in the world can be understood, unless one has an eye both to the Root-Being and its opposite at once. "The good has swallowed up into itself the evil or

the hideous. . . . Every being has in itself good and evil, and in its unfoldment, as it passes over into division, it becomes a contradiction of qualities, as one seeks to overcome the other."

Hence it is altogether in accordance with Jacob Boehme's view to see in everything, and in every process of the world, both good and evil; but it is not in accord with his meaning, without more ado to seek the Root-Being in the mingling of good and evil. The Root-Being must swallow up the evil; but the evil is not a part of the Root-Being. Jacob Boehme seeks the Root-Being of the world; but the world itself has sprung forth from the "fathomless abyss" through the Root-Being. "The external world is not God, and eternally will not be called God, but only a being wherein God manifests Himself. . . . "When one says: God is

all, God is heaven and earth, and also the outer world, so is that true: for from him and in him all stands originally rooted. But what am I to do with such a saying, which is no religion?"

'With such a view in the background, Jacob Boehme's conceptions as to the being of the whole world built themselves up in his mind, so that he makes the orderly world emerge in a series of steps from the "fathomless abyss." This world builds itself up in seven natural forms. In dark astringency the Root-Being receives form, dumbly shut up within itself and motionless. This astringency Boehme grasps under the symbol of Salt. In employing such designations he leans upon Paracelsus, who had borrowed from chemical processes his names for the processes of Nature. By swallowing up its opposite,

the first nature-form passes over into the form of the second; the astringent, the motionless, takes on movement; Power and Life enter into it. Quicksilver (Mercury) is the symbol for this second form. In the struggle of Rest and Motion, of Death with Life, the third form of Nature unveils itself (Sulphur). This Life battling within itself, becomes manifest to itself; it lives thenceforward no longer an outer battle of its members; there quivers through it as it were a unifying glowing flash, itself lighting up its own being (Fire). This fourth form of Nature rises to the fifth, the living battle of the parts resting in themselves (Water). On this level, as upon the first, there is present an inner astringency and dumbness; only it is not an absolute rest, a silence of the inner opposites, but an interior movement of

the opposites. It is not the motionless resting in itself, but the moved, that which has been kindled by the fire-flash of the fourth stage. Upon the sixth level, the Root-Being itself becomes aware of itself as such inner life. Living beings endowed with senses represent this form of Nature. Jacob Boehme calls it the "Clang" or Call, and in so doing adopts the sense-perception of sound as the symbol for sense-perception in general. The seventh form of Nature is the Spirit, raising itself on the basis of its sense-perceptions (Wisdom), He finds **himself** again as himself, as the Root-Being, within the world that has grown up out of the "fathomless abyss," shaping itself out of the harmonious and the discordant. "The Holy Ghost brings the Glory of this Majesty into the being, wherein the Godhead stands revealed."



It is with such views that Jacob Boehme seeks to fathom that world which for him, according to the knowledge of his time, was reckoned as the actual world of fact. For him all is fact which is so regarded by the natural science of his time and by the Bible. His way of conceiving things is one thing, his world of facts quite another. One can imagine the former applied to a totally different knowledge of facts. And thus there appears before our eyes a Jacob Boehme as he might stand at the parting of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Such a one would not saturate with his way of conceiving things the six days' creation work of the Bible and the fight of the angels and the devils, but Lyell's geological knowledge and the facts of Haeckel's *The History of Creation*. He who can penetrate into the spirit of Jacob

Boehme's writings must arrive at this conviction.<sup>1</sup>

'We may here name the most important of Boehme's writings: *Die Morgenröthe im Aujgang*, *Die drei Prineipie*« gottlichen Lebens oder über das dreifache Leben des Menschen; *Das umgewandte Auge*; "*Signatura rerum*" oder von der Geburt und Bezeichnung alter Wesen; *Das* *Mysterium M*agnum: "

## **GIORDANO BRUNO AND ANGELUS SILESIUS**

IN the first decennium of the sixteenth century, the scientific genius of Nicholas Copernicus (1473-1543) thinks out in the castle of Heilsberg, in Prussia, an intellectual structure which compels the men of subsequent epochs to look up to the starry heavens with other conceptions than those which their forefathers in antiquity and the Middle Ages had. To them the earth was their dwelling-place, at rest in the centre of the Universe. The stars, however, were for them beings of a perfect nature, whose motion took place in circles because the circle is the representative of perfection.

In that which the stars showed to human senses they beheld something of the nature of soul, something spiritual. It was one kind of speech that the things and processes upon earth spoke to man; quite another, that of the shining stars, beyond the moon in the pure aether, which seemed like some spiritual nature filling space. Nicholas of Cusa had already formed other ideas.

Through Copernicus, earth became for man a brother-being in face of the other heavenly bodies, a star moving like others. All the difference that earth has to show for man he could now reduce to this: that earth is his dwelling-place. He was no longer forced to think differently about the events of this earth and those of the rest of universal space. The world of his senses had expanded itself into the most remote spaces. He was

compelled henceforth to allow that which penetrated his eye from the ~~æther~~ to count as sense-world just as much as the things of earth. He could no longer seek in the eether in sensuous fashion for the Spirit.

'Whoever, henceforth, strove after higher knowledge, must needs come to an understanding with this expanded world of the senses. In earlier centuries, the brooding mind of man stood before a world of facts. Now he was confronted with a new task. No longer could the things of earth only express this nature from within man's inner being. This inner nature of his was called on to embrace the spirit of a sense-world, which fills the All of Space everywhere alike.

The thinker of Nola, PHILOTHEO *GWRDANO BRUNO* (1548-1600) found himself faced by such a problem. The senses

have conquered the universe of space; henceforth the Spirit is no more to be found in space. Thus man was guided from without to seek henceforward for the Spirit there alone where from out of profound inner experiences those glorious thinkers sought it, whose ranks our previous expositions have led before us. These thinkers drew upon a view of the world to which, later on, the advance of natural knowledge forces humanity. The sun of those ideas, which later should shine upon a new view of Nature, with them still stands below the horizon; but their light already appears as the early dawn at a time when men's thoughts of Nature itself still lay in the darkness of night.

The sixteenth century gave the heavenly spaces to natural science for the sense-world to which it rightfully belongs; by the end of the nineteenth century, this

science had advanced so far ~~that~~, even within the phenomena of plant, animal, and human life, it could assign to the world of sensible facts that which belongs to it. Neither, then, in the ~~æther~~ above, nor in the development of living creatures, can this natural science henceforth seek for anything but sensible, matter-of-fact processes. As the thinker in the sixteenth century had to say: "The earth is a star among other stars, subject to the same laws as other stars"; so must the thinker of the nineteenth century say: "Man, whatever may be his origin and his future, is for anthropology only a mammal, and further, that mammal whose organisation, needs and diseases are the most complex, whose brain, with its marvellous capacities, has reached the highest level of development." †

† Paul Topinard : *Anthropologie*, Leipzig, ,888, p. 528.

From such a standpoint, attained through natural science, there can no longer occur any confusion between the spiritual and the sensible, provided man understands himself rightly. Developed natural science makes it impossible to seek in Nature for a Spirit conceived of after the fashion of something material, just as healthy thinking makes it impossible to seek for the reason of the forward movement of the clock-hand, not in mechanical laws (the Spirit of inorganic Nature), but in a special Daimon, supposed to bring about the movements of the hands. Ernst Haeckel was quite right in rejecting, as a scientist, the gross conception of a God conceived of in material fashion. "In the higher and more abstract forms of religion, the bodily appearance is abandoned and God is worshipped as pure Spirit, devoid of



body. 'God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.' But, nevertheless, the soul-activity of this pure Spirit remains quite the same as that of the anthropomorphic personal God. In reality, even this immaterial Spirit is not thought of as bodiless, but as invisible, like a gas. We thus arrive at the paradoxical conception of God as a gaseous vertebrate."<sup>1</sup>

In reality, the matter-of-fact, sensible existence of something spiritual may be assumed only when immediate sensible experience shows something spiritual, and only such a degree of the spiritual may be assumed as can be perceived in this manner. That first rate thinker, B. Carneri, ventured to say (in his book: *Empfindung und Bewusstsein*, p. 15): "The dictum: No spirit without matter,

<sup>1</sup> Haeckel, *Riddle of the Universe*.

but also no matter without spirit,-would entitle us to extend the question to the plant also, nay, even to any block of stone taken at random, wherein there seems very little to speak in favour of these correlative conceptions." Spiritual occurrences as matters of fact are the results of various doings of an organism; the Spirit of the world is not present in the world in a material sense, but precisely after a spiritual fashion. Man's soul is a sum of processes in which Spirit appears most immediately as fact. In the form of such a soul, however, Spirit is present in man only. And it implies that one misunderstands Spirit, that one commits the worst sin against Spirit, to seek for Spirit in the form of Soul elsewhere than in man, to imagine other beings thus ensouled as man is. Whoever does this, only shows that he has

not experienced Spirit within himself; he has only experienced that outer form of appearance of Spirit, the Soul, which reigns in him. But that is just the same as though one regarded a circle drawn with a pencil as the real, mathematically ideal circle. Whoever experiences in himself nothing other than the soul-form of the Spirit, feels himself thereupon driven to assume also such a soul-form in non-human things, in order that thereby he may not need to remain rooted in the materiality of the gross senses. Instead of thinking the Root-Being of the world as Spirit, he thinks of it as World-Soul, and postulates a general ensoulment of Nature.

Giordano Bruno, upon whom the new Copernican view of Nature forced itself, could grasp Spirit in the world, from which it had been expelled in its old form,

in no other manner than as World-Soul. On plunging into Bruno's writings (especially his deeply thoughtful book: *De ~~Rebus~~ Principiis et Elementis et Causis*) one gets the impression that he thought of things as ensouled, although in varying degree. He has not, in reality, experienced in himself the Spirit, therefore he conceives Spirit after the fashion of the human soul, wherein alone he has encountered it. When he speaks of Spirit, he conceives of it in the following way: "The universal reason is the inmost, most effective and most special capacity, and a potential part of the World-Soul; it is something one and identical, which fills the All, illuminates the universe and instructs Nature how to bring forth her species as they ought to be." In these sentences Spirit, it is true, is not described as a "gaseous verte-

brate," but it is described as a being that is like to the human soul. "Let now a thing be as small and tiny as you please, it yet has within it a portion of spiritual substance, which, when it finds a substratum adapted thereto, reaches out to become a plant, an animal, and organises itself to any body you choose that is ordinarily called ensouled. For Spirit is to be found in all things, and there does not exist even the tiniest little body which does not embrace in itself such a share thereof as causes **it** to come to life."

Because Giordano Bruno had not really experienced the Spirit, as Spirit, in himself, he could therefore confuse the life of the Spirit with the external mechanical processes, wherewith Raymond Lully (1235-1315) wanted to unveil the secrets of the Spirit in his so-called

"Great Art" (*Ars Magna*). A recent philosopher, Franz Brentano, describes this "Great Art" thus: "Concepts were to be inscribed upon concentric, separately revolving discs, and then the most varied combinations produced by turning them about." Whatever chance brings up in the turning of these discs, was shaped into a judgment about the highest truths. And Giordano Bruno, in his manifold wanderings through Europe, made his appearance at various seats of learning as a teacher of this "Great Art." He possessed the daring courage to think of the stars as worlds, perfectly analogous to our earth; he widened the outlook of scientific thinking beyond the confines of earth; he thought of the heavenly bodies no longer as bodily spirits; but he still thought of them as soul-like spirits. One must not be unjust towards

the man whom the Catholic Church caused to pay with death the penalty for his advanced way of thinking. It required something gigantic to harness the whole space of heaven in the same view of the universe which hitherto had been applied only to things upon earth, even though Bruno did still think of the sensible as soul-like.

\* \* \*

**I**n the seventeenth century there appeared Johann Scheffler, called ANGELUS SILESIUS (1624-1677), a personality in whom there once more shone forth, in mighty harmony of soul, what Tauler, Weigel, Jacob Boehme, and others, had prepared. Gathered, as it were, into a spiritual focus and shining with enhanced light-giving power, the ideas of the thinkers named make their appearance in his book: "Cherubinischer Wanders-

mann. Geistreiche Sinn- und Schlussreime." And everything that Angelus Silesius utters appears as such an immediate, inevitable, natural revelation of his personality, that it is as though this man had been called by a special providence to embody wisdom in a personal form. The simple, matter-of-course way in which he lives wisdom, attains its expression by being set forth in sayings which, even in respect of their art and their form, are worthy of admiration. He hovers like some spiritual being over all earthly existence; and what he says is like the breath of another world, freed beforehand from all that is gross and impure, wherefrom human wisdom generally only toilsomely works itself free.

He only is truly a knower, in the sense of Angelus Silesius, who brings the eye of the All to vision in himself; he alone



sees his action in the true light who feels that this action is wrought in him by the hand of the All: "God is in me the fire, and I in him the light; are we not in most intimate communion one with another?"—"I am as rich as God; there can be no grain of dust that I-believe me, man,-have not in common with Him."-"God loves me above Himself; if I love Him above myself: I so give Him as much as He gives me from Himself."-"The bird flies in the air, the stone rests on the earth; in water lives the fish, my spirit in God's own hand."-"Art thou born of God, then bloometh God in thee; and His Godhead is thy sap and thy adornment."-"Halt! whither runnest thou? Heaven is in thee: seekest thou God elsewhere, **thou** missest Him ever and ever."

For one who thus feels himself in the

All, every separation ceases between self and another being; he no longer feels himself as a single individual; rather does he feel all that there is of him as a part of the world, his own proper being, indeed, as that World-Whole itself. "The world, it holds thee not; thou art thyself the world that holds thee, in thee, with thee, so strongly captive bound."—"Man has never perfect bliss before that unity has swallowed up otherness."—"Man is all things; if aught is lacking to him, then in truth he knoweth not his own riches."

As a sense-being, man is a thing among other things, and his sense-organs bring to him, as a sensible individuality, sense-news of the things in space and time outside of him; but when Spirit speaks in man, then there remains no without and no within; nothing is here and nothing

is there that is spiritual; nothing is earlier and nothing is later; space and time have vanished in the contemplation of the All-Spirit. Only so long as man looks forth as an individual, is he here and the thing there; and only so long as he looks forth as an individual, is this earlier, and this later. "Man, if thou swingest thy spirit over time and place, so each moment canst thou be in eternity." - "I am myself eternity when I leave time behind, and self in God and God in self together grasp." - "The rose that here thine outer eye doth see, it so hath bloomed in God from all eternity." - "In centre set thyself, so see'st thou all at once: what then and now occurred, here and in heaven's realm." - "So long for thee, my friend, in mind lies place and time: so long graspest thou not what 's God, nor what eternity." -

"When man from manifoldness withdraws, and inward turns to God, so cometh he to unity." The summit has thus been climbed, whereon man steps forth beyond his individual "I" and abolishes every opposition between the world and himself. A higher life begins for him. The inner experience that comes over him appears to him as the death of the old and a resurrection in a new life. "When thou dost raise thyself above thyself and lettest God o'errule; then in thy spirit happens ascension into heaven." - "The body in the spirit must arise, the spirit, too, in God: if thou in him, my man, will live for ever blessed."-" So much mine 'I' in me doth 'minish and decrease; so much therefore to power cometh the Lord's own'!.'"

From such a point of view, man recognises his meaning and the meaning of all

things in the realm of eternal necessity. The natural All appears to him immediately as the Divine Spirit. The thought of a divine All-Spirit, who could still have being and sub-existence over and beside the things of the world, vanishes away as a superseded conception. This All-Spirit appears so outpoured into things, so becomes one in being with the things, that it could no longer be thought at all, if even one single member were thought away from its being. "Naught is but I and thou; and if we twain were not; then is God no more God, and heaven falleth in."-Man feels himself as a necessary link in the world-chain. His doing has no longer aught of arbitrariness or of individuality in it. What he does is necessary in the whole, in the world-chain, which would fall to pieces if this his doing were to fall out from it. "God

may not make without me a single little worm: if I with him uphold it not, straightway must it burst asunder."-"I know that without me God can no moment live: if I come to naught, he needs must give up the ghost."-Upon this height, man for the first time sees things in their real being. He no longer needs to ascribe from outside to the smallest thing, to the grossly sensible, a spiritual entity. For just as this minutest thing is, in all its smallness and gross sensibility, it is a link in the Whole. "No grain of dust is so vile, no mote can be so small: the wise man seeth God most gloriously therein.t->"In a mustard seed, if thou wilt understand it, is the image of all things above and beneath."

Man feels himself free upon this height. For constraint is there only where a thing

can constrain from without. But when all that is without has flowed into the within, when the opposition between "I and world," "Without and Within," "Nature and Spirit," has disappeared, man then feels all that impels him as his own impulse. "Shut me, as strongly as thou wilt, in a thousand irons: I still will be quite free and unfettered." – "So far as my will is dead, so far must God do what I will; I myself prescribe to him the pattern and the goal." – At this point cease all moral obligations, coming from without: man becomes to himself measure and goal. He is subject to no law; for the law, too, has become his being. "For the wicked is the law; were there no command written, still would the pious love God and their neighbour."

Thus, on the higher level of knowledge, the innocence of Nature is given back to

man. He fulfils the tasks that are set him in the feeling of an external necessity. He says to himself: Through this iron necessity it is given into thy hand to withdraw from this very iron necessity the link which has been allotted to thee. "Ye men, learn but from the meadow flower: how ye shall please God and be beautiful as well."-" The rose exists without why and because, she blooms because she blooms; she takes no heed of herself, asks not if men see her." The man who has arisen upon the higher level feels in himself the eternal, necessary pressure of the All, as does the meadow flower; he acts, as the meadow flower blooms. The feeling of his moral responsibility grows in all his doing into the immeasurable. For that which he does not do is withdrawn from the All, is a slaying of that All, so far as the possi-



bility of such a slaying lies with him.  
"What is it, not to sin? Thou need'st  
not question long: go, the dumb flowers  
will tell it thee."-"All must be slain.  
**If** thou slayest not thyself for God, then  
at last eternal death shall slay thee for  
the enemy."

## AFTERWORD

NEARLY two and a half centuries have passed since Angelus Silesius gathered up the profound wisdom of his predecessors in his *Cherubineasi Wanderer*. These centuries have brought rich insights into Nature. Goethe opened a vast perspective to natural science. He sought to follow up the eternal, unchangeable laws of Nature's working, to that summit where, with like necessity, they cause man to come into being, just as on a lower level they bring forth the stone.<sup>1</sup> Lamarck, Darwin, Haeckel, and others, have laboured further in the direction of this way of conceiving things. The

<sup>1</sup> Cp. my book: *Goethe's Weltanschauung*, Weimar, 1897.

“question of all questions,” that <sup>111</sup> regard to the natural origin of man, found its answer in the nineteenth century; and other related problems in the realm of natural events have also found their solutions. To-day men comprehend that it is not necessary to step outside of the realm of the actual and the sensible in order to understand the serial succession of beings, right up to man, in its development in a purely natural manner.

And, further, J. G. Fichte's penetration has thrown light into the being of the human ego, and shown the soul of man where to seek itself and what it is.<sup>1</sup> Hegel has extended the realm of thought over all the provinces of being, and striven to grasp in thought the entire sensible

<sup>1</sup> Cp. ante, and the section upon Fichte in my book: *Welt- und Lebensanschauungen im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, vol. i., Berlin, S. Cronbach.

## AFTERWORD

existence of Nature, as also the loftiest creations of the human spirit.'

How, then, do those men of genius whose thoughts have been traced in the preceding pages, appear in the light of a world-conception which takes into account the scientific achievements of the centuries that followed their epoch? They still believed in a "supernatural" story of creation. How do their thoughts appear when confronted with a "natural" history of creation, which the science of the nineteenth century has built up?

**This** natural science has given to Nature naught that did not belong to her; it has only taken from her what did not belong to her. **It** has banished from Nature all that is not to be sought **in** her, but is to be found only **in** man's inner

, Cp. my presentation of Hegel in *Welt- und Lebensanschauungen im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, vol. i.

being. It sees no longer any being in Nature that is like unto the human soul, and that creates after the manner of man. It no longer makes the organic forms to be created by a man-like God; it follows up their development in the sense-world according to purely natural laws. Meister Eckhart, as well as Tauler, and also Jacob Boehme with Angelus Silesius, would needs feel the deepest satisfaction in contemplating this natural science. The spirit in which they desired to behold the world has passed over in the fullest sense to this view of Nature, when it is rightly understood. What they were still unable to do, *viz.*: to bring the facts of Nature themselves into the light which had risen for them, that, undoubtedly, would have been their longing, if this same natural science had been laid before them. They could not do it; for

no geology, no "natural history of creation" told them about the processes in Nature. The Bible alone told them in its own way about such processes. Therefore they sought, so far as they could, for the spiritual where alone it is to be found: in the inner nature of man.

At the present time, they would have quite other aids at hand than in their own time, to show that an actually existing Spirit is to be found only in man. They would to-day agree unreservedly with those who seek Spirit as a fact not in the root of Nature, but in her fruit. They would admit that Spirit as perceivable is a result of evolution, and that upon lower levels of evolution such Spirit must not be sought for. They would understand that no "creative thought" ruled in the forthcoming of the Spirit in the organism, any more than

such a "creative thought" caused the ape to evolve from the marsupials.

Our present age cannot speak about the facts of Nature as Jacob Boehme spoke of them. But there exists a point of view, even in this present day, which brings Jacob Boehme's way of regarding things near to a view of the world that takes account of modern natural science. There is no need to lose the Spirit, when one finds in Nature only the natural. Many do, indeed, believe to-day that one must needs lose oneself in a shallow and prosaic materialism, if one simply accepts the "facts" which natural science has discovered. I myself stand fully upon the ground of this same natural science. I have, through and through, the feeling that, in a view of Nature such as Ernst Haeckel's, only he can lose himself amid shallows who him-

self approaches it with a shallow thought-world. I feel something higher, more glorious, when I let the revelations of the "natural history of creation" work upon me, than when the supernatural miracle stories of the confessions of faith force themselves upon me. **In** no "holy book" do I know aught that unveils for me anything as lofty as the "sober" fact, that every human germ in the mother's womb repeats in brief, one after the other, those animal types which its animal ancestors have passed through. **If** only we fill our hearts with the glory of the facts that our senses behold, then we shall have little left over for "wonders" which do not lie in the course of Nature. **If** we experience the Spirit in ourselves, then we have no need of such in external Nature.

**In** my *Philosophy of Freedom*, (Berlin, 1894) I have described my view



of the world, which has no thought of driving out the Spirit, because it beholds Nature as Darwin and Haeckel beheld her. A plant, an animal, gains nothing for me if I people it with souls of which my senses give me no information. I do not seek in the external world for a "deeper," "more soulful" being of things; nay, I do not even assume it, because I believe that the insight which shines forth for me in my inner being guards me against it. I believe that the things of the sense-world are, in fact, just as they present themselves to us, because I see that a right self-knowledge leads us to this: that in Nature we should seek nothing but natural processes. I seek no Spirit of God in Nature, because I believe that I perceive the nature of the human spirit in myself. I calmly admit my animal ancestry, because I be-

lieve myself to know that there, where these animal ancestors have their origin, no spirit of like nature with soul can work. I can only agree with Ernst Haeckel when he prefers the "eternal rest of the grave" to an immortality such as is taught by some religions.<sup>1</sup> For I find a dishonouring of Spirit, an ugly sin against the Spirit, in the conception of a soul continuing to exist after the manner of a sensible being.

I hear a shrill discord when the scientific facts in Haeckel's presentation come up against the "piety" of the confessions of some of our contemporaries. **B**ut for me there rings out from confessions of faith, which give a discord with natural facts, naught of the spirit of the higher piety which I find in Jacob Boehme and Angelus Silesius. This higher piety stands far more in full harmony with

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Haeckel's *Riddle of the Universe*,

the working of the natural. There lies no contradiction in the fact of saturating oneself with the knowledge of the most recent natural science, and at the same time treading the path which Jacob Boehme and Angelus Silesius have sought. He who enters on that path in the sense of those thinkers has no need to fear losing himself in a shallow materialism when he lets the secrets of Nature be laid before him by a "natural history of creation." Whoever has grasped my thoughts in this sense will understand with me in like manner the last saying of the *Cherubinean Wanderer*, with which also this book shall close: "Friend, it is even enough. In case thou more wilt read, go forth, and thyself become the book, thyself the reading."

THE END

# **A Road to Self-knowledge**

**By  
Rudolf Steiner**

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A ROAD TO  
SELF-KNOWLEDGE

Rudolf Steiner

## Scan / Edit Notes

This book is an "amplification" of the book entitled Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment. It consists of eight "meditations." The eight topics treated are: The Physical Body, The Etheric Body, Clairvoyant Cognition of the Elemental World, The Guardian of the Threshold, The Astral Body, The Ego Body or Thought Body, The Character of Experience in the Supersensible Worlds, and The Way in Which Man Beholds His Repeated Earth Lives.

The original German title is: Ein Weg Zur Selbsterkenntnis des Menschen. In Acht Meditationen.

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## Introduction

It is the endeavour of this treatise to convey spiritual-scientific knowledge concerning the being of man. The method of representation is arranged in such a way that the reader may grow into what is depicted, so that, in the course of reading, it becomes for him a kind of self-conference. If this soliloquy takes on such a form that thereby hitherto concealed forces, which can be awakened in every soul, reveal themselves, then the reading leads to a real inner work of the soul; and the latter can see itself gradually urged on to that soul-journeying, which truly advances towards the beholding of the spiritual world. What has to be imparted, therefore, has been given in the form of eight Meditations, which can be actually practised. If this is done, they can be adapted for imparting to the soul, through its own inner deepening, that about which they speak.

It has been my aim on the one hand, to give something to those readers who have already made themselves conversant with the literature dealing with the domain of the supersensible, as it is here understood. Thus through the style of the description, through the communication directly connecting with the soul's experience, perhaps those who have knowledge of supersensible life will here find something that may appear of importance to them. On the other hand, many a one can find that just through this method of representation profit may be gained by those who yet stand far distant from the achievements of Spiritual Science.

Although this work is intended as an amplification of my other writings in the domain of Spiritual Science, it should nevertheless be possible to read it independently.

It has been my endeavour in my books, Theosophy and Occult Science, to represent the things as they show themselves to observation, when it ascends to the Spiritual. In these works the method of representation is descriptive and its direction prescribed by conformity to the law manifesting out of the things themselves. In this, A Road to Self-Knowledge, the method of representation is different. Herein is stated that which can be experienced by a soul which sets out on the path to the Spirit in a certain manner.

The treatise may therefore be regarded as an account of experiences of the soul; only it must be taken into consideration that the experiences which can be gained in such a way as is here described, must assume an individual form in each soul according to its own peculiarity. It has been my endeavour to do justice to this fact, so that one can also imagine that what is depicted here has been actually lived through by an individual soul, exactly as represented. The title of this treatise is, therefore, A Road to Self-knowledge. On that account it may serve the purpose of assisting other souls to live into this portrayal and attain to corresponding goals, and is an amplification of my book, Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment.

Only isolated fundamental experiences of a spiritual scientific nature are represented. The giving of information in this manner of the further spheres of "Spiritual Science" is suspended for the present.

Rudolf Steiner.

Munich

August 1912



## First Meditation

In which the Attempt is made to obtain a True Idea of the Physical Body

When the soul is surrendered to the phenomena of the outer world by means of physical perception, it cannot be said - after true self-analysis - that the soul perceives these phenomena, or that it actually experiences the things of the outer world. For, during the time of surrender, in its devotion to the outer world, the soul knows in truth nothing of itself. The fact is rather that the sunlight itself, radiating from things through space in various colours, lives or experiences itself within the soul. When the soul enjoys any event, at the moment of enjoyment it actually is joy in so far as it is conscious of being anything. Joy experiences itself in the soul.

The soul is one with its experience of the world. It does not experience itself as something separate which feels joy, admiration, delight, satisfaction, or fear. It actually is joy, admiration, delight, satisfaction, and fear. If the soul would always admit this fact, then and only then would the occasions when it retires from the experience of the outer world and contemplates itself by itself appear in the right light. These moments would then appear as forming a life of quite a special character, which at once shows itself to be entirely different from the ordinary life of the soul.

It is with this special kind of life that the riddles of the soul's existence begin to dawn upon our consciousness. And these riddles are, in fact, the source of all other riddles of the world. For two worlds - an outer and an inner - present themselves to the spirit of man, directly the soul for a longer or shorter time ceases to be one with the outer world and withdraws into the loneliness of its own existence.

Now this withdrawal is no simple process, which, having been once accomplished, may be repeated again in much the same way. It is much more like the beginning of a pilgrimage into worlds previously unknown. When once this pilgrimage has been begun, every step made will call forth others, and will also be the preparation for these others. It is the first step which makes the soul capable of taking the next one. And each step brings fuller knowledge of the answer to the question: "What is Man in the true sense of the word?" Worlds open up which are hidden from the ordinary conception of life. And yet only in those worlds can the facts be found which will reveal the truth about this very conception. And even if no answer proves all-embracing and final the answers obtained through the soul's inner pilgrimage go beyond everything which the outer senses and the intellect bound up with them can ever give. For this "something more" is necessary to man, and he will find that this is so, when he really and earnestly analyses his own nature.

At the outset of such a pilgrimage through the realms of our own soul, hard logic and common sense are necessary. They form a safe starting-point for pushing on into the supersensible realms, which the soul, after all, is yearning to reach. Many a soul would prefer not to trouble about such a starting-point, but rather penetrate directly into the supersensible realms; though every healthy soul, even if it has at first avoided such commonsense considerations as disagreeable, will always submit to them later. For however much knowledge of the supersensible worlds one may have obtained from another starting-point, one can only gain a firm footing there through some such methods of reasoning as follow here.

In the life of the soul moments may come in which it says to itself: "You must be able to withdraw from everything that an outer world can give you, if you do not wish to be forced into confessing that you are but self-contradictory non-sense; but this would make life impossible, because it is clear that what you perceive around you exists independently of you; it existed without you and will continue to exist without you. Why then do colours perceive themselves in you, whilst your perception may be of no consequence to them? Why do the forces and materials of the outer world build up your body? Careful thought will show that this body only acquires life as the outward manifestation of you.

It is a part of the outer world transformed into you, and, moreover, you realise that it is necessary to you. Because, to begin with, you could have no inner experiences without your senses, which the body alone can put at your disposal. You would remain empty without your body, such as you are at the beginning. It gives you through the senses inner fulness and substance." And then all those reflections may follow which are essential to any human existence if it does not wish to get into unbearable contradiction with itself at certain moments which come to every human being. This body - as it exists at the present moment - is the expression of the soul's experience. Its processes are such as to allow the soul to live through it and to gain experience of itself in it.

A time will come, however, when this will not be so. The life in the body will some day be subject to laws quite different from those which it obeys to-day whilst living for you, and for the sake of your soul's experience. It will become subject to those laws, according to which the material and forces in nature are acting, laws which have nothing more to do with you and your life. The body to which you owe the experience of your soul, will be absorbed in the general world-process and exist there in a form which has nothing more in common with anything that you experience within yourself

Such a reflection may call forth in the inner experience all the horror of the thought of death, but without the admixture of the merely personal feelings which are ordinarily connected with this thought. When such personal feelings prevail it is not easy to establish the calm, deliberate state of mind necessary for obtaining knowledge.

It is natural that man should want to know about death and about a life of the soul independent of the dissolution of the body. But the relation existing between man himself and these questions is - perhaps more than anything else in the world - apt to confuse his objective judgment and to make him accept as genuine answers only those which are inspired by his own desires or wishes.

For it is impossible to obtain true knowledge of anything in the spiritual realms without being able with complete unconcern to accept a "No " quite as willingly as a "Yes." And we need only look conscientiously into ourselves to become distinctly aware of the fact that we do not accept the knowledge of an extinction of the life of the soul together with the death of the body with the same equanimity as the opposite knowledge which teaches the continued existence of the soul beyond death.

No doubt there are people who quite honestly believe in the annihilation of the soul on the extinction of the life of the body, and who arrange their lives accordingly. But even these are not unbiased with regard to such a belief. It is true that they do not allow the fear of annihilation, and the wish for continued existence, to get the better of the reasons which are distinctly in favour of such annihilation. So far the conception of these people is more logical than that of others who unconsciously construct

or accept arguments in favour of a continued existence, because there is an ardent desire in the secret depths of their souls for such continued existence. And yet the view of those who deny immortality is no less biased, only in a different way. There are amongst them some who build up a certain idea of what life and existence are. This idea forces them to think of certain conditions, without which life is impossible.

Their view of existence leads them to the conclusion that the conditions of the soul's life can no longer be present when the body falls away. Such people do not notice that they have themselves from the very first fixed an idea of the conditions necessary for the existence of life, and cannot believe in a continuation of life after death for the simple reason that, according to their own preconceived idea, there is no possibility of imagining an existence without a body. Even if they are not biased by their own wishes, they are biased by their own ideas from which they cannot emancipate themselves.

Much confusion still prevails in such matters, and only a few examples need be put forward of what exists in this direction. For instance, the thought that the body, through whose processes the soul manifests its life, will eventually be given over to the outer world, and follow laws which have no relation to inner life - this thought puts the experience of death before the soul in such a way that no wish, no personal consideration, need necessarily enter the mind; and by a thought such as this we are led to a simple, impersonal question of knowledge.

Then also the thought will soon dawn upon the mind that the idea of death is not important in itself, but rather because it may throw light upon life. And we shall have to come to the conclusion that it is possible to understand the riddle of life through the nature of death.

The fact that the soul desires its own continued existence should, under all circumstances, make us suspicious with regard to any opinion which the soul forms about its own immortality. For why should the facts of the world pay any heed to the feelings of the soul? It is a possible thought that the soul, like a flame produced from fuel, merely flashes forth from the substance of the body and is then again extinguished. Indeed, the necessity of forming some opinion about its own nature might perhaps lead the soul to this very thought, with the result that it would feel itself to be devoid of meaning. But nevertheless this thought might be the actual truth of the matter, even although it made the soul feel itself to be meaningless.

When the soul turns its eyes to the body, it ought only to take into consideration that which the body may reveal to it. It then seems as if in nature such laws were active as drive matter and forces into a continual process of change, and as if these laws controlled the body and after a while drew it into that general process of mutual change.

You may put this idea in any way you like: it may be scientifically admissible, but with regard to true reality it proves itself to be quite impossible. You may find it to be the only idea which seems scientifically clear and sensible, and that all the rest are only subjective beliefs. You may imagine that it is so, but you cannot adhere to this idea with a really unbiased mind. And that is the point.

Not that which the soul according to its own nature feels to be a necessity, but only that which the outer world, to which the body belongs, makes evident, ought to be taken into consideration. After

death this outer world absorbs the matter and forces of the body, which then follow laws that are quite indifferent to that which takes place in the body during life. These laws (which are of a physical and chemical nature) have just the same relation to the body as they have to any other lifeless thing of the outer world. It is impossible to imagine that this indifference of the outer world with regard to the human body should only begin at the moment of death, and should not have existed during life.

An idea of the relation between our body and the physical world cannot be obtained from life, but only from impressing upon our mind the thought that everything belonging to us as a vehicle of our senses, and as the means by which the soul carries on its life - all this is treated by the physical world in a way which only becomes clear to us when we look beyond the limits of our bodily life and take into consideration that a time will come when we no longer have about us the body in which we are now gaining experience of ourselves. Any other conception of the relation between the outer physical world and the body conveys in itself the feeling of not conforming with reality. The idea, however, that it is only after death that the real relationship between the body and the outer world reveals itself does not contradict any real experience of the outer or the inner world.

The soul does not feel the thought to be unendurable, that the matter and the forces of its body are given up to processes of the outer world which have nothing to do with its own life. Surrendering itself to life in a perfectly unprejudiced way, it cannot discover in its own depths any wish arising from the body which makes the thought of dissolution after death a disagreeable one. The idea becomes unbearable only when it implies that the matter and the forces returning to the outer world take with them the soul and its experiences of its own existence. Such an idea would be unbearable for the same reason as would any other idea, which does not grow naturally out of a reliance on the manifestation of the outer world.

To ascribe to the outer world an entirely different relation to the existence of the body during life from that which it bears after death is an absolutely futile idea. As such it will always be repelled by reality, whereas the idea that the relation between the outer world and the body remains the same before and after death is quite sound. The soul, holding this latter view, feels itself in perfect harmony with the evidence of facts. It is able to feel that this idea does not clash with facts which speak for themselves, and to which no artificial thought need be added.

One does not always observe in what beautiful harmony are the natural healthy feelings of the soul with the manifestations of nature. This may seem so self-evident as not to need any remark, and yet this seemingly insignificant fact is most illuminating. The idea that the body is dissolved into the elements has nothing unbearable in it, but on the other hand, the thought that the soul shares the fate of the body is senseless. There are many human personal reasons which prove this, but such reasons must be left out of consideration in objective investigation.

Apart from these reasons, however, thoroughly impersonal attention to the teachings of the outer world shows that no different influence upon the soul can be ascribed to this outer world before death from that which it has after death. The fact is conclusive that this idea presents itself as a necessity and holds its own against all objections which may be raised against it. Any one who thinks this thought when fully self-conscious feels its direct truth. In fact, both those who deny and those who believe in immortality think in this way. The former will probably say that the conditions of the bodily processes during life are involved in the laws which act upon the body after death; but they are mistaken if they

believe that they are really capable of imagining these laws to be in a different relation to the body during life when it is the vehicle of the soul from that which prevails after death.

The only idea possible in itself is that the special combination of forces which comes into existence with the body, remains quite as indifferent to the body in its character of a vehicle for the soul, as that combination of forces which produces the processes in the dead body. This indifference is not existent on the part of the soul, but on the part of the matter and the forces of the body. The soul gains experience of itself by means of the body, but the body lives with, in, and through the outer world and does not allow any more importance to the soul as such than to the processes of the outer world. One comes to the conclusion that the heat and cold of the outer world have an influence upon the circulation of the blood in our body which is analogous to that of fear and shame which exist within the soul.

So, first of all, we feel within ourselves the laws of the outer world active in that special combination of materials which manifests itself as the form of the human body. We feel this body as a member of the outer world, but remain ignorant of its inner workings. External science of the present day gives some information as to how the laws of the outer world combine within that particular entity, which presents itself as the human body.

We may hope that this information will grow more complete in the future. But such increasing information can make no difference whatever to the way in which the soul has to think of its relation to the body. It will, on the contrary, bring more and more into evidence that the laws of the outer world remain in the same relation to the soul before and after death. It is an illusion to expect that the progress of the knowledge of nature will show how far the bodily processes are agents of the life of the soul. We shall more and more clearly recognise that which takes place in the body during life, but the processes in question will always be felt by the soul as being outside it in the same way as the processes in the body after death.

The body must therefore appear within the outer world as a combination of forces and substances, which exists by itself and is explainable by itself as a member of this outer world. Nature causes a plant to grow and again decomposes it. Nature rules the human body, and causes it to pass away within her own sphere. If man takes up his position to nature with such ideas, he is able to forget himself and all that is in him and feel his body as a member of the outer world. If he thinks in such a way of its relations to himself and to nature, he experiences in connection with himself that which we may call his physical body.

## Second Meditation

In which the Attempt is made to form a True Conception of the Elemental or Etheric Body

Through the idea which the soul has to form in connection with the fact of death, it may be driven into complete uncertainty with regard to its own being. This will be the case when it believes that it cannot obtain knowledge of any other world but the world of the senses and of that which the intellect is able to ascertain about this world. The ordinary life of the soul directs its attention to the physical body.

It sees that body being absorbed after death into the workshop of nature, which has no connection with that which the soul experiences before death as its own existence. The soul may indeed know (through the preceding Meditation) that the physical body during life bears the same relation to it as after death, but this does not lead it further than to the acknowledgment of the inner independence of its own experiences up to the moment of death.

What happens to the physical body after death is evident from observation of the outer world. But such observation is not possible with regard to its inner experience. In so far then as it perceives itself through the senses, the soul in its ordinary life cannot see beyond the boundary of death. If the soul is incapable of forming any ideas which go beyond that outer world which absorbs the body after death, then with regard to all that concerns its own being it is unable to look into anything but empty nothingness on the other side of death.

If this is to be otherwise, the soul must perceive the outer world by other means than those of the senses and of the intellect connected with them. These themselves belong to the body and decay together with it. What they tell us can lead to nothing but to the result of the first Meditation, and this result consists merely in the soul being able to say to itself: "I am bound to my body."

This body is subject to natural laws which are related to me in the same way as all other natural laws. Through them I am a member of the outer world and a part of this world is expressed in my body, a fact which I realise most distinctly, when I consider what the outer world does to that body after death. During life it gives me senses and an intellect which make it impossible for me to see how matters stand with regard to my soul's experiences on the other side of death." Such a statement can only lead to two results. Either any further investigation into the riddle of the soul is suppressed and all efforts to obtain knowledge on this subject are given up; or else efforts are made to obtain by the inner experience of the soul that which the outer world refuses. These efforts may bring about an increase of power and energy with regard to this inner experience such as it would not have in ordinary life.

In ordinary life man has a certain amount of strength in his inner experiences, in his life of feeling and thought. He thinks, for instance, a certain thought as often as there is an inner or outer impulse to do so.

Any thought may, however, be chosen out of the rest and voluntarily repeated again and again without any outer reason, and with such intense energy as actually to make it live as an inner reality. Such a thought may by repeated effort be made the exclusive object of our inner experience. And while we

do this we can keep away all outer impressions and memories which may arise in the soul. It is then possible to turn such a complete surrender to certain thoughts or feelings exclusive of all others, into a regular inner activity.

If, however, such an inner experience is to lead to really important results, it must be undertaken according to certain tested laws. Such laws are recorded by the science of spiritual life. In my book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment*, a great number of these rules or laws are mentioned. Through such methods we obtain a strengthening of the powers of inner experience. This experience becomes in a certain way condensed.

What is brought about by this we learn through that observation of ourselves which sets in when the inner activity described has been continued for a sufficiently long time. It is true that much patience is required before convincing results appear. And if we are not disposed to exercise such patience for years, we shall obtain nothing of importance. Here it is only possible to give one example of such results, for they are of many varieties. And that which is mentioned here is adapted to further the particular method of meditation which we are now describing.

A man may carry out the inner strengthening of the life of his soul which has been indicated for a long period without perhaps anything happening in his inner life which is able to alter his usual way of thinking with regard to the world. Suddenly, however, the following may occur. Naturally the incident to be described might not occur in exactly the same way to two different persons. But if we arrive at a conception of one experience of this kind, we shall have gained an understanding of the whole matter in question.

A moment may occur in which the soul gets an inner experience of itself in quite a new way. At the beginning it will generally happen that the soul during sleep wakes up, as it were, in a dream. But we feel at once that this experience cannot be compared with ordinary dreams. We are completely shut off from the world of sense and intellect, and yet we feel the experience in the same way as when we are standing fully awake before the outer world in ordinary life. We feel compelled to picture the experience in ourselves. For this purpose we use ideas such as we have in ordinary life, but we know very well that we are experiencing things different from those to which such ideas are normally attached. These ideas are only used as a means of expression for an experience which we have not had before, and which we are also able to know that it is impossible for us to have in ordinary life.

We feel, for instance, as though thunderstorms were all around us. We hear thunder and see lightning. And yet we know we are in our own room. We feel permeated by a force previously quite unknown to us. Then we imagine we see rents in the walls around us, and we feel compelled to say to ourselves or to some one we think is near us. "I am now in great difficulties, the lightning is going through the house and taking hold of me; I feel it seizing and dissolving me." When such a series of representations has been gone through, the inner experience passes back to ordinary soul-conditions. We find ourselves again in ourselves with the memory of the experience just undergone.

If this memory is as vivid and accurate as any other, it enables us to form an opinion of the experience. We then have a direct knowledge that we have gone through something which cannot be experienced by any physical sense nor by ordinary intelligence, for we feel that the description just

given and communicated to others or to ourselves is only a means of expressing the experience. Although the expression is a means of understanding the fact of the experience, it has nothing in common with it. We know that we do not need any of our senses in having such an experience.

One who attributes it to a hidden activity of the senses or of the brain, does not know the true character of the experience. He adheres to the description which speaks of lightning, thunder, and rents in the walls, and therefore he believes that this experience of the soul is only an echo of ordinary life. He must consider the thing as a vision in the ordinary sense of the word. He cannot think otherwise.

He does not take into consideration, however, that when one describes such an experience one only uses the words lightning, thunder, rents in the walls as pictures of that which has been experienced, and that one must not mistake the pictures for the experience itself. It is true that the matter appears to one as if one really saw these pictures. But one did not stand in the same relation to the phenomenon of the lightning in this case as when seeing a flash with the physical eye. The vision of the lightning is only something which, as it were, conceals the experience itself; one looks through the lightning to something beyond which is quite different, to something which cannot be experienced in the outer world of sense.

In order that a correct judgment may be made possible, it is necessary that the soul which has such experiences should, when they are over, be on a thoroughly sound footing with regard to the ordinary outer world. It must be able clearly to contrast what it has undergone as a special experience, with its ordinary experience of the outer world. Those who in ordinary life are already disposed to be carried away by all kinds of wild imaginings regarding things, are most unfit to form such a judgment. The more sound - or one might say sober - a sense of reality we have got the more likely we are to form a true and, therefore, valuable judgment of such things. One can only attain to confidence in supersensible experiences when one feels with regard to the ordinary world that one clearly perceives its processes and objects as they really are.

When all necessary conditions are thus fulfilled, and when we have reason to believe that we have not been misled by an ordinary vision, then we know that we have had an experience in which the body was not transmitting perceptions. We have had direct perception through the strengthened soul without the body. We have gained the certainty of an experience when outside the body.

It is evident that in this sphere the natural differences between fancy or illusion and true observation made when outside the body, cannot be indicated in any other way than in the realm of outer sense perception. It may happen that some one has a very active imagination with regard to taste, and therefore, at the mere thought of lemonade, gets the same sensation as if he were really drinking it. The difference, however, in such a case becomes evident through the association of actual circumstances in life. And so it is also with those experiences which are made when we are out of the body. In order to arrive at a fully convincing conception in this sphere, it is necessary that we should become familiar with it in a perfectly healthy way and acquire the faculty of observing the details of the experience and correcting one thing by another.

Through such an experience as the one described, we gain the possibility of observing that which



belongs to our proper self not only by means of the senses and intellect - in other words, the bodily instruments. Now we not only know something more of the world than those instruments will allow of, but we know it in a different way. This is especially important. A soul that passes through an inner transformation will more and more clearly comprehend that the oppressive problems of existence cannot be solved in the world of sense because the senses and the intellect cannot penetrate deeply enough into the world as a whole. Those souls penetrate deeper which so transform themselves as to be able to have experiences when outside the body; and it is in the records which they are able to give of their experiences that the means for solving the riddles of the soul can be found.

Now an experience that occurs when outside the body is of a quite different nature from one made when in the body. This is shown by the very opinion which may be formed about the experiences described, when, after it is over, the ordinary waking condition of the soul is re-established and memory has come into a vivid and clear condition. The physical body is felt by the soul as separated from the rest of the world, and seems only to have a real existence in so far as it belongs to the soul.

It is not so, however, with that which we experience within ourselves and with regard to ourselves when outside the body, for then we feel ourselves linked to all that may be called the outer world. All our surroundings are felt as belonging to us just as our hands do in the world of sense. There is no indifference to the world outside us when we come to the inner soul-world. We feel ourselves completely grown together, and woven into one with that which here may be called the world. Its activities are actually felt streaming through our own being. There is no sharp boundary line between an inner and an outer world. The whole environment belongs to the observing soul just as our two physical hands belong to our physical head.

In spite of this, however, we may say that a certain part of this outer world belongs more to ourselves than the rest of the environment, in the same way in which we speak of the head as independent of the hands or feet. Just as the soul calls a piece of the outer physical world its body, so when living outside the body it may also consider a part of the supersensible outer world as belonging to it. When we penetrate to an observation of the realm accessible to us beyond the world of the senses, we may very well say that a body unperceived by the senses belongs to us. We may call this body the elemental or etheric body, but in using the word "etheric" we must not allow any connection with that fine matter which science calls "ether" to establish itself in our mind.

Just as the mere reflection upon the connection between man and the outer world of nature leads to a conception of the physical body which agrees with facts, so does the pilgrimage of the soul into realms that can be perceived outside the physical body lead to the recognition of an elemental or etheric body, or body of formative forces.

### Third Meditation

In which the Attempt is made to form an Idea of Clairvoyant Cognition of the Elemental World

When we have perceptions by means of the elemental body and not through the physical senses, we experience a world that remains unknown to perception of the senses and to ordinary intellectual thinking. If we wish to compare this world with something belonging to ordinary life, we shall find nothing more appropriate than the world of memory. Just as recollections emerge from the innermost soul, so also do the supersensible experiences of the elemental body. In the case of a memory-picture the soul knows that it is related to an earlier experience in the world of the senses.

In a similar way the supersensible conception implies a relation. Just as the recollection by its very nature presents itself as something which cannot be described as a mere picture of the imagination, so does also the supersensible conception. The latter wrests itself from the soul's experience, but manifests itself immediately as an inner experience that is related to something external. It is by means of recollection that a past experience becomes present to the soul. But it is by means of a supersensible conception that something, which at some time can be found somewhere in the supersensible world, becomes an inner experience of the soul. The very nature of Supersensible conceptions impresses upon our mind that they are to be looked upon as communications from a supersensible world manifesting within the soul.

How far we get in this way with our experiences in the supersensible world depends upon the amount of energy we apply to the strengthening of the life of our soul.

The attainment of the conviction that a plant is not merely that which we perceive in the world of the senses as well as the attainment of such a conviction with regard to the whole earth belongs to the same sphere of supersensible experience. If any one who has acquired the faculty of perception when outside his physical body, looks at a plant, he will be able to perceive - besides what his senses are showing him - a delicate form which permeates the whole plant. This form presents itself as an entity of force; and he is brought to consider this entity as that which builds up the plant from the materials and forces of the physical world, and which brings about the circulation of the sap.

He may say - employing an available, although not an altogether appropriate simile - that there is something in the plant which sets the sap in motion in the same way as that in which his own soul moves his arm. He looks upon something internal in the plant, and he must allow a certain independence to this inner principle of the plant in its relation to that part which is perceived by the senses. He must also admit that this inner principle existed before the physical plant existed. Then if he continues to observe how a plant grows, withers, and produces seeds, and how new plants grow out of these, he will find the supersensible form of energy especially powerful, when he observes these seeds. At this period the physical being is insignificant in a certain respect, whereas the supersensible entity is highly differentiated and contains everything that, from the supersensible world, contributes to the growth of the plant.

Now in the same way by supersensible observation of the whole earth, we discover an entity of force which we can know with absolute certainty existed before everything came into being which is

perceptible by the senses upon and within the earth. In this way we arrive at an experience of the presence of those supersensible forces which co-operated in forming and developing the earth in the past. What is thus experienced we may just as well call the etheric or elemental basic entities or bodies of the plant and of the earth, as we call the body through which we gain perception when outside the body, our own elemental or etheric body.

Even when we first begin to be able to observe in a supersensible way, we can assign elemental basic-entities of this kind to certain things and processes apart from their ordinary qualities, which are perceptible in the world of the senses. We are able to speak of an etheric body belonging to the plant or to the earth. However, the elemental beings, observed in this way are not by any means the only ones which reveal themselves to supersensible experience.

We characterise the elemental body of a plant by saying that it builds up a form from the materials and forces of the physical world and thereby manifests its life in a physical body. But we may also observe beings that lead an elemental existence without manifesting their life in a physical body. Thus entities that are purely elemental are revealed to supersensible observation. It is not merely that we experience an addition, as it were, to the physical world; we experience another world in which the world of the senses presents itself as something which may be compared to pieces of ice floating about in water.

A man who could only see the ice and not the water might quite possibly ascribe reality to the ice only and not to the water. Similarly, if we take into account only that which manifests itself to the senses, we may deny the existence of the supersensible world, of which the world of the senses is in reality a part, just as the floating pieces of ice are part of the water in which they are floating.

Now we shall find that those who are able to make supersensible observations describe what they behold by making use of expressions borrowed from the perceptions of sense. Thus we may find the elemental body of a being in the world of the senses, or that of a purely elemental being, described as manifesting itself as a self-contained body of light and having manifold colours.

These colours flash forth, glow or shine, and it appears that these phenomena of light and colour are the manifestation of its life. But that of which the observer is really speaking is altogether invisible, and he is perfectly aware that the light or colour-picture which he gives, has no more to do with that which he actually perceives than, for instance, the writing in which a fact is communicated has to do with the fact itself. And yet the supersensible experience has not been expressed through arbitrarily chosen perceptions of the senses. The picture seen is actually before the observer, and is similar to an impression of the senses.

This is so because, during supersensible experiences liberation from the physical body is not complete. The physical body is still connected with the elemental body, and brings the supersensible experience in a form drawn from the sense world. Thus the description given of an elemental being is given in the form of a visionary or fanciful combination of sense-impressions. But in spite of this, it is, when given in this manner, a true rendering of what has been experienced. For we have really seen what we are describing. The mistake that may be made is not in describing the vision as such, but in taking the vision for the reality, instead of that to which the vision points namely, the reality

underlying it. A man who has never seen colours - a man born blind - will not, when he attains to the corresponding faculty of perception, describe elemental beings in such a way as to speak of flashing colours. He will make use of expressions familiar to him.

To people, however, who are able to see physically, it is quite appropriate when they, in their description, make use of some such expression as the flashing forth of a colour form. By its aid they can give an impression of what has been seen by the observer of the elemental world. And this holds good not only for communications made by a clairvoyant - that is to say, one who is able to perceive by the aid of his elemental body - to a non-clairvoyant, but also for the intercommunication between clairvoyants themselves. In the world of the senses man lives in his physical body, and this body clothes the supersensible observations in forms perceptible to the senses. Therefore the expression of supersensible observations by making use of the sense-pictures they produce is, in ordinary earth-life, a useful means of communication.

The point is, that any one receiving communication experiences in his soul something bearing the right relation to the fact in question. Indeed, the pictures are only communicated in order to call forth an experience. Such as they really are, they cannot be found in the outer world. That is their characteristic and also the reason why they call forth experiences that have no relation to anything material.

At the beginning of his clairvoyance, the pupil will find it difficult to become independent of the sense picture. When his faculty becomes more developed, however, a craving will arise for inventing more arbitrary means of communicating what has been seen. These will involve the necessity for explaining the signs which he uses. The more the exigencies of our time demand the general diffusion of supersensible knowledge, the greater will be the necessity for clothing such knowledge in the expressions used in everyday life on the physical plane.

Now at certain times supersensible experiences may come upon the pupil of themselves. And he has then the opportunity of learning something about the supersensible world by personal experience according as he is more or less often favoured, as we may say, by that world through its shining into the ordinary life of his soul. A higher faculty however is that of calling forth at will clairvoyant perception from the soul-life.

The path to the attainment of this faculty results ordinarily from energetic continuation of the inner strengthening of the soul-life, but much also depends upon establishing a certain keynote in the soul. A calm unruffled attitude of mind is necessary in regard to the supersensible world - an attitude which is as far removed on the one hand from the burning desire to experience the most possible in the clearest possible manner as it is from a personal lack of interest in that world. Burning desire has the effect of diffusing something like an invisible mist before the clairvoyant sight, whilst lack of interest acts in such a way that though the supersensible facts really do manifest themselves, they are simply not noticed. This lack of interest shows itself now and then in a very peculiar form.

There are persons who honestly wish for supersensible experiences, but they form a priori a certain definite idea of what these experiences should be in order to be acknowledged as real. Then when the real experiences arrive, they flit by without being met by any interest, just because they are not such

as one has imagined that they ought to be.

In the case of voluntarily produced clairvoyance there comes a moment in the course of the soul's inner activity when we know: now my soul is experiencing something that it never experienced before. The experience is not a definite one, but a general feeling that we are not confronting the outer world of the senses, nor are we within it, nor yet are we within ourselves as in the ordinary life of the soul.

The outer and inner experiences melt into one, into a feeling of life, hitherto unknown to the soul, concerning which, however, the soul knows that it could not be felt if it were only living within the outer world by means of the senses or by its ordinary feelings and recollections. We feel, moreover, that during this condition of the soul something is penetrating into it from a world hitherto unknown. We cannot, however, arrive at a conception of this unknown something. We have the experience but can form no idea of it. Now we shall find that when we have such an experience we get a feeling as if there were a hindrance in our physical bodies preventing us from forming a conception of that which is penetrating into the soul. If, however, we continue the inner efforts of our soul we shall, after a while, feel that we have overcome our own corporeal resistance.

The physical apparatus of the intellect had hitherto only been able to form ideas in connection with experiences in the world of the senses. It is at the outset incapable of raising to a picture that which wants to manifest itself from out of the supersensible world. It must first be so prepared as to be able to do this. In the same way as a child is surrounded by the outer world, but has to have his intellectual apparatus prepared by experience in that world before he is able to form ideas of his surroundings, so is mankind in general unable to form an idea of the supersensible world.

The clairvoyant who wishes to make progress prepares his own apparatus for forming ideas so that it will work on a higher level in exactly the same way as that of a child is prepared to work in the world of the senses. He makes his strengthened thoughts work upon this apparatus and as a consequence the latter is by degrees remodeled. He becomes capable of including the supersensible world in the realm of his ideas.

Thus we feel how through the activity of the soul we can influence and remodel our own body. In the beginning the body acts as a strong counterpoise to the life of the soul; we feel it as a foreign body within us. But presently we notice how it always adapts itself increasingly to the experiences of the soul; until, finally, we do not feel it any more at all, but find before us the supersensible world, just as we do not notice the existence of the eye with which we look upon the world of colours. The body then must become imperceptible before the soul can behold the supersensible world.

When we have in this way deliberately arrived at making the soul clairvoyant, we shall, as a rule, be able to reproduce this state at will if we concentrate upon some thought that we are able to experience within ourselves in a specially powerful manner. As a consequence of surrendering ourselves to such a thought we shall find that clairvoyance is brought about.

At first we shall not be able to see anything definite which we especially wish to see. Supersensible things or happenings for which we are in no way prepared, or desire to call forth, will play into the life

of the soul. Yet, by continuing our inner efforts, we shall also attain to the faculty of directing the spiritual eye to such things as we wish to investigate. When we have forgotten an experience we try to bring it back to our memory by recalling to the mind something connected with the experience; and in the same way we may, as clairvoyants, start from an experience which we may rightly think is connected with what we want to find.

In surrendering ourselves with intensity to the known experience, we shall often after a longer or shorter lapse of time find added to it that experience which it was our object to attain. In general, however, it is to be noted that it is of the very greatest importance for the clairvoyant quietly to wait for the propitious moment. We should not desire to attract anything. If a desired experience does not arrive, it is best to give up the search for a while and to try to get an opportunity another time. The human apparatus of cognition needs to develop calmly up to the level of certain experiences. If we have not the patience to await such development, we shall make incorrect or inaccurate observations.

## Fourth Meditation

In which the Attempt is made to form a Conception of the Guardian of the Threshold

When the soul has attained the faculty of making observations whilst remaining outside the physical body, certain difficulties may arise with regard to its emotional life. It may find itself compelled to take up quite a different position towards itself from that to which it was formerly accustomed.

The soul was accustomed to regard the physical world as outside itself, while it considered all inner experience as its own particular possession. To supersensible surroundings, however, it cannot take up the same position as to the outer world. As soon as the soul perceives the supersensible world around it, it must merge with it to a certain extent: it cannot consider itself as separate from these surroundings as it does from the outer world. Through this fact all that can be designated as our own inner world in relation to the supersensible surroundings assumes a certain character which is not easily reconcilable with the idea of inward privacy. We can no longer say, "I think," "I feel," or "I have my thoughts and fashion them as I like." But we must say instead, "Something thinks in me, something makes emotions flash forth in me, something forms thoughts and compels them to come forward in an absolutely definite way and make their presence felt in my consciousness."

Now this feeling may contain something exceedingly depressing when the manner in which the supersensible experience presents itself is such as to convey the certainty that we are actually experiencing a reality and are not losing ourselves in imaginary fancies or illusions. Such as it is it may indicate that the supersensible surrounding world wants to feel, and to think for itself, but that it is hindered in the realisation of its intention. At the same time we get a feeling that that which here wants to enter the soul is the true reality and the only one that can give an explanation of all we have hitherto experienced as real.

This feeling also gives the impression that the supersensible reality shows itself as something which in value infinitely transcends the reality hitherto known to the soul. This feeling is therefore depressing, because it makes us feel that we are actually forced to will the next step which has to be taken. It lies in the very nature of that which we have become through our own inner experience to take this step. If we do not take it we must feel this to be a denial of our own being, or even self-annihilation. And yet we may also have the feeling that we cannot take it, or if we attempt it as far as we can, it must remain imperfect

All this develops into the idea: Such as the soul now is, a task lies before it, which it cannot master, because such as it now is, it is rejected by its supersensible surroundings, for the supersensible world does not wish to have it within its realm. And so the soul arrives at a feeling of being in contradiction to the supersensible world; and has to say to itself: "I am not such as to make it possible for me to mingle with that world, and yet only there can I learn the true reality and my relation to it; for I have separated myself from the recognition of Truth." This feeling means an experience which will make more and more clear and decisive the exact value of our own soul.

We feel ourselves and our whole life to be steeped in an error. And yet this error is distinct from other errors. The others are thought; but this is a living experience. An error that is only thought may be

removed when the wrong thought is replaced by the right one. But the error that has been experienced has become part of the life of our soul itself; we ourselves are the error, we cannot simply correct it, for, think as we will, it is there, it is part of reality, and that, too, our own reality. Such an experience is a crushing one for the "self." We feel our inmost being painfully rejected by all that we desire. This pain, which is felt at a certain stage in the pilgrimage of the soul, is far beyond anything which can be felt as pain in the physical world. And therefore it may surpass everything which we have hitherto become able to master in the life of our soul.

It may have the effect of stunning us. The soul stands before the anxious question: Whence shall I gather strength to carry the burden laid upon me? And the soul must find that strength within its own life. It consists in something that may be characterised as inner courage, inner fearlessness.

In order now to be able to proceed further in the pilgrimage of the soul, we must have developed so far that the strength which enables us to bear our experiences will well up from within us and produce this inner courage and inner fearlessness in a degree never required for life in the physical body. Such strength is only produced by true self-knowledge. In fact it is only at this stage of development that we realise how little we have hitherto really known of ourselves. We have surrendered ourselves to our inner experiences without observing them as one observes a part of the outer world. Through the steps that have led to the faculty of extra-physical experience, however, we obtain a special means of self-knowledge.

We learn in a certain sense to contemplate ourselves from a standpoint which can only be found when we are outside the physical body. And the depressing feeling mentioned before is itself the very beginning of true self-knowledge. To realise oneself as being in error in one's relations to the outer world is a sign that one is realising the true nature of one's own soul.

It is in the nature of the human soul to feel such enlightenment regarding itself as painful. It is only when we feel this pain that we learn how strong is the natural desire to feel ourselves, just as we are - to be human beings of importance and value. It may seem an ugly fact that this is so; but we have to face this ugliness of our own self without prejudice. We did not notice it before, just because we never consciously penetrated deeply enough into our own being. Only when we do so do we perceive how dearly we love that in ourselves which must be felt as ugly.

The power of self-love shows itself in all its enormity. And at the same time we see how little inclination we have to lay aside this self-love. Even when it is only a question of those qualities of the soul which are concerned with our ordinary life and relations to other people, the difficulties turn out to be quite great enough. We learn, for instance, by means of true self-knowledge, that though we have hitherto believed that we felt kindly towards some one, nevertheless we are cherishing in the depths of our soul secret envy or hatred or some such feeling towards that person.

We realise that these feelings, which have not as yet risen to the surface, will some day certainly crave for expression. And we see how very superficial it would be to say to ourselves: "Now that you have learned how it stands with you, root out your envy or hatred." For we discover that armed merely with such a thought we shall certainly feel exceedingly weak, when some day the craving to show our envy or to satisfy our hatred breaks forth as if with elemental power.



Such special kinds of self-knowledge manifest themselves in different people according to the special constitution of their souls. They appear when experience outside the body begins, for then our self-knowledge becomes a true one, and is no longer troubled by any desire to find ourselves modeled in some such way as we should like to be.

Such special self-knowledge is painful and depressing to the soul, but if we want to attain to the faculty of experience outside the body, it cannot be avoided, for it is necessarily called forth by the special position which we must take up with regard to our own soul. For the very strongest powers of the soul are required, even if it is only a question of an ordinary human being obtaining self-knowledge in a general way. We are observing ourselves from a standpoint outside our previous inner life.

We have to say to ourselves: "I have contemplated and judged the things and occurrences of the world according to my human nature. I must now try to imagine that I cannot contemplate and judge them in that way. But then I should not be what I am. I should have no inner experiences. I should be a mere nothing." And not only a man in the midst of ordinary everyday life, who only very rarely even thinks about the world or life, would have to address himself in this way. Any man of science, or any philosopher, would have to do so. For even philosophy is only observation and judgment of the world according to individual qualities and conditions of the human soul-life.

Now such a judgment cannot mingle with supersensible surroundings. It is rejected by them. And therewith everything we have been up to that moment is rejected. We look back upon our whole soul, upon our ego itself, as upon something which has to be laid aside, when we want to enter the supersensible world. The soul, however, cannot but consider this ego as its real being until it enters the supersensible worlds. The soul must consider it as the true human being, and must say to itself: "Through this my ego I have to form ideas of the world. I must not lose this ego of mine if I do not want to give myself up as a being altogether.'

There is in the soul the strongest inclination to guard the ego at all points in order not to lose one's foothold absolutely. What the soul thus feels of necessity to be right in ordinary life, it must no longer feel when it enters supersensible surroundings. It has there to cross a threshold, where it must leave behind not only this or that precious possession, but that very being which it has hitherto believed itself to be. The soul must be able to say to itself: "That which until now has seemed to me to be my surest truth, I must now, on the other side of the threshold of the supersensible world, be able to consider as my deepest error."

Before such a demand the soul may well recoil. The feeling may be so strong that the necessary steps would seem a surrender of its own being, and an acknowledgment of its own nothingness, so that it admits more or less completely on the threshold its own powerlessness to fulfil the demands put before it. This acknowledgment may take all possible forms. It may appear merely as an instinct and seem to the pupil who thinks and acts upon it as something quite different from what it really is. He may, for instance, feel a great dislike to all supersensible truths. He may consider them as day dreams, or imaginary fancies.

He does so only because in those depths of his soul of which he is ignorant he has a secret fear of

these truths. He feels that he can only live with that which is admitted by his senses and his intellectual judgment. He therefore avoids arriving at the threshold of the supersensible world, and he veils the fact of his avoidance of it by saying: " That which is supposed to lie behind that threshold is not tenable by reason or by science." The fact is simply that he loves reason and science such as he knows them, because they are bound up with his ego. This is a very, frequent form of self-love and cannot as such be brought into the supersensible world.

It may also happen that there is not only this instinctive halt before the threshold. The pupil may consciously proceed to the threshold and then turn back, because he fears that which lies before him. He will then not easily be able to blot out from the ordinary life of his soul the effect of thus approaching it. The effect will be that weakness will spread over the whole of his soul's life.

What ought to take place is this, that the pupil on entering the supersensible world should make himself able to renounce that which in ordinary life he considers as the deepest truth and to adapt himself to a different way of feeling and judging things. But at the same time he must keep in mind that when he again confronts the physical world, he must make use of the ways of feeling, and judging that are suitable for this physical world. He must not only learn to live in two different worlds, but also to live in each in quite a different way, and he must not allow his sound judgment, which he needs for ordinary life in the world of reason and of the senses, to be encroached upon by the fact that he is obliged to make use of another kind of discernment while in another world.

To take up such a position is difficult for human nature, and the capacity for doing so is only acquired through continued energetic and patient strengthening of our soul-life. Any one who goes through the experiences of the threshold realises that it is a boon to the ordinary life of the soul not to be led so far.

The feelings that awaken are such that one cannot but think that this boon proceeds from some powerful entity, who protects man from the danger of undergoing the dread of self-annihilation at the threshold. Behind the outer world of ordinary life there is another. Before the threshold of this world a stern guardian is standing, who prevents man from knowing what the laws of the supersensible world are. For all doubts and all uncertainty concerning that world are, after all, easier to bear than the sight of that which one must leave behind when we want to cross the threshold.

The pupil remains protected against the experience described, as long as he does not step forward to the very threshold. The fact that he receives descriptions of such experiences from those who have trodden or crossed this threshold does not change the fact of his being protected. On the contrary, such communications may be of good service to him when he approaches the threshold. In this case as in many others, a thing is done better if one has an idea of it beforehand. But as regards the self-knowledge which must be gained by a traveler in the supersensible world nothing is changed by such preliminary knowledge.

It is therefore not in harmony with the facts, when many clairvoyants, or those acquainted with the nature of clairvoyance, assert that these things should not be mentioned at all to people who are not on the point of resolving to enter into the supersensible world. We are now living in a time when people must become more and more acquainted with the nature of the supersensible world, if the life of their

soul is to become equal to the demands of ordinary life upon it. The spread of supersensible knowledge, including the knowledge of the guardian of the threshold, is one of the tasks of the moment and of the immediate future.

## **Fifth Meditation**

In which the Attempt is made to form an Idea of the Astral Body

When we experience through our elemental body a surrounding supersensible world, we feel ourselves less separated from that world than we are from physical surroundings when in our physical body. And yet we bear a relation to these supersensible surroundings, which may be expressed by saying that we have attached to ourselves certain substances of the elemental world in the form of an elemental body, just as in the physical outer world we carry some of its materials and forces attached to us in the shape of our physical body.

We observe that this is so when we want to find our way about in the supersensible world outside the physical body. It may happen that we have before us some fact or being of the supersensible world. It may be there, and we can behold it, but we do not know what it is. If we are strong enough, we may drive it away, but only by carrying ourselves back into the world of the senses by energetic concentration upon our experiences in that world.

We are, however, unable to remain in the supersensible world and compare with other beings or facts the being or the fact perceived. And yet it is only by so doing that we could form a correct estimate of what is beheld. Thus our "sight" in the supersensible world may be limited to the perception of single things without the faculty of moving freely from one thing to another. We then feel fettered to that single thing.

We may now look for the reason of this limitation. This can only be found when through further inner development the life of our soul has been still more strengthened and we arrive at a point when this limitation is no longer there. And then we shall discover that the reason why we could not move from one thing to another is to be found in our own soul. We learn that sight in the supersensible world differs in this way from perception in the world of the senses. One can, for instance, in the physical world see every visible thing when one has got sound eyes.

If one sees one thing one can also, with the same eyes, see all other things. This is not so in the supersensible world. One can have the organ of supersensible perception developed in such a way that one can experience this or that fact, but if another fact is to be perceived one's organ must first be specially developed for this purpose. Such a development gives one the feeling that an organ has awoken to a particular region of the supersensible world.

One feels as if one's elemental body were in a kind of sleep with regard to the supersensible world, and as if it had to be awake with regard to each particular thing. It is in fact possible to speak of being asleep and being awake in the elemental world; but they are not alternate states as in the physical world. They are states existing in man simultaneously. As long as we have not attained any faculty for experience through our elemental body, that body is asleep. We always carry this body about with us, but it is a sleeping body. With the strengthening of the life of our soul the awakening begins, but at first only for a part of the elemental body. The more we awaken our elemental being, ' the deeper we penetrate into the elemental world.

In the elemental world itself there is nothing that can aid the soul to bring about this awakening. However much may be beheld, one thing perceived adds nothing to the possibility of perceiving another thing. Free movement in the supersensible world can be attained by the soul through nothing that is found in the elemental environment. When we continue the exercises to strengthen the soul, we attain more and more this power of moving in particular regions. Through all this our attention is drawn to something in ourselves, which does not belong to the elemental world, but is discovered within ourselves through our experience of that world. We feel ourselves as particular beings in the supersensible world, who seem to be the rulers, directors, and masters of their elemental bodies, and who by and by awaken these bodies to supersensible consciousness.

When we have arrived so far, a feeling of intense loneliness overwhelms the soul. We find ourselves in a world that is elemental in all directions; we see only ourselves within endless elemental space as beings which can nowhere find their equal. It is not affirmed that every development to clairvoyance should lead to this fearful loneliness, but any one who consciously and by his own efforts acquires a strengthening of his soul, will meet with it. And if he follow a teacher who gives him directions from step to step in order to further his development, he will, perhaps late, but still some day, have to realise that his teacher has left him all to himself. He will find that his teacher has left him, and that he is abandoned to loneliness in the elemental world. Only afterwards will he understand that he has been obliged to let him depend upon himself since the necessity for such self-reliance had asserted itself.

At this stage of the soul's pilgrimage the pupil feels himself an exile in the elemental world. But now he can go on further if sufficient force has been aroused in him through his inner exercises. He may begin to see a new world emerge - not in the elemental world, but within himself - a world that is not one either with the physical or with the elemental world. For such a pupil a second supersensible world is added to the first.

This second supersensible world is at first completely an inner world. The pupil feels that he carries it within himself and that he is alone with it. To compare this state to anything in the world of the senses, let us take the following case. Somebody has lost all his dear ones through death and now carries only the recollection of them in his soul. They live on for him only as his thoughts. Thus it is in the second supersensible world. Man stands to this second supersensible world in such a way that he carries it within himself; but he knows that he is shut out from its reality. Nevertheless he feels that this reality within his soul, whatever it may be, is something much more real than mere recollection from the world of the senses.

This supersensible world lives an independent life within one's own soul. All that is there is yearning to get out of the soul, and arrive at something else. Thus one feels a world within oneself, but a world that does not want to remain there. This produces a feeling like being torn asunder by every separate detail of that world. One may arrive at a point where these details free themselves, where they break through something which seems like a shell and escape from the soul. Then one may feel oneself the poorer by all that has in this manner torn itself away from the soul.

One now learns that that part of the supersensible reality in the soul which one is able to love for its own sake, and not simply because it is actually in one's own soul, behaves in a particular way. What one can thus love deeply does not tear itself from the soul; it certainly does force its way out of the

soul, but carries the soul along with it. It carries the soul to that region where it lives in its true reality.

A kind of union with the real essence takes place, for hitherto one has only carried something like a reflection of this real essence within one. The love here mentioned must, however, be of the kind that is experienced in the supersensible world. In the world of the senses one can only prepare oneself for such love. And this preparation takes place when one strengthens one's capacity for love in the world of the senses. The greater the love of which one is capable in the physical world, the more of this capacity remains for the supersensible world.

With regard to the individual entities of the supersensible world, this works as follows. You cannot, for instance, get into touch with those real supersensible beings which are connected with the plants of the physical world if you do not love plants in the world of the senses, and so on. An error, however, may very easily arise with regard to such things. It may happen that somebody in the physical world passes the vegetable kingdom by with complete indifference, and yet an unconscious affinity for that kingdom may lie hidden in the soul. Afterwards when he enters the supersensible world this love may awaken.

But the union with beings in the supersensible world does not only depend upon love. Other feelings, as, for instance, respect and reverence, which the soul may have for a being when it first feels the picture of this being arise within it, have the same effect. These qualities will, however, always be such as must be reckoned as belonging to the inner qualities of the soul. One will in this way learn to know those beings of the supersensible world to which the soul itself opened the way through such inner qualities.

A sure way to get acquainted with the supersensible world consists in gaining access to the different beings through one's relationship to their reflections. In the world of the senses we love a being after having learned to know him; in the second supersensible world we may love the image of a being before meeting with the being itself, as this image presents itself before the meeting takes place.

That which the soul in this way learns to know within itself is not the elemental body. It stands in relation to that body as its "awakener." It is a being dwelling within the soul which is experienced in the same way as that in which you would experience yourself during sleep if you were not unconscious but felt yourself to be conscious when outside your physical body and in the position of its "awakener" at the moment of its rousing from sleep. Thus the soul learns to know a being within itself which is a third something beside the physical and the elemental bodies. Let us call this something the astral body, and this expression shall, for the time being, mean nothing but that which in the way described is experienced within the being of the soul.

## Sixth Meditation

In which the Attempt is made to form a Conception of the Ego-Body or Thought-Body

The feeling of being outside our physical body is stronger during experiences within the astral body than during those within the elemental body. In the case of the elemental body we feel ourselves outside the region in which the physical body exists, and yet we feel connected with the latter body. In the astral body we feel the physical body itself as something outside our own being.

On passing into the elemental body we feel something like an expansion of our own being; but in identifying our consciousness with the astral body it is as though we made a jump into another being. And we feel a world of spiritual beings sending their activities into that being. We feel ourselves in some way or other connected with or related to these beings. And by degrees we learn to know how these beings are mutually connected. To our human consciousness the world widens out in the direction of the spiritual.

We behold spiritual beings, for example, who bring about the succession of epochs in the development of mankind so that we realise that the different characters of the different epochs are, as it were, stamped upon them by real spiritual entities. These are the Spirits of Time or Primordial Powers (Archai). We learn to know other beings, whose psychic life is such that their thoughts are at the same time active forces of nature. We are led to understand that only to physical perception do the forces of nature appear to be constituted as physical perception imagines them to be. That in fact everywhere, where a force of nature is acting, the thought of some being is expressing itself just as a human soul finds expression in the movement of a hand.

All this is not as though man by the aid of any theory is able in thought to place living beings at the back of nature's processes; when we realise ourselves in our astral body we enter into quite as concrete and real a relation to those beings as that between human individuals in the physical world. Among the spirits into whose realm we thus penetrate we discover a series of gradations, and we may thus speak of a world of higher hierarchies. Those beings whose thoughts manifest themselves to physical perception as forces of nature we may call Spirits of Form.

Experience in that world assumes that we feel our physical being as something outside us, in the same way as in physical existence we look upon a plant as a thing outside ourselves. We shall feel this state of being outside all that in ordinary life must be felt as the whole compass of our own being, as a very painful one, so long as it is not accompanied by a certain other experience. If the inner work of the soul has been energetically carried on and has led to a proper deepening and strengthening of the life of our soul, it is not necessary that this pain should be very pronounced. For a slow and gradual entrance into that second experience may be accomplished simultaneously with our entrance into the astral body as our natural vehicle.

This second experience will consist in obtaining the capacity for considering all that, which before filled and was connected with our own soul, as a kind of recollection, so that we stand in the same relation to our own former ego as we do to our recollections in the physical world. Only through such an experience do we attain to full consciousness of ourselves as truly living with our own real being in

a world quite different from that of the senses.

We now possess the knowledge that that which we carry about with us and have hitherto considered as our ego is something different from what we really are. We are now able to stand opposite to ourselves, and we may form an idea concerning that which now confronts our own soul and of which it formerly said, "That is myself." Now the soul no longer says, "That is myself," but, "I am carrying that something about with me." Just as the ego in ordinary life feels independent of its own recollections, so our newly-found ego feels itself independent of our former ego.

It feels that it belongs to a world of purely spiritual beings. And as this experience - a real experience: no mere theory - comes to us, so we realise what that really is which we hitherto considered as our ego. It presents itself as a web of recollections, produced by the physical, the elemental, and the astral bodies in the same way as an image is produced by a mirror. Just as little as a man identifies himself with his rejected picture, so little does the soul, experiencing itself in the spiritual world, identify itself with that which it experiences of itself in the world of the senses. The comparison with the rejected image is, of course, to be taken merely as a comparison.

For the reflected image vanishes when we change our position with regard to the mirror. The web woven of recollections and representing what we in the physical world consider as our own being, has a greater degree of independence than the image in the mirror. It has in a certain way a being of its own. And yet to the real being of the soul it is only like a picture of our real self. The real being of the soul feels that this picture is needed for the manifestation of its real self. This real being knows that it is something different, but also that it would never have attained to any real knowledge of itself if it had not at first realised itself as its own image within that world, which, after its ascent into the spiritual world, becomes an outer world.

The web of recollection which we now regard as our former ego may be called the "ego-body" or "thought-body." The word "body" must in this connection be taken in a wider sense than that which is usually called a "body." By "body" is here meant all that we experience as belonging to us and of which we do not say, "We are it," but, "We possess it."

Only when clairvoyant consciousness has arrived at the point where it experiences, as a sum of recollections, that which it formerly considered to be itself, does it become possible to acquire real experience of what is hidden behind the phenomenon of death. For then we have arrived at a truly real world in which we feel ourselves as beings who are able to retain, as though in a memory, what has been experienced in the world of the senses.

This sum total of experiences in the physical world needs - in order to continue its existence - a being who is able to retain it in the same way in which the ordinary ego retains its recollections. Supersensible knowledge discloses that man has an existence within the world of spiritual beings, and that it is he himself who keeps within him his physical existence as a recollection. The question what after death will become of all that I now am, receives the following answer from clairvoyant investigation: "You will continue to be yourself just to that extent to which you realise that self to be a spiritual being amongst other spiritual beings."



We realise the nature of these spiritual beings and amongst them our own nature. And this knowledge is direct experience. Through it we know that spiritual beings, and with them our own soul, have an existence of which the physical existence is but a passing manifestation. If to ordinary consciousness it appears - as shown in the First Meditation - that the body belongs to a world whose real part in it is proved by its dissolution therein after death, clairvoyant observation teaches us that the real human ego belongs to a world to which it is attached by bonds quite different from those which connect the body with the laws of nature.

The bonds which attach the ego to the spiritual beings of the supersensible world are not touched in their innermost character either by birth or by death. In physical existence these bonds only show themselves in a special way. That which appears in this world is the expression of realities of a supersensible nature. Now as man as such is a supersensible being, and also appears so to supersensible observation, so the bonds between souls in the supersensible world are not affected by death. And that anxious question which comes before the ordinary consciousness of the soul in this primitive form: " Shall I meet again after death those with whom I know I have been connected during physical existence?" must, by any real investigator, who is entitled to form a judgment based upon experience, be emphatically answered in the affirmative.

Everything that has been said of the being of the soul experiencing itself as a spiritual reality within the world of other spiritual beings, may be seen and confirmed if we strengthen the life of our soul in the way mentioned before. And it is possible to make this easier and to help oneself along by the development of special feelings. In ordinary life in the physical world we take up such a position to all that we feel to be our fate, as to feel sympathy or antipathy for different occurrences.

A self-observer, who is able to remain quite unbiased, must admit that these sympathies and antipathies are some of the strongest that man is able to feel. Ordinary reflection upon the fact that everything in life is a result of necessity, and that we have to bear our fate, may certainly take us a long way towards a deliberate attitude of mind in life. But in order to be able to grasp something of the real being of man still more is required. The reflection described will do excellent service in the life of our soul. We may, however, often find that those sympathies and antipathies of the kind mentioned, which we have been able to discard, have only disappeared from our immediate consciousness.

They have retired into the deeper strata of human nature and manifest themselves as a certain mood of the soul or as a feeling of slackness or some other such sensation in the body. Real imperturbability with regard to fate is only acquired when we behave in this matter in just the same way as in the repeated concentrated surrender to thoughts or feelings for the purpose of strengthening the soul in general. A reflection only leading to intellectual understanding is not sufficient. It is necessary to live intensely with such a reflection, and to continue in it for a certain period of time while keeping away all experiences appertaining to the senses or other recollections of ordinary life. Through such exercises we arrive at a certain fundamental attitude of mind towards fate.

It is possible radically to do away with sympathies and antipathies in this respect and finally to consider everything that happens to us quite as unconcernedly as an observer watches water falling over a mountainside and splashing down beneath. It is not meant that in this way we ought to arrive at

facing our own fate without any feelings whatever. One who becomes indifferent to anything that happens to him is surely on no profitable track.

We certainly do not remain indifferent to the outer world with regard to things not touching our own soul as part of our fate. We look upon things happening before our eyes with pleasure or with pain. Indifference to life should not be sought, when we strive after supersensible knowledge, but transformation of the direct interest that the ego takes in its own fate. It is quite possible that by such transformation the vividness of the life of feeling is strengthened and not weakened. In ordinary life tears are shed over many things that happen to our own soul in the way of fate. We are, however, able to win our way to a standpoint where the unfortunate fate of others awakens in our soul the same keen interest and feeling as are induced by our own unhappy experiences.

It is easier to arrive at such a standpoint with regard to misfortunes that fate brings us than, for example, with regard to our mental capacities. It is not so easy, after all, to experience as great a joy when you discover a capacity in another, as when you discover that you possess that capacity yourself. When self-observation strives to penetrate into the depths of the soul, much selfish satisfaction with many things which we can do ourselves may be discovered.

An intense, repeated meditative union with the thought, that in many instances it is quite indifferent to the course of human life whether we ourselves or others are able to do certain things, may carry us a long way towards true imperturbability with regard to that which we feel to be the innermost working of fate in our own lives. Such inner reinforcement of the life of our soul, by steeping it in thought, when rightly done, can never lead to a mere blunting of our feeling for our own capacities. Instead they are transformed and we realise the necessity of behaving in accordance with these capacities.

And here we have already indicated the direction taken by this strengthening of the life of the soul by thought. We learn to realise something in ourselves which appears to the soul as a second being within it. This becomes especially manifest, when we connect with it thoughts which show how in ordinary life we bring about this or that event in our destiny. We are able to see that this or that would not have happened to us, if we had not behaved in a certain way at an earlier period in our life.

What happens to us to-day is truly in many ways the result of what we did yesterday. We may now, with the intention of carrying our soul's experience further than some point at which we have arrived, look back upon our past experience. We may then search out all that shows how we ourselves have prepared our later destinies. We may try in so doing to go back so far as to reach that point where the consciousness awakens in the child, which enables it later in life to remember what it has experienced.

If we set about this retrospect in such a way that we combine with it an attitude of mind which eliminates the usual selfish sympathies and antipathies with regard to occurrences in our own destiny, then, having reached in memory the above-mentioned point in our childhood, we face ourselves in such a way as to be able to say: At that time the possibility of feeling ourselves in ourselves and of conscious work upon the life of our soul first presented itself; but this ego of ours was there before, and it, although not working consciously within us, has brought us our capacity for knowledge as well as everything we now know. The attitude towards our own destiny just described brings about what no intellectual reflection is able to produce.

We learn to look at the events of destiny with equanimity; we meet them with an unprejudiced mind; but we see in the being who brings these happenings upon us our own self. And when we look upon ourselves in this way, we find that the conditions of our own destiny, already given us at birth, are connected with our own self. We win our way to the conviction that just as we have worked upon ourselves since the awakening of our consciousness, so we had already been working before our present consciousness awoke.

Now such a working of ourselves up to the realisation of a higher ego-being within the ordinary ego leads us not only to admit that our thoughts have brought us to a theoretical statement of the existence of such a higher ego, but also makes us realise as a power within ourselves the living activity of this ego in all its reality and feel the ordinary ego as a creation of the other. This feeling is, in fact, the first step towards beholding the spiritual being of the soul. And if it leads to nothing, it is because we rest satisfied with the beginning only.

This beginning may be a scarcely perceptible dull sensation. It may remain so perhaps for a long time. But if we strongly and energetically pursue the course which has led us up to this beginning, we shall at last arrive at beholding the soul as a spiritual being. And having brought ourselves thus far we shall easily understand why some one, without any experience in these matters, may say that in believing we see such things we have only created an imaginative picture of a higher ego through auto-suggestion. But one who has had the experience knows that such an objection can only be derived from lack of this very experience.

For those who seriously go through this development acquire at the same time the capacity to distinguish between realities and the pictures of their own imagination. The inner activities and experiences which are necessary during such a pilgrimage of the soul, if it is a right one, make us practise the greatest circumspection towards ourselves with regard to imagination and reality. When we systematically strive to attain the experience of ourselves in the higher ego as spiritual beings, we shall consider as the principal experience that which is described at the beginning of this meditation and look upon the rest as a help to the soul on its pilgrimage.

## Seventh Meditation

In which the Attempt is made to form an Idea of the Character of Experience in Supersensible Worlds

The experiences that showed themselves to be necessary for the soul, if it wants to penetrate into supersensible worlds, may seem deterrent to many people. These may say they do not know what would befall them if they ventured upon such processes, or how they would be able to stand them. Under the influence of such a feeling the opinion is very easily formed that it is better not to interfere artificially with the development of the soul, but calmly to surrender to the guidance of which the soul remains unconscious, and to await its effect in the future upon one's inner life.

Such a thought must, however, always be repressed by a person who is able to make another thought a living power within him; namely, that it is natural to human nature to progress, and that if no attention were paid to these things it would mean disloyally consigning to stagnation forces in the soul which are waiting to be unfolded. Forces of self-unfolding are present in every human soul, and there cannot be a single one that would not listen to the call for unfolding them if in some way or other it could learn something about these powers and their importance.

Moreover, nobody will allow himself to be deterred from the ascent into higher worlds unless beforehand he has taken up a false position towards the processes through which he has to go. These processes are described in the preceding meditations. And if they are to be expressed by words which must naturally be taken from ordinary human existence, they can be rightly expressed only in that way. For experiences on the supersensible path of knowledge are related to the human soul in such a way that they are exactly similar to what, for example, a highly-strung feeling of loneliness, a feeling of hovering over an abyss and the like may mean to the soul of man.

Through the experience of such feelings and sensations the powers to tread the path of knowledge are produced. They are the germs of the fruits of supersensible knowledge. All these experiences in a certain way carry something in themselves which lies hidden deep within them, When they are experienced this hidden element is brought to a state of the utmost tension, something bursts the feeling of loneliness, which surrounds this hidden " something " like a veil, and it then pushes forward into the soul's life as a means of knowledge.

One must, however, take into consideration that when the right path is entered upon, something else at once presents itself behind every such experience. When the one has occurred, the other cannot fail to appear. When anything has to be borne there is at once added the power to bear it steadfastly if we will only reflect calmly on this power and also take time to notice that which wants to manifest itself in the soul.

When something painful appears, and when at the same time there is a sure feeling in the soul that forces are to be found which will make the pain bearable and with which we are able to connect ourselves, we are then able to take up such a position towards experiences, which would be unbearable in the course of our ordinary life, so that we seem to be the spectator of ourselves in all such experiences. And thus people who, whilst on their way towards supersensible knowledge, pass through many a rise and fall of great waves of feeling, show nevertheless perfect equanimity in

ordinary life. It is of course quite possible that experiences that are made within also react upon the state of mind in outer life in the physical world, so that for a time we do not come into harmony with ourselves and with life in the way which was possible before we entered upon the path of knowledge.

We are then obliged to draw from that which has already been obtained within ourselves such forces as make it possible again to find the balance. And if the path of knowledge be rightly trod no situation can arise in which this would not be possible.

The best path of knowledge will always be the one that leads to the supersensible world through strengthening or condensing the life of the soul by means of concentration on inner meditations during which certain thoughts or feelings are retained in the mind. In this case it is not a question of experiencing a thought or an emotion as we do in order to find our way in the physical world, but the point is to live entirely with and within the thought or emotion, concentrating all the powers of our soul in it, so that it entirely fills the consciousness during the time of retirement within ourselves.

We think, for instance, of a thought which has given to the soul a conviction of some kind; we at first leave on one side any power of conviction it may have, and only live with it and in it again and again so as to become one with it. It is not necessary that it should be a thought of things belonging to the higher worlds, although such a thought is more effective. For inner meditation we can even use a thought which pictures an ordinary experience. Fruitful for instance, are emotions which represent resolutions with regard to deeds of love, and which we kindle within ourselves to the highest degree of human warmth and sincere experience.

Effective - especially where knowledge is concerned - are symbolic representations, gained from life, or accepted on the advice of such persons as are in a certain way experts in these matters, because they know the fruitfulness of the means employed from what they themselves have gained by them.

Through these meditations, that must become a habit, nay, a necessity of life, just as breathing is necessary for the life of the body, we shall concentrate the powers of the soul, and by concentrating strengthen them. Only we must succeed during the time of inner meditation in remaining in such a state that neither outer impressions of the senses nor any recollections of such play upon the soul.

Recollections also of all that we have experienced in ordinary life, all that gives pleasure or pain to the soul, must remain silent so that the soul may surrender itself exclusively to that which we ourselves determine shall occupy it. The capacities for supersensible knowledge grow legitimately only out of that which we have acquired in this way by inner meditations, the content and the form of which have been fixed by the power of our own soul.

The important point is not the source whence we derive the object of the meditation; we may take it from an expert in these matters or from the literature of spiritual science; the important point is to make its substance an inner experience of our own life and not merely to choose it out from thoughts which may arise in our own soul, or from things which we feel inclined to consider as the best objects for meditation.

Such an object has but little power, because the soul is already familiar with it and cannot

consequently make the necessary effort in order to become one with it. It is in making this effort, however, that the effective means of acquiring the faculties for supersensible knowledge are to be found, and not in the mere fact of becoming one with the substance of the meditation as such.

We can also arrive at supersensible sight in other ways. People may arrive at fervent meditation and inner experience by reason of their whole constitution. And so they may be able to liberate powers for acquiring supersensible knowledge in their soul. Such powers may all of a sudden manifest themselves in souls which do not seem at all predetermined for such experiences.

In the most varied ways the supersensible life of the soul may awaken; but we can only arrive at an experience of which we are the masters as we are the masters of ourselves in ordinary life, if we tread the path of knowledge here described. Any other irruption of the supersensible world into the experiences of the soul will mean that such experiences enter in as it were forcibly, and the person in question will either lose himself in them, or lay himself open to every conceivable kind of deception with regard to their value, their true meaning, and their importance within the real supersensible world.

It is most important to keep in mind that on the path to supersensible knowledge the soul changes. It may be the case that in ordinary life in the physical world, we are not at all inclined to fall into any kind of illusion or deception, but that on entering the supersensible world we fall victims to such deceptions and illusions in the most credulous manner. It may also happen that in the physical world we have a very good and sound feeling for truth, and understand that we must not think only in such a way of a thing or an occurrence as to satisfy our own' egoism in order to judge it rightly; yet in spite of this we may arrive at seeing in the supersensible world only what pleases our egoism. We must remember how this egoism colours all that we behold.

We are observing only that to which our egoism is directing its gaze in accordance with its own inclinations, though perhaps we may not realise that it is egoism which is directing our spiritual sight. And it is then quite natural that we should take what we see for truth. Protection against this can only be obtained if, on the path to supersensible knowledge through earnest self-observation, and through an energetic striving for clearer self-knowledge, we more and more develop our capacity to discern truly how much egoism is to be found in our own soul and where it is finding utterance. Only then we shall be able to emancipate ourselves by degrees from the leadership of this egoism if in our meditation we forcibly and relentlessly put before ourselves the possibility of our soul being in this or that respect under its domination.

It belongs to the unhampered mobility of the soul in higher worlds that it should make clear to itself in what a different manner certain qualities of the soul react upon the spiritual world from that in which they do in the physical world. This becomes especially evident when we direct our attention to the moral qualities of the soul. Within the physical world we distinguish between the laws of nature and those of morality. When we want to explain natural processes we cannot make use of moral ideas. We explain a poisonous plant according to natural law, and we do not condemn it morally for being poisonous.

We clearly understand that, with regard to the animal kingdom, there can, at the most, be only a

question of something resembling morality, and that a moral judgment in the strict sense could only disturb the main issue. It is in circumstances of human life that moral judgment about the worth of existence begins to be of importance. Man himself makes his own value dependent on this judgment, when he comes so far that he is able to judge himself impartially. Nobody, however, would dream of considering the laws of nature as identical with or even similar to moral laws, if he considers physical existence in the right way.

As soon as we enter the higher worlds this is changed. The more spiritual the worlds which we enter, the more do moral law and what may be termed natural law in these worlds coincide. In the physical world we know that we are speaking figuratively when we say of an evil deed that it burns in the soul. We know that natural fire is quite a different thing. But such a distinction does not exist in the supersensible worlds; for there hate and envy are forces acting in such a way that we may term their effects the "natural laws" of that world. Hate and envy have there the effect that the being who is hated or envied reacts upon the hater or envier in a consuming, extinguishing manner, so that processes of destruction are established which are hurtful to the spiritual being. Love acts in such a way in spiritual worlds that its effect is an irradiation of warmth that is productive and helpful.

This can already be observed in the elemental body of man. Within the sense-world the hand that commits an immoral action must in its activity be explained according to natural law quite in the same way as a hand that serves morality. But certain elemental parts of man remain undeveloped, when no corresponding moral feelings exist. And we must account for the imperfect formation of elemental organs through imperfect moral qualities in the same way as natural processes are explained by natural law. On the other hand, we must never from the imperfect development of a physical organ draw the conclusion that the corresponding part of the elemental body must be imperfectly developed. We must always keep in mind that in the different worlds different kinds of law prevail.

A person may have a physical organ imperfectly developed; but at the same time the corresponding elemental organ may be not only normally perfect, but more perfect to the same extent as the physical one is imperfect. In a significant way does the difference between the supersensible and the physical worlds present itself in all that is connected with ideas of beauty and ugliness. The way in which these ideas are employed in physical existence loses all significance as soon as we enter supersensible worlds. Beautiful, for instance - only that being can be called beautiful which succeeds in communicating all its inner experiences to the other beings of its world, so that they can take part in the totality of its experience.

The capacity of manifesting all that lives within oneself, and of not having to hide away anything, might in higher worlds be called "beautiful." And in these worlds this conception of beauty completely coincides with that of unreserved sincerity, of honest manifestation of that which a being carries within itself. Similarly that being might be called ugly which does not want to show outwardly its own inner content, and which holds back its own experience and hides itself from other beings with regard to certain qualities. Such a being withdraws from its spiritual surroundings. This conception of ugliness coincides with that of insincere manifestation of oneself. To lie and to be ugly are realities which in the spiritual world are identical, so that a being which appears ugly is a deceitful being.

What are known in the physical world as desires and wishes also appear with quite a different

significance in the spiritual world. Desires which in the physical world arise from the inner nature of the human soul do not exist in the spiritual world. What may be termed desires in that world are kindled by that which is seen outside the being in question. A being which must feel that it has not a certain quality, which, according to that being's nature, it should have, beholds another being endowed with that quality, Moreover it cannot help having this other being always before it.

As in the physical world the eye naturally sees what is visible, so in the supersensible world the want of a quality always carries a being into the neighbourhood of another being endowed with the quality in question. And the sight of this other being becomes a continual reproach that acts as a real force, making the being, who is hampered with the fault, desirous of amending it. This is a quite different experience from a desire in the physical world; for in the spiritual world free will is not interfered with through such circumstances. A being may oppose itself to that which the sight of something else will call forth within it. It will then succeed by degrees in being taken away from its model.

The consequence, however, will be that the being who opposes itself to its model will bring itself into worlds where the conditions of existence will be worse than those would have been which were given to it in the world for which it was in a certain way predestined.

All this shows the soul that its world of conceptions must be transformed when entering supersensible realms. Ideas must be changed, widened, and blended with others if we want to describe the supersensible world correctly. That is the reason why descriptions of supersensible worlds given in terms of the physical world without any alteration or transformation are always unsatisfactory. We may realise that it is the outcome of a correct human feeling, when we use, within the physical world - more or less symbolically or even as immediately applicable - ideas which only become fully significant with regard to supersensible worlds.

Thus we may really feel lying to be ugly, but compared with the character of this idea in the supersensible world, such a use of words in the physical world is only a reflection, resulting from the fact that all the different worlds are related to one another, and these relations are dimly felt and unconsciously perceived in the physical world. Yet we must remember that in the physical world a lie, which we feel as ugly, is not necessarily ugly in its outer appearance, and that it would be a confusion of ideas if we were to explain ugliness in physical nature as the outcome of lying.

In the supersensible world, however, anything false, seen in its right light, impresses itself upon us as being ugly in appearance. Here again possible deceptions have to be taken into consideration and guarded against. The soul may meet a being in the supersensible world which may rightly be characterised as evil, although it manifests itself in a form that must be called beautiful if judged according to the idea of the beautiful that we bring with us from the physical world. in such a case we shall not be able to judge correctly before we have penetrated to the heart of the being in question.

We shall then discover that the "beautiful" manifestation was only a mask which does not harmonise with the nature of the being, and then that which we thought to be beautiful - according to ideas borrowed from the physical world - impresses itself with particular force upon our mind as ugly. And as soon as this happens, the "evil" being will no more be able to deceive us with its "beauty." It must unveil itself to such a beholder in its true form, which can only be an imperfect expression of that



which it is within. Such phenomena of the supersensible world make it especially evident how human conceptions must be transformed when we enter that world.

## **Eighth Meditation**

In which the Attempt is made to form an Idea of the Way in which Man beholds his Repeated Earth-Lives

We are not really entitled to speak of dangers during the pilgrimage of the soul through supersensible worlds, when this pilgrimage is undertaken in the right way. The method would not lead to its goal if amongst the psychic instructions given there were those which created dangers for the pupil. The goal is rather to make the soul strong, to concentrate its forces, so that man should become able to bear his soul's experiences, which he has to go through when he wants to see and understand other worlds than the physical. Moreover, an essential difference between the physical world and the supersensible worlds is that beholding, perceiving, and understanding are related to one another in quite a different way in the two worlds.

When we hear about some part of the physical world, we have a certain right to feel that we can only arrive at a complete understanding of it through beholding and perceiving it. We do not believe we have understood a landscape or a picture until we have seen it. But the supersensible worlds can be thoroughly understood when with unbiased judgment we accept a correct description of them. In order to understand and to experience all the forces for the strengthening and fulfilment of life which belong to spiritual worlds, we only need the descriptions of those who are able to see. Real knowledge of those worlds at first hand can only be obtained by those who are able to investigate when outside their physical body.

Descriptions of the spiritual worlds must always originate with the seers. But such knowledge of these worlds as is necessary to the life of the soul may be obtained through the understanding. And it is perfectly possible to be unable to look into supersensible worlds oneself and yet be able to understand them and their peculiarities, with an understanding for which the soul has under certain circumstances a perfect right to ask, and indeed must ask.

Therefore it is also possible that we should choose our means of meditation out of the store of conceptions which we have acquired concerning the spiritual worlds. Such a means of meditation is by far the best and the one which leads us most safely to the goal.

Although such a notion may seem very natural, it is, however, not correct to believe that knowledge of higher worlds obtained through the understanding before attaining to supersensible vision is an obstacle to the development of such vision. The contrary is in fact more correct, namely, that it is easier and safer to arrive at clairvoyance with some preliminary understanding than without. Whether we stop short at understanding only, or go on to strive after clairvoyance, depends upon the awakening or non-awakening of an inner craving for firsthand knowledge. If such a craving is there, we cannot but look for every opportunity to start on a real personal pilgrimage into supersensible worlds.

The wish for an understanding of the higher worlds will spread more and more amongst the people of our day; for close observation of human evolution shows that from now onward human souls are entering upon a stage of development in which they will be unable to find the right relation to life

without an understanding of supersensible worlds.

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When we have come so far on our soul's pilgrimage that we carry within ourselves as a memory all that we call "ourself," namely, our own being in physical life, and experience ourselves instead in another, newly-won superior ego, then we become capable of seeing our life stretching beyond the limits of earthly life. Before our spiritual sight appears the fact that we have shared in another life, in the spiritual world, prior to our present existence in the world of the senses; and in that spiritual life are to be found the real causes of the shaping of our physical existence.

We become acquainted with the fact that before we received a physical body and entered upon this physical existence we lived a purely spiritual life. We see that that human being which we now are, with its faculties and inclinations, was prepared during a life that we spent in a purely spiritual world before birth. We look upon ourselves as upon beings who lived spiritually before their entrance into the world of the senses, and who are now striving to live as physical beings with those faculties and psychic characteristics which were originally attached to them and which have developed since their birth.

It would be a mistake to say: "How is it possible that in spiritual life I should have aspired to possess faculties and inclinations, which now, when I have got them, do not please me at all?" It does not matter whether something pleases the soul in the world of senses or not. That is not the point. The soul has quite different points of view for its aspirations in the spiritual world from those which it adopts in the life of the senses. The character of knowledge and will is quite different in the two worlds. In the spiritual life we know that for the sake of our total evolution we need a certain kind of life in the physical world, which when we get there may seem unsympathetic or depressing to the soul; and yet we strive for it, because in the spiritual existence we do not prefer what is sympathetic and agreeable, but what is necessary to the right development of our individual being.

It is the same with regard to the events of life. We contemplate them and see how we have prepared in the spiritual world what is antipathetic as well as what is sympathetic, and how we ourselves have brought together the impulses which cause our painful as well as our joyful experiences in physical existence. But even then we may find it incomprehensible that we ourselves have brought about this or that situation in life, as long as we only experience ourselves in the physical world. In the spiritual world, however, we have had what may be called supersensible insight which caused us to say: "You must go through that uncongenial or painful experience, for only such an experience can bring you a step further in your total development." From the standpoint of the physical world only, it is never possible to decide how far one particular life on earth brings a human being forward in his total evolution.

Having realised the spiritual existence that precedes our earthly existence, we see the reasons why in our spiritual life we have aimed at a certain kind of destiny for the ensuing terrestrial life. These reasons lead back to an earlier terrestrial life lived in the past. Upon the character of that earlier life, upon the experiences made and the capacities attained in it, depends the wish during the succeeding spiritual existence to correct defective experiences and develop neglected capacities through a new

life upon earth.

In the spiritual world you feel a wrong done by you to another human being to be a disturbance of the harmony of the world, and you realise the necessity of meeting that human being again on earth in the next terrestrial life, in order to be able to get into such relationship to him as to be able to repair the wrong you have done. During the progressive development of the soul the range of vision is widened over a whole series of earlier terrestrial lives. In this way you arrive through observation at a knowledge of the true history of the life of your higher "Ego." You see that man goes through his total existence in a succession of lives upon earth, and that between these repeated terrestrial lives he passes through purely spiritual states of existence which are connected with his terrestrial lives according to certain laws.

Thus the knowledge of repeated existences upon earth is lifted into the sphere of observation. (In order to avoid a frequently repeated mistake, attention is called to the following fact, more fully treated in other writings of mine. The sum total of a man's existence does not unfold itself in an endless repetition of lives. A certain number of repetitions take place, but both before the beginning and after the close of these quite different kinds of existence are found, and all this shows itself in its totality as a development inspired by sublime wisdom.)

The knowledge of repeated terrestrial lives may also be reached by reasonable observation of physical existence. In my books *Theosophy* and *An Outline of Occult Science*, as well as in lesser writings of mine, the attempt has been made to prove reincarnation along such lines of reasoning as are characteristic of the modern doctrine of evolution in natural science. It is there shown how logical thought and investigation that really follow up scientific research (and its results) to its full consequences are absolutely bound to accept the idea of evolution, presented to us by modern science, in such a sense as to consider the true being, the psychic individuality of man, as something which is evolving through a sequence of physical existences alternating with intermediate purely spiritual lives.

The proofs attempted in those writings are naturally capable of much further development and completion. But the opinion does not seem unjustified that proofs in this matter have precisely the same scientific value as that which in general is called scientific proof. There is nothing in the science of spiritual things which cannot be confirmed by proofs of that kind. But of course we must admit the difficulty is greater for spiritually scientific proofs to be acknowledged than proofs of natural science.

This is not on account of their less stringent logic, but because in the face of such proofs one does not feel those underlying physical facts, which make the acceptance of the proofs of natural science so easy. This has nothing whatever to do with the conclusiveness of the reasoning itself. And if we are capable of comparing with an unbiased mind the proofs of natural science with those given on analogous lines by spiritual science, we shall easily be convinced of their equally conclusive power.

Thus the force of such proofs may also be added to that which the investigator of the spiritual worlds has to give as a description of successive terrestrial lives resulting from his own vision. The one side can support the other in the formation of a conviction of the truth of human reincarnation based simply on reasonable comprehension. Here the attempt has been made to show the way that leads beyond mental comprehension to supersensible vision of this reincarnation.

**EGYPTIAN MYTHS  
AND  
MYSTERIES**

by  
RUDOLF STEINER

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# **Egyptian Myths and Mysteries**

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# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

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# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 1

*Spiritual Connections between  
the Culture-streams of Ancient  
and Modern Times.*

*September 2, 1908*

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If we ask ourselves what spiritual science should be for men, then presumably, out of all sorts of reactions and feelings that we have developed in the course of our work in this field, we will place the following answer before our souls: Spiritual science should be for us a path to the higher development of our humanity, of all that is human in us.

Thus we set up a life-aim, which in a certain way is self-understood for every thinking and feeling person, a life-aim that includes the achieving of the highest ideals and also includes the unfolding of the deepest and most significant forces in our souls. The best men in all ages have asked themselves how man can rightly bring to expression what lies within him, and to this question the most diverse answers have been given. Perhaps none can be found that is terser or more telling than the answer Goethe gave out of a deep conviction in his *Geheimnisse*:

“From the power that binds all beings That man frees himself who overcomes himself.”

Deep meaning lies in these words, for they show us clearly and pregnantly what lies at the heart of all evolution. This is that man develops his inner feeling through rising above himself. Thereby we lift ourselves, so to speak, above ourselves. The soul that overcomes itself finds the path that leads beyond itself to the highest treasures of humanity. This lofty goal of spiritual research should be borne in mind when we undertake to treat such a theme as the one that is to occupy us here. It will lead us beyond the ordinary horizons of life to sublime things. We will have to survey wide reaches of time if we take as our subject an epoch stretching from ancient Egypt down to our own day. We will have to pass millennia in review, and what we gain there from will really be something connected with the deepest concerns of our souls, something that grips our innermost soul-life. Only apparently does the man who strives toward the heights of life remove himself from his immediate surroundings; just through this he comes to an understanding of his daily concerns. Man must get away from the troubles of the day, from what his routine brings to him, and look up to the great events of the history of the world and its peoples. Then for the first time he finds what is most sacred for his soul. It may seem strange to suggest that connections, intimate connections, should be sought for between our own time and ancient Egypt, when the mighty pyramids and the Sphinx appeared. It can at first seem remarkable that one should understand his own time better by directing his gaze so far back. But just for this purpose we are going to look backward over much wider and more comprehensive epochs. This will bring the result we seek: The possibility of transcending ourselves.

To one who has already carefully studied the ideas of spiritual science, it will not seem strange that one should look for a connection between widely separated periods of time. It is one of our basic convictions that the human soul continually returns, that the



experiences between birth and death occur repeatedly for us. The doctrine of reincarnation has become ever more familiar to us. When we reflect on this we may ask: Since these souls that dwell in us today have often been here before, is it possible that they were also present in ancient Egypt during Egyptian cultural epoch, that the same souls are in us which at that time looked up at the gigantic pyramids and the enigmatic Sphinxes?

The answer to this question is, Yes. Our souls have beheld the old cultural monuments that they see again today. The same souls that lived then have gone through later periods and have appeared again in our own time. We know that no life remains without fruit; we know that what the soul has gone through in the way of experiences remains within it and appears in later incarnations as powers, temperament, capacities, and dispositions. Thus the way we look on nature today, the way we take up what our times bring forth, the way we view the world, all this was prepared in ancient Egypt, in the land of the pyramids. We were then prepared in such a way that we now look at the physical world as we do. Just how these widely separated periods link themselves together is what we will now explore.

If we want to grasp the deeper meaning of these lectures, we must go a long way back in earthly evolution, We know that our earth has often changed. Before ancient Egypt there were still other cultures. By means of occult research we can see much further back into the gray primeval times of human evolution, and we come to times when the earth appeared quite other than it is today. Things were entirely different in ancient Asia and Africa. If we look back clairvoyantly into primeval times, we come to a point where a tremendous catastrophe, caused by water-forces, took place on our earth and fundamentally altered its face. If we go still further back, we reach a time when the earth had an entirely different physiognomy, when what now forms the floor of the Atlantic Ocean, between Europe and America, was above water, was land. We come to a time when our souls lived in entirely different bodies than today; we reach ancient Atlantis, of which our external science can as yet say little.

The regions of Atlantis were destroyed through colossal deluges. Human bodies had different forms at that time, but the souls that live in us today lived also in the ancient Atlanteans. Those were our souls. Then the water-catastrophe caused a movement of the Atlantean peoples, a great migration from west to east. We ourselves were these peoples. Toward the end of Atlantis all was in movement. We wandered from the west toward the east, through Ireland, Scotland, Holland, France, and Spain. Thus the peoples moved eastward and populated Europe, Asia, and the northern parts of Africa.

It must not be imagined that those who, in the last great migration, wandered out of the west into the regions that have gradually developed into Asia, Europe, and Africa, did not encounter other peoples. Almost all of Europe, the northern parts of Africa, and large parts of Asia were already inhabited at that time. These areas were not peopled from the west only; they had already been settled earlier, so that this migration found a strange population already established. We may assume that when quieter times set in, special cultural relations arose. There was, for instance, in the neighborhood of Ireland, a region where, before the catastrophe that now lies thousands of years behind us, there lived the most advanced portions of the entire population of the earth. These portions then migrated, under the special guidance of great individualities, through Europe to a region of central Asia, and from that point cultural colonies were sent out to the most diverse

places. One such colony of the post-Atlantean time was sent from this group of people into India, finding a population that had been seated there from primeval times and had its own culture. Paying due heed to what was already present, these colonists founded the first post-Atlantean culture. This was many thousand years ago, and external documents tell us scarcely anything about it. What appears in these documents is much later. In those great compendiums of Wisdom called the Vedas, we have only the final echoes of a very early Indian culture that was directed by super-earthly beings and was founded by the Holy Rishis. It was a culture of a unique kind, and we today can form only a feeble idea of it because the Vedas are only a reflection of that primeval holy Indian culture. After this culture there followed another, the second cultural epoch of the post-Atlantean time. Out of this the wisdom of Zarathustra flowed and the Persian culture arose. Long did the Indian culture endure, long also the Persian, reaching a culmination in Zarathustra.

Then arose, under the influence of colonists who were sent into the land of the Nile, the culture that is comprised under the four names, Chaldean-Egyptian-Assyrian-Babylonian. This third post-Atlantean culture arose in Asia Minor and northern Africa, and reached its summit, on the one side, in the wonderful Chaldean star-lore and, on the other, in the Egyptian culture.

Then comes a fourth age, developing in the south of Europe, the age of the Greco-Roman culture, which dawns with the songs of Homer and goes on to produce the Greek sculptures and the art of poetry that appears in the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles. Rome also belonged to this period. The epoch begins in the eighth pre-Christian century, approximately in 747 B. C., and lasts until the fourteenth or fifteenth century A. D. After that we have the fifth period, in which we ourselves live, and this in turn will be followed by the sixth and seventh periods.

In the seventh period, ancient India will appear in a new form. We shall see that there is a remarkable law that enables us to understand the working of wonderful forces through the various epochs and the relationships of the epochs to each other. If we begin by looking at the first period, that of the Indian culture, we will find that this first culture later recrudesces in a new form in the seventh period. Ancient India will then appear in a new form. Mysterious forces are at work here. And the second period, which we have called the Persian, will appear again in the sixth period. After our own culture perishes, we will see the Zarathustra religion revive in the culture of the sixth period. And in the course of these lectures we will see how, in our own fifth period, there takes place a sort of reawakening of the third period, the Egyptian. The fourth period stands in the middle; it is peculiar to itself, and neither earlier nor later does it have a parallel.

To make this mysterious law somewhat clearer, we should add the following. We know that India has something that strikes our humanitarian consciousness as strange. This is the division into definite castes, into priests, warriors, merchants, and laborer. This strict segregation is foreign to our modern views. In the first post-Atlantean culture it was not strange, it was entirely natural; in those times it could not be otherwise than that the souls of men should be divided into four grades according to their capacities. No harshness was felt in it for men were distributed by their leaders, who had such authority that what they prescribed was accepted without question. It was felt that the leaders, the seven Holy Rishis who had received their instruction from divine beings in Atlantis, could see where each man should be placed. Thus such a classification of men was something altogether

natural. An entirely different grouping will appear in the seventh period. The division in the first period was effected by authority, but in the seventh period men will group themselves according to objective points of view. Something similar is seen among the ants; they form a state which, in its wonderful structure as well as in its capacity to perform a relatively prodigious amount of work, is not rivaled by any human state. Yet there we have just what seems to be alien to us, the caste system; for each ant has its particular task.

Whatever we may think of this today, men will see that the salvation of humanity lies in division into objective groups, and they will even be able to combine division of labor with equality of rights. Human society will appear as a wonderful harmony. This is something we can see in the annals of the future. Thus ancient India will appear again; and in a similar way certain traits of the third period will appear again in the fifth.

Glancing at the immediate implications of our theme, we see a large domain. We see the gigantic pyramids, the enigmatic Sphinx. The souls that belonged to the ancient Indians were also incarnated in Egypt and are again incarnated today. If we follow our general line of thought into detail, we will discover two phenomena that show us how, in superearthy connections, there are mysterious threads between the Egyptian culture and that of today. We have observed the law of repetition in the different periods of time, but it will seem far more significant if we follow it in spiritual regions. We are all familiar with a painting of great importance that has surely passed before all our souls at least once. I mean Raphael's famous painting of the Sistine Madonna, which by a chain of circumstances has come to be located among us in central Germany. In this picture, which is available in countless reproductions, we have learned to admire the wonderful purity poured out over the whole form. We have all felt something in the countenance of the mother, in the singular way the form floats in the air, perhaps also in the deep expression of the child's eyes. Then, if we see the cloud-forms round about from which numerous little angel-heads appear, we have a still deeper feeling, a feeling that makes the whole picture more comprehensible to us. I know it seems daring when I say that if one gazes deeply and earnestly on this child in the arms of the mother and on the clouds in the background forming themselves into a number of little angel-heads, then he has the feeling that this child was not born in the natural way, but that it is one of those that float round about in the clouds. This Jesus child itself is such a cloud-form, only become a little denser, as though one of the little angels had flown out of the clouds onto the arm of the Madonna. That would be a healthy feeling. If we make this feeling live within us, then our view will expand and free itself from certain narrow conceptions about the natural connections of life. Just out of such a picture our narrow vision can be expanded to see that what must happen in a certain way according to modern laws could at one time have been different. We will discern that there was once a form of reproduction other than the sexual one. In short, we will perceive deep connections between what is human and the spiritual forces in this picture. This is what lies in it.

If we allow our gaze to wander back from this Madonna into the Egyptian time, we are met by something similar, by an equally sublime picture. The Egyptian had Isis, the figure connected with the words: *I am what was, what is, and what will be. No mortal has yet raised my veil.*

A deep mystery, heavily veiled, manifests itself in the figure of Isis, the lovable goddess who, in the spiritual consciousness of the ancient Egyptian, was present with the Horus

child as our Madonna is present today with the Jesus child. In the fact that this Isis is presented to us as something bearing the eternal within it, we are again reminded of our feeling in contemplating the Madonna. We must see deep mysteries in Isis, mysteries that are grounded in the spiritual. The Madonna is a remembrance of Isis: the Isis appears again in the Madonna. This is one of the connections that I spoke of. We must learn to recognize with our feelings the deep mysteries that show a superearthy connection between ancient Egypt and our modern culture.

Still another connection can be brought before you today. We recall how the Egyptian handled the dead; we remember the mummies, and how the Egyptian concerned himself that the outer physical form should be preserved for a long time. We know that he filled his tombs with such mummies, in which he had preserved the outer form, and that as mementos of the past physical life he gave to the deceased certain utensils and possessions suited to the needs of physical life. Thus what the person had had in the physical was to be retained. In this way the Egyptian bound the dead to the physical plane. This custom developed more and more and is a special earmark of the old Egyptian culture. Such a thing is not without consequences for the soul. Let us remember that our souls were in Egyptian bodies.

This is quite correct; our souls were incorporated in these bodies that became mummies. We know that when man, after death, is freed from his physical and etheric bodies, he has a different consciousness; he is by no means unconscious in the astral world. He can look down from the spiritual world, even though today he cannot look up; he can then look down on the physical earth. It is not then indifferent to him whether his body has been preserved as a mummy, has been burned, or has decayed. A definite kind of connection arises through this. We shall see this mysterious connection. Through the fact that in ancient Egypt the bodies were preserved for a long time, the souls experienced something very definite in the period after death. When they looked down they knew — that is my body. They were bound to this physical body. They had the form of their body before them. This body became important to the souls, for the soul is susceptible to impressions after death. The impression made by the mummified body imprinted itself deeply, and the soul was formed in accordance with this impression.

These souls went through incarnations in the Greco-Latin period, and in our own time they are living in us. It was not without effect that they saw their mummified bodies after death, that they were repeatedly led back to these bodies; this is by no means unimportant. They attached their sympathies to these bodies, and the fruit of their looking down upon them appears now, in the fifth period, in the inclination that souls have today to lay great weight upon the outer physical life. All that we describe today as the attachment to matter stems from the fact that the souls at that time, out of the spiritual world, could look upon their own embodiment. Through this man learned to love the physical world; through this it is so often said today that the only important thing is the physical body between birth and death. Such views do not arise out of nothing.

This is not a criticism of the practice of mummifying. We only want to point to certain necessities that are connected with the repeated incarnating of the soul. Without this pondering on the mummies men would not have been equal to developing further. We would by now have lost all interest in the physical world had the Egyptians not had the mummy-cult. It had to be thus if a proper interest in the physical world was to be

awakened. That we see the world as we do today is a consequence of the fact that the Egyptians mummified the physical body after death.

This cultural stream was under the influence of initiates, who could see into the future. Not through any whim did men make mummies. Particularly in those days mankind was led by high individualities who prescribed What was right. This was done under authority. In the schools of the initiates it was known that our fifth epoch was connected with the third epoch. These mysterious connections stood at that time before the eyes of the priests, who instituted mummification so that the souls might acquire the disposition to seek spiritual experience in the external physical world.

The world is guided through wisdom; this is a second example of such connections. That men think as they do today is a result of what they experienced in ancient Egypt. Here we glimpse deep mysteries that reveal themselves in the cultural streams. We have barely touched these mysteries, for what has been shown of the Madonna as a remembrance of Isis, together with what we have seen of mummification, gives only a feeble hint of the real spiritual connections. But we will throw more light upon these relationships; we will consider not only what appears outwardly, but also what lies behind the external. External life runs its course between birth and death. Man lives a much longer life after death, in what we know as kamaloka and the experiences of the spiritual world. The experiences in the supersensible worlds are no more uniform than the experiences here in the physical world. What did we experience as ancient Egyptians in the other world? When our eyes looked on the pyramids and the Sphinx, how completely different was the course of our lives, how differently did our souls live between birth and death! That life cannot be compared to the life of the present day; such a comparison would have no meaning, and the experiences between death and a new birth have been far more dissimilar than the experiences of outer life. During the Egyptian epoch the soul experienced something quite different than in the Greek world, or in the time of Charlemagne, or in our own time. Also in the other world, in the spiritual world, evolution takes place, and what the soul experiences today between death and a new birth is something quite different from what the ancient Egyptian experienced when he laid aside his outer form at death. Just as mummification worked on in its peculiar way, causing the mood of the present day, just as this external life repeats itself from the third into the fifth period, so does evolution continue in those mysterious worlds between death and birth. This also we will have to study and here again we will find a mysterious connection. Then we will be able to grasp what lives in us as the fruit of that ancient time. We will be led into deep recesses of the labyrinth of the earth's evolution. But just through this we will recognize the full connection between what the Egyptian built, what the Chaldean thought, and what we today live. We will see what was then achieved flaring up again in what surrounds us, in what interests us in our environment. Physically and spiritually we will obtain clues to this connection. It will also be shown how evolution proceeds, how the fourth period forms a wonderful link between the third and the fifth. Thus our souls will lift themselves to the significant connections of the world, and the fruit will be a deep understanding of what lives in us.

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# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 2

*The Reflection of Cosmic Events  
in the Religious Views of Men.*

September 3, 1908

GA 106

YESTERDAY we looked at certain connections in the spiritual relationships of the so-called post-Atlantean time. We saw how the first cultural epoch of this period will repeat itself in the last, the seventh; how the Persian culture will repeat itself in the sixth; and how the Egyptian culture, which will occupy us during the next few days, repeats itself in our own lives and destinies in the fifth period. Of the fourth culture, the Greco-Latin, we were able to say that it occupies an exceptional position in that it experiences no repetition. Thus we could point in a sketchy way to the mysterious connections in the cultures of the post-Atlantean time, which follows after the time of the Atlantis that perished through powerful water-catastrophes. This age that follows Atlantis will perish in turn. At the end of our fifth great epoch, the post-Atlantean, there will be catastrophes that will work in a way similar to those at the close of the Atlantean epoch. Through the War of All Against All, the seventh culture of the fifth epoch will find its conclusion. These are interesting connections that are indicated in certain repetitions, and when we follow them more closely they will throw light into the depths of our soul life.

In order to lay a proper foundation, we must today allow still other repetitions to pass before our mind's eye. We will let our glance rove far into the evolution of our earth, and we will see that these wide horizons must have an intimate interest for us.

But let us begin with an admonition, a warning against a mechanical approach to the repetitions. When in the realm of occultism we speak of such repetitions, saying that the first cultural epoch repeats itself in the seventh, the third in the fifth, etc., it is easy to let a certain gift for combinations get the upper hand, so that we try to apply such schemes or diagrams in other contexts also. It is easy to believe that we can do this, and many books on theosophy actually contain a good deal of rubbish of this sort. Hence there must be a strong warning that such combinations are not controlling, but only perception, spiritual vision, without which we go astray. Such combinations must be warned against. What we can read in the spiritual world may be understood, but not discovered, through logic. It can be discovered only through experience.

If we wish to understand the cultural epochs more clearly, we must achieve a general view of the evolution of the earth as it presents itself to the seer who can direct his spiritual gaze to the events of the most remote past. If we look far back into the evolution of the earth, we can say that our earth has not always appeared as it does today. It did not have the firm mineral base of today; the mineral kingdom was not as it is today; the earth did not bear the same plants and animals, and men were not in such a fleshly body as they have today; men had no bony system. All that was formed later. The farther we look back, the nearer we come to a condition which, if we could have observed it from cosmic distances, we would have seen as a mist, as a fine etheric cloud. This mist was much larger than our present earth, for it extended as far as the outermost planets of our solar

system and even farther. It included a far-reaching nebular mass, wherein was contained all that went into the formation of the earth, and also of the planets and even of the sun. If we could have examined this mass of mist closely, if an observer could have approached it, it would have seemed to be composed entirely of fine etheric points. When we see a swarm of gnats from a distance, it looks to us like a single cloud; close-up, however, we see the single insects. Thus, in the most remote past, the mass of our earth would have appeared, although then it was not material in our sense but was condensed only to an etheric condition. This earth-formation consisted of single ether-points, but something special was connected with these ether-points. Had the human eye been able to see these points, it would not have seen what the clairvoyant would have seen or what he actually sees now when he looks back. Let us make this clear by a comparison. Take the seed of a wild rose, a fully developed seed. What does one see who observes this? He sees a body that is very small, and if he did not know how a rose seed looked he would never imagine that a rose could grow from it. He would never derive this from the mere form of the seed. But a person who was endowed with a certain clairvoyant capacity would experience the following. The seed would gradually disappear from his sight, but to his clairvoyant eye would appear a flower-like form growing spiritually out of the seed. It would stand before his clairvoyant view, a real form, but one that could be seen only in the spirit. This form is the archetype of what later grows out of the seed. We would err if we believed that this form was exactly like the plant that grows from the seed. It is not at all like it. It is a wonderful light-form, containing streams and complicated formations. One could say that what later grows out of the seed is only a shadow of this wonderful spiritual light-form beheld by the clairvoyant.

Holding fast to this picture of how the clairvoyant sees the archetype of the plant, let us now return to the primeval earth and the single etheric points. If now, as in the previous example, the clairvoyant contemplated such an etheric point in the primeval substance, there would arise for him from the point (as from the seed in the previous example) a light-form, a beautiful form, which in reality is not there but rests slumbering in the point. What is this form that the seer perceives, looking back at the primal earth atom? What is it that arises? It is a form that is different from physical man, as different as is the archetype from the physical plant. It is the archetype of the present human form. At that time the human form slumbered spiritually in the etheric point, and the whole earth-evolution was necessary in order that what rested there might develop into present-day man. Many, many things were necessary for this, just as much is also necessary for the seed. This seed must be sunk in the earth, and the sun must send its warming rays, before it can develop itself into a plant. We will gradually understand how these points became men if we make clear to ourselves all that has happened in the meanwhile.

In the primeval past all the planets were connected with our earth. However, we will first consider the sun, moon, and earth because they are of special interest to us. At that time our sun, our moon, and our earth were not separate, but were all together. If we could stir these three bodies together like a broth in a great world-kettle, and if we thought of this as one cosmic body, we would have what the earth in its original condition was — sun plus earth plus moon. Naturally, man could live there only in a spiritual condition. He could live only in this condition because what is in the present sun was then united with the earth. For a long, long time the cosmic body contained our earth, sun, and moon within itself, as well as all the beings and forces connected with them. In those times man was

still only present spiritually in the primal human atom. This changed only in a time when something important occurred in world-evolution, when the sun split off and became a separate body, leaving earth and moon behind. After this, what was formerly a unity appears as a duality, as two cosmic bodies, the sun and the earth-plus-moon. Why did this occur?

All that happens has, naturally, a deep meaning, and we understand this when, looking backward, we find that there dwelt on earth at that time not only men but also other beings of a spiritual nature who were connected with them. These were not perceptible to the physical eye but were nevertheless present, as truly present as men and the other physical beings. Thus, for example, there are connected with our earth, living in its environs, beings whom Christian esotericism calls angels, *Angeloi*. We can best conceive these beings if we reflect that they stand at the stage at which man will be when the earth completes its evolution. Today these beings are already as far along as man will be at the end of his evolution on earth. A still higher stage is occupied by the archangels, *Archangeloi*, or Spirits of Fire, beings whom we can perceive when we direct our glance to what concerns entire peoples. Such concerns are guided by the beings called archangels or *Archangeloi*. A still higher type of being is called the Primal Beginnings or *Archai* or Spirits of Personality. We find these when we look at whole epochs of time and at many peoples, with all their connections and contrasts, contemplating what is usually called the *Zeitgeist* or Spirit of the Time. When we examine our own time, for example, we find that it is guided by higher beings called *Archai* or Primal Beginnings. Then there are still higher beings called, in Christian esotericism, Powers or *Exusiai* or Spirits of Form. Thus there are innumerable beings connected with our earth who are related to man in a sort of ladder of successive stages.

If we begin with the mineral and rise from the mineral to the plant, from the plant to the animal, and then to man, man is the highest physical being, but the others are also there; they are among us and permeate us. In the beginning of things, when the earth emerged from the womb of eternity as a sort of primeval mist, all these beings were bound up with the earth, and the clairvoyant would have seen how other beings pervade this picture at the same time as the human form. These were the beings named above, and beings of still higher types such as the Virtues, Dominions, Thrones, Cherubim, and finally the Seraphim. All of these beings were intimately connected with that powerful etheric dust, but they are at various stages of development. There are those whose sublimity man cannot fathom, but others are closer to him.

Since these beings were at different stages, they could not go through their evolution in the same way as man. A dwelling place had to be created for them. Among these high beings there were some who would have been greatly handicapped had they remained bound to lower beings. Therefore they split off. They took the finest substances out of the mist and built their dwelling in the sun. They created their heaven there, and there they found the proper tempo for their evolution. Had they remained in the inferior substances that they left behind in the earth, they would not have been able to continue their evolution. This would have hindered their development like a lead weight. This shows how material occurrences, such as the split in the cosmic substance, do not proceed from merely physical causes but rather from the forces of beings who need a site for their development. It happens because they must build their cosmic house. We must emphasize that spiritual causes lie at the foundation.



Man remained behind on the earth-plus-moon, and with him higher beings of the lowest hierarchy, such as angels and archangels, as well as beings who stood lower than man. But a single mighty being, who was already ripe enough to migrate to the sun, sacrificed himself and stayed with earth-plus-moon. This was the being who was later named Yahweh or Jehovah. He left the sun and became the leader of affairs on earth-plus-moon. Thus we have two dwelling-places: the sun and earth-plus-moon. On the sun were the most exalted beings, under the leadership of an especially high and sublime being whom the Gnostics attempted to conceive under the name Pleroma. We must picture this being as the regent of the sun. Yahweh is the leader of earth-plus-moon. We must make it especially clear that the noblest loftiest spirits went out with the sun, leaving the earth behind with the moon. The moon was not yet split off; it was still within the earth. How should one conceive this cosmic event of the separation of the sun from the earth? Above all, one must feel the sun and its inhabitants to be the most august, pure, and sublime element that was formerly connected with the earth, whereas earth-plus-moon was the lower element. At that time its condition was still lower than that of our present earth. The latter stands higher because there came a later period during which the earth unburdened itself of the moon and its grosser substances, in the presence of which man could not have developed further. The earth had to expel the moon.

Just before this, however, was the darkest and most dreadful time for our earth. Everything with a noble evolutionary disposition came under the control of bad forces, so that man could progress further only by eliminating the worst conditions of existence along with the moon.

We must realize that a sublime light-principle, that of the sun, was opposed to the principle of darkness, that of the moon. Had one clairvoyantly observed the sun, which had already withdrawn, one would have seen the beings who wished to inhabit it, but also something else would have been perceived. What had withdrawn itself as the sun would have shown itself not only as a cluster of spiritual beings, nor would it have appeared as something etheric, for that belongs to a coarser realm; it would have appeared as something astral, as a mighty light-aura. What one would have sensed as a light-principle, one would have seen as a shining aura in cosmic space. The earth, through allowing this light to go forth, would suddenly have appeared densified, though not yet coming to a firm mineral consistency. A good and an evil, a bright and a dark principle, stood opposed to each other at that time.

Now let us see how the earth looked before it expelled the moon. It would be entirely wrong to think of it as resembling our present earth. The core of the earth was then a fiery seething mass. This core would have appeared as a nucleus of fire surrounded by powerful water-forces, although these would not have been like our water of today, for they contained the metals in fluid form. In the middle of all this was man, but in entirely different form.

Thus the earth appeared when it expelled the moon. Air was not to be found on the earth; it simply was not there. The beings then existing needed no air; they had an entirely different breathing system. Man had become a sort of fish-amphibian, but he consisted of soft fluid material. What he sucked into himself was not air but what was contained in the water. This is approximately the way the earth looked at that time. We must see that the earth at that time was in a lower condition than at present. It had to be so. Otherwise man could never have been able to find the right tempo and the means for his evolution, if the

sun and moon had not separated themselves from the earth. Had the sun remained in the earth, everything would have gone too fast; whereas everything would have gone too slowly with the forces that now work on the moon. As the moon withdrew from the earth amid tremendous catastrophes, there prepared itself slowly what we may call the separation of an air-sheath from the water-element. Air was then entirely different from the air of today, for all kinds of vapors were still contained in it. But the being that was then gradually preparing itself was a sort of sketch of the man of today. We will describe all this more fully later.

We have learned to know man in three relationships. First, as he lived in earth-plus-sun-plus-moon with all the higher beings in a single cosmic body. Here he presented himself to the clairvoyant eye in the way described above. Next we see him under unfavorable conditions on earth-plus-moon. Had he remained in this condition, he would have become a malicious and savage being. When the sun had separated itself, there was the contrast of the sun on one side and moon-plus-earth on the other side. The sun, in all its streaming glory, glittered as a great sun-aura in space. On the other side remained earth-plus-moon with all the sinister forces that drag down the nobler elements in man. A twofoldness arises, which is followed by a threefoldness. The sun remains as it is, but the earth separates itself from the moon. The grosser substances withdraw and man remains behind upon the earth.

Looking at the third period, man feels the forces as a threefold principle. He asks: Whence come these forces? In the first period man was still connected with all the high forces of the sun. The forces that developed in the second period then went out with the moon. Man felt this as a redemption, but he had a memory of the first period in which he was still united with the sun-beings. He learned to know what longing was; he felt himself to be a cast-off son. With the forces that had gone out with sun and moon he could feel himself as a son of the sun and of the moon.

So, our earth evolved from a unity to a duality to a trinity: sun, earth, and moon.

The time when the moon split away, when man first received the possibility of developing himself, is designated as the Lemurian epoch. After great fire-catastrophes had terminated this Lemurian epoch, our earth gradually entered a condition that could produce the relationships prevailing in ancient Atlantis. The first beginnings of land emerged from the water-masses. This was long after the moon broke away, yet it was only because of that breaking-away that the earth was able to evolve as it did.

In Atlantis man was entirely different from today, but he had reached the point where he could move about within the air-sheath as a soft, swimming, floating mass. Only gradually did he develop a bony system. About the middle of Atlantis he had progressed so far as somewhat to resemble our present form.

But in Atlantis man had a clairvoyant consciousness. Our present consciousness developed only in much later times, and if we wish to understand the man of that time we must bear this clairvoyant consciousness in mind. We can understand this best through a comparison with the consciousness of today. Today man perceives the world from morning to evening by means of his senses. Through his sense-activity he continually receives impressions of sight, hearing, etc. But at night this sense-world sinks into an ocean of unconsciousness. For the occultist, this is really not so much a lack of consciousness as a lower grade of consciousness.

At this point we must make it clear that today man has a double consciousness, a bright day-consciousness and a sleep or dream consciousness. This was not at all the case in the first Atlantean times. Let us examine the alternation between waking and sleeping in those early times. During a certain period man dipped down into his physical body, but he did not perceive objects in the same sharp outlines as today. If we picture ourselves walking through a dense fog when the street lamps seem surrounded by a light-aura, we will have a rough idea of the Atlantean's object-consciousness. For the man of that time, everything was surrounded by such a fog; everything was as though enveloped in mist. That was the look of things by day. By night things looked entirely different, although still not the same as today. When the Atlantean went out of his body, he did not sink into unconsciousness but found himself in a world of divine spiritual beings, ego-beings, whom he perceived around him as his companions. As truly as man today does not see these beings at night, so truly did he in those times plunge into an ocean of spirituality, in which he actually perceived the divine beings. By day he was the companion of the lower kingdoms; by night he was the companion of the higher beings. Man lived in a spiritual consciousness, though this was dim; and, though he had no self-consciousness, he dwelt among these divine spiritual beings.

Now let us recapitulate the four epochs in the evolution of our earth. First, let us bring to mind the epoch in which sun and moon were still united with the earth. We must say that the beings of this earth are pure ideal beings, while man is present only as an etheric body, visible only to spiritual eyes. Then we come to the second epoch. We see the sun as a separate body, visible as an aura, and moon-plus-earth as a world of evil. Then we come to a third epoch, where the moon separates itself and on earth there work the forces that are the result of this threeness. Then we come to a fourth epoch. Here man is already a being in the physical world, which seems misty to him, and in sleep he is still the companion of divine beings. This is the epoch that closes with huge water-catastrophes, the time of Atlantis.

Now let us go one step further, to the man of the post-Atlantean time. As stated earlier, he has evolved through many thousands of years. We see him pass through the cultural epochs of the post-Atlantean time; the ancient Indian, the ancient Persian, the Egypto-Chaldean-Babylonian, the Greco-Latin culture, and our fifth culture. What, above all things, had man lost? He had lost something that we can conceive when we bear the description of Atlantis in mind.

Let us try to imagine the sleep-condition of the Atlantean. Man was then still the companion of the gods; he actually perceived a world of the spirit. This he had lost after the Atlantean catastrophe. The darkness of night surrounded him. In recompense there came a brightening of the day-consciousness and the development of the ego. All this man had achieved, but the old gods had vanished from his sight; they were now only memories. In fact, during the first post-Atlantean time all that his soul had experienced was merely a memory, a memory of his earlier inter-course with these divine beings. We know that souls endure, that they reincarnate. Just as in ancient Atlantean times our souls were already present, were already living in bodies, so were they also present at the separation of moon and sun from the earth, and also in the earliest times of all. Man existed in the etheric dust or points, and the five cultural periods of the post-Atlantean time, in their views of the world, in their religions, are nothing else than memories of the ancient epochs of the earth.

The first period, the primeval Indian, developed a religion that seems like an inner lighting-up, an inner repetition, in ideas and feelings, of the very first period, when sun and moon were still bound up with the earth, when the lofty beings of the sun still dwelt on earth. We may imagine that this had to awaken a sublime view. The spirit who, in the first condition of the earth, in the primeval mist, connected himself with all angels, archangels, high gods, and spiritual beings, was for Indian consciousness summed up as a single high individuality under the name of **Brahm or Brahma**.\* This first post-Atlantean culture recapitulated in the spirit what had happened earlier. It is a repetition of the first epoch of the earth, in its inner aspect.

Now let us look at the second cultural period. In the principles of light and darkness we have the religious consciousness of the primeval Persian period. The great initiate saw an opposition between two beings, one of which was personified in the sun and the other in the moon. Ahura Mazdao or Ormuzd, the Light-aura, is the being whom the Persians venerated as the highest god. Ahriman is the evil spirit, the representative of all the beings who belonged to earth-plus-moon. The religion of the Persians is a remembrance of the second epoch of the earth.

In the third cultural epoch, man had to say to himself, "In me are the forces of the sun and of the moon; I am a son of the sun and a son of the moon. All the forces of the sun and of the moon appear as my father and my mother." Thus we have *unity* in the primeval past as the attitude of the Indian; while the *duality* that appeared with the separation of the sun is reflected in the religion of the Persians; and in the religious views of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Assyrians, and Babylonians we find the *trinity* that appeared in the third epoch, after the separation of sun and moon. Trinity appears in all the religions of the third period, and in Egypt it is exemplified in Osiris, Isis, and Horus.

But what man had experienced in his consciousness in the fourth earth-epoch, the Atlantean, as a companion of the gods, emerges as a memory in the Greco-Latin period. The gods of the Greeks are nothing other than memories of the gods whose companion man was in Atlantis, the gods whom he saw clairvoyantly in etheric forms when he had risen out of his physical body at night. As truly as man today sees outer objects, so truly at that time did he see Zeus, Athena, etc. For him these were real figures. What the Atlantean felt and experienced in his clairvoyant condition reappeared, for the man of the fourth post-Atlantean period, in the pantheon. As the Egyptian time was a memory of the trinity that prevailed in the Lemurian epoch, the experience of Atlantis remained as a memory in the Hellenic hierarchy of gods. In Greece and elsewhere in Europe these were the same gods whom the Atlantean had seen, but under other names. These names were not invented; they are names for the same forms that walked beside man in the Atlantean time when he went out of his physical body.

So we see how the epochs of cosmic events find their symbolical expression in the religious views of the different post-Atlantean cultural periods. What took place during sleep in the Atlantean time lives again in the fourth period.

We are in the fifth post-Atlantean period. What can we remember? In the first period the ancient Indians could conceive the first earth-epoch; in the second period the Persians had the principles of good and evil; the ancient Egyptians could picture the third epoch in its trinity. The period of the Greeks, the old Germans, the Romans, had its Olympus. It remembered the godlike figures of Atlantis. Then came the modern time, the fifth period. What can it remember?

It can remember nothing. This is the reason why in this period, godlessness has been able to make headway in many respects. This is why the fifth period is driven to look toward the future rather than the past. It must look toward the future, when all the gods must arise again. This reunion with the gods was prepared in the time of the bursting-in of the Christ-force, which worked so powerfully that it could again endow man with a godly consciousness. The god-pictures of the fifth period cannot be memories. Only if man looks forward will life again become spiritual. In the fifth post-Atlantean period, consciousness must become *apocalyptic*.

Yesterday we examined the relations of the single cultures of the Post-Atlantean time. Today we have seen how cosmic events are reflected in the religious views of these cultures.

Our fifth period stands at a central point in the world, hence it must look forward. The Christ must for the first time be fully grasped in this period, for our souls are deeply interwoven in mysterious connections. We shall see how the repetition of the Egyptian time in our fifth period gives us a point of departure, and how we can actually pass over into the future.

It may occur to the reader that India, even in ancient times, was notable for the multiplicity of its gods rather than for their unity. In this connection the following passage from the Upanishads may be illuminating:

Then Vidagda Sakayla questioned him: "How many gods are there, Yajnavalkya?"  
He answered: "As many as are mentioned in the Hymn to All the Gods, namely three hundred and three, and three thousand and three."  
"Yes, but just how many gods are there, Yajnavalkya?"  
"Thirty-three."  
"Yes, but just how many gods are there, Yajnavalkya?"  
"Six."  
"Yes, but just how many gods are there, Yajnavalkya?"  
"Two."  
"Yes, but just how many gods are there, Yajnavalkya?"  
"One and a half."  
"Yes, but just how many gods are there, Yajnavalkya?"  
"One."

(Brih. Upan., ii, 2, iv, 4.)

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# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 3

*The Old Initiation Centers.  
The Human Form as the Subject  
of Meditation.*

*September 4, 1908*

GA 106

YESTERDAY we spoke of the mysterious connection between the earlier evolutionary conditions of our earth and the various world-conceptions of the successive post-Atlantean periods. The remarkable fact emerged that when the Atlantean catastrophe had altered the face of the earth, the holy pre-Vedic Indian culture, in its philosophical conceptions, showed something like a mirror-picture of the events that, in the beginning of the earth's evolution, took place in that remote past when sun, moon, and earth were still united. What the eye of the spirit beheld at that time was nothing but a spiritually conceived form of what actually existed when our earth stood at the beginning of its evolution.

The second condition of the earth, when the sun had detached itself but earth and moon still formed one body, came to light during the second cultural period, the old Persian, as a philosophic-religious system in the opposition of the light-principle in the sun-aura to the principle of darkness, the opposition of Ormuzd to Ahriman. The third period, the Egyptian-Babylonian-Assyrian, is a spiritual reflection of what took place when earth, sun, and moon had become three bodies. We also pointed out that the trinity of Osiris, Isis, and Horus reflected the third epoch's astral trinity of sun, earth, and moon.

This separation occurred in the Lemurian time. After this followed the Atlantean time, the fourth evolutionary condition of the earth, in which there prevailed conditions of consciousness entirely different from those of today. Through these different forms of consciousness man lived with the gods, he was acquainted with the gods who were later named Wotan, Balder, Thor, Zeus, Apollo, etc. These were beings whom the Atlantean man could perceive with his clairvoyance. We have a repetition of the Atlantean perception of divine-spiritual beings in the memory of the peoples of the Greco-Latin time, and also among the peoples of northern Europe. It was a memory of the experiences of earlier conditions of consciousness. Be it Wotan or Zeus, be it Mars, Hera, or Athena, all were a memory of the spirit-forms of that old world of gods.

Today we must gradually penetrate a little more into the souls of the ancient Indian, Persian, and Egyptian cultures. If we want to form a true picture of the religious experiences of these ancient cultures, we must bear in mind that, the most important parts of the population among these ancient peoples, including the seers, prophets, and enlightened persons, were successors of men who had already lived in the Atlantean time. Furthermore, it was by no means the case that the whole of Atlantean culture was destroyed immediately after the great catastrophe; on the contrary, what remained was gradually carried over and planted into the new time. We will best understand the souls of the post-Atlantean descendants if we steep ourselves in the soul-life of the last Atlanteans.

In the latter Atlantean time men were different one from another, some having retained a high degree of clairvoyant ability. This faculty did not vanish suddenly, but was still present in many of the men who took part in the great migration from west to east. In others, however, it had already disappeared. There were advanced persons and retarded persons and, in accordance with the whole nature of evolution at that time, we can understand that the least advanced were those who were the most clairvoyant, for in a certain way they had remained stationary and had preserved the old Atlantean character. The most advanced were those who had already achieved a physical perceiving of the world, thus approaching our form of day-consciousness. It was they who, ceased to see the spiritual world clairvoyantly at night, and who during their waking hours saw objects with sharper contours. That little handful of whom we have already spoken, who were led by the greatest initiate (generally known as **Manu\***) and his pupils deep into Asia and thence fructified the other cultures, just this handful, being composed of the most advanced men of that time, first lost the ancient gift of clairvoyance for the ordinary relationships of life. For them the true day-consciousness, in which we see physical objects sharply contoured, became ever clearer. Their great leader led this group farthest into Asia, so that they could live in isolation; otherwise they would have come too closely in touch with other peoples who still preserved the old clairvoyance. Only because they remained separated from other peoples for a time could they grow into a new type of man. A colony was established in inner Asia, whence the great cultural streams could flow into the most varied peoples.

Northern India was the first country to receive its new cultural current from this center. It has already been pointed out that these little groups of cultural pioneers nowhere found un-populated territory. Earlier still, before their great migration from west to east, there had been other wanderings, and whenever new stretches of land rose from the sea, they were peopled by the wanderers. The persons sent out from this colony in Asia had to mix with other peoples, all of whom were more backward than they who had been led by Manu. Among these other peoples were many persons who had retained the old clairvoyance.

It was not the custom of the initiates to establish colonies as this is done today; they colonized in a different way. They knew that they had to start with the souls of the persons whom they met in the lands that were to be colonized. The emissaries did not impose what they had to say. They reckoned with what they found. A balance was reached that took into account the needs of the old inhabitants. This reckoned with their religious views, which were based on the memory of earlier epochs, and also with the old clairvoyant disposition. So it was natural that only a handful of the most advanced could develop true concepts. The great masses could form only ideas that were a sort of compromise between the old Atlantean and the post-Atlantean attitudes. Therefore, we find in all these countries, in India, in Persia, in Egypt, whenever the different post-Atlantean cultures appeared, religious ideas which for that age are less advanced, less cultivated; which are nothing but a sort of continuation of the old Atlantean ideas.

To understand what kind of conceptions really appeared in these folk-religions we must form a picture of them. We must transport ourselves into the souls of the last Atlantean population. We must bear in mind that in the Atlantean time man was not unconscious at night, but that he could then perceive just as he perceived by day — if we can speak at all of night or day in that time. By day he perceived the first traces of what we today so

clearly see as the world of sense-perceptions. By night he was the companion of the divine spiritual beings. He needed no proof of the existence of gods, just as we today need no proof of the existence of minerals. The gods were his companions; he himself was a spiritual being during the night. In his astral body and ego he wandered about the spiritual world. He was himself a spirit and he met beings who were of like nature with himself.

Naturally, man did not meet only these higher spiritual beings. He also met beings lower than those who were later known as Wotan, Zeus, etc. These were the choicest figures, but by no means the only ones. It was like seeing kings and emperors to day. Many do not see them, yet still believe that there are kings and emperors.

In this state, which was common to everyone, man perceived the surrounding objects in a way different from his perception today. This was true even while he was conscious during the day. We must try to understand what this consciousness of the latter Atlanteans was.

We have described how the divine beings became imperceptible to man when he dived down into his physical body in the morning. He saw objects as though they were surrounded by mist. These were the images of his waking day at that time. But these pictures had another remarkable property, which we must grasp clearly. Let us suppose that such a man approached a pond. He did not see the water in the pond so clearly defined as we do today, but when he directed his attention to it he experienced something quite different. In approaching the pond a feeling arose in him, merely through looking at it, that was like a taste of what lay before him physically, without his having to drink the water. Simply through looking at it he would have felt that the water was sweet or salty. It was not at all like our seeing water today. We see only the surface and do not penetrate into the inner qualities. But while a dim clairvoyance still prevailed, the man who approached the pond had no alien feeling toward it. He felt himself as being within the properties of the water; he did not stand over against the object as we do; it was as though he could penetrate into the water.

If we had encountered a block of salt at that time, we would have noticed its taste as we approached it. Today we must lick it before we perceive what was then given through mere sight. Man was, as it were, within the whole, and he perceived things as though they were ensouled. He perceived beings that imparted a salty taste to the block. Everything was ensouled for him; air, earth, water, fire. Everything revealed something to him. He could feel himself into the interior of objects; he experienced their inner essence. Nothing appeared to him as a soulless object in the modern way. Therefore man felt everything with sympathy and antipathy because he saw its inner nature. He felt, he experienced, the inner being of the objects.

Memories of these experiences remained everywhere. The parts of the Indian population encountered by the colonists had such a relation to things. They knew that souls lived in things. They had preserved the ability to see the properties of things. Let us bear in mind this whole relationship of men to things. At that time man could perceive how the water tasted as he approached the pond. There he saw a spiritual being, who gave the water its taste. He could meet this spiritual being during the night if he lay down by the water and fell asleep. By day he saw the material; by night he saw what lived in things. By day he saw stones, plants, and animals, he heard the wind blow and the waters roar; by night he saw within himself, in its true form, what he only sensed by day — the spirits that live in



all things. When he said that spirits live in the minerals, in the plants, in the water, in the clouds, in the wind, this was for him no poetic license, no mere fantasy, but something that he could see.

We must live, deeply into these souls in order to understand them. Then we understand what dreadful folly it is when our scholars speak of animism and allege that it is the “folk-imagination” that ensouls and personifies things. There is no such folk-imagination. One who really knows the folk does not speak in this way. Repeatedly we find this singular analogy; just as a child, bumping against a table, strikes the table in revenge because (so say the scholars) it thinks of the table as having a soul, so did the primeval man in his childishness ensoul the objects of nature, such as the trees. This is repeated *ad nauseam*. Certainly there is imagination here, but it is the imagination of the scholars rather than of the folk. It is the scholars who are dreaming. Those who originally saw everything as ensouled were not dreaming; they only reported what they actually saw. As a sort of remnant, this kind of perception emerged among the ancient peoples as a memory. But the error in the above analogy is that the child does not see the table as ensouled; he does not yet feel a soul in himself, but regards himself as a lump of wood. Feeling himself soulless, he places himself on the same level as the soulless table that he bangs. The fact is just the opposite of what we read in the learned books. Whether we look at India, Persia, Egypt, Greece, or any other place, we find everywhere the same images that were described above, and into these images was poured the culture that was given out by the old initiates.

In ancient India the Rishis guided the culture. We must try to understand something of what gave the impulse to a form that developed into one of the most important forms of the Indian outlook. We know that in all ages there have been so-called mystery schools, where those who could develop their spiritual faculties learned to see more deeply into the world-all, awakening the slumbering faculties so as to see the spiritual connections of things. From these mystery-places proceeded the spiritual impulses of the various cultures. In order really to understand the initiates, we usually consider them as they were in post-Atlantean times, since their nature at that time is most easily comprehensible. But in Atlantis we could encounter something similar to initiate-schools. In order to understand them thoroughly, let us examine the methods of such an ancient Atlantean initiation-school.

If we go back to those times, we find that the above-described conditions of consciousness prevailed and also that man did not then have his present shape. He had quite a **different form**.† Let us go back to the first half of the Atlantean period. Man consisted already of physical, etheric, and astral bodies, plus the ego, but the physical body still looked quite different. We might compare it with the bodies of certain sea-animals, transparent, hardly to be seen, although laced with luminous threads in certain directions. It was much softer than today, having as yet no bones. It is true that there was already cartilage in some parts, but in these ancient times the physical body was definitely not of its present form.

The etheric body was a much more important member. The physical body was then more or less the same size as now, but the etheric body was extraordinarily large. This etheric body varied among individuals, but one could perceive four different types. One part of mankind would resemble one type, another part another. These four types may be designated by the names of the apocalyptic beasts: bull, lion, eagle, man. It would not be

correct to imagine that these beasts were exactly similar to the present animals, but the impression that they made reminds us of these. The impressions that the etheric bodies made can be understood through the picture of a lion, bull, eagle, or man. We can compare with the bull the portion of mankind that gave the impression of having powerful reproductive forces or an unusual appetite. Another portion lived more in the spiritual; these were the eagle men, who felt less at home in the physical world. Then there were men in whom the etheric body was already similar to the present-day physical body; it was not quite identical, but it was like the human form. However, we must not imagine that each man represented only one type; all four types would show some traces in each person, but one or another would predominate.

Such were the etheric bodies of the Atlantean population. As to the astral body, it was especially powerful but largely undeveloped, while the ego was still wholly outside of man. People were entirely different at that time from today. Naturally, some men matured earlier and assumed the ultimate form before the others, but in the main one can describe the men of that time as we have just done. This was the normal condition of the average man.

It was entirely different with the more advanced persons, with the pupils of the mystery-places, who strove after the initiation of the ancient Atlantis. Let us enter in spirit such a center of initiation and try to picture what the teacher had to give. First, what was this teacher himself?

If one meets an initiate today, there is nothing in his general appearance by which he can be recognized. Few persons would recognize him today. The initiate must live in a physical body, and the physical body has developed a long way; hence it differs from others only in certain inner refinements. At that time, however, the initiate was vastly different from other men. The others still had a more animal-like form; the physical body was small in comparison with the gigantic etheric bodies, forming a clumsy animal-like mass. The initiate differed from these in that his physical body was more similar to the modern formation; his countenance was similar to that of modern man, and he had a forebrain such as that of the average man of today. His brain was highly developed, which was not true of other men at that time. These initiates had their schools, into which they admitted pupils who, having proved themselves mature and sufficiently developed, were selected out of the ordinary run of men by special methods.

We must bear one thing in mind if we wish fully to understand what follows. We must realize that in the course of time the power of man's spiritual members over his physical body has almost completely disappeared. The man of today has a certain degree of control over his body. He can move his arms and legs, pedal on bicycles, and exercise some command over his physiognomy, but this is only a last meager remnant of the mastery over the physical body that obtained in ancient Atlantean times. In those days the thoughts and feelings had a much greater influence over the physical body. If today a person were to concentrate for weeks, months, or even years on a certain thought, only in exceptional cases would this influence more than the etheric body. Seldom would the physical body be influenced by a meditation. If, for example, someone should succeed by this means in making his brain move further forward, thus working even on the bones of his forehead, this would be an astounding achievement. Very, very seldom does this happen today. Extraordinary energy would have to be developed today for a thought to work on the physical body. It is easier to affect the blood-circulation or the breathing, but

even this is difficult. Thoughts can work on the etheric body today, and in the next incarnation they will have worked so powerfully as to alter the external physical structure. Man should work today in the knowledge that he is working not for *one* incarnation but for many incarnations to come. The soul is eternal; it continually returns. Things were different in the ancient initiation schools. Thinking had such mastery there that it could influence the physical body in a comparatively short time. The pupil of the mysteries could mold his own organization until it resembled the human. One could accept a pupil out of the normal run of men and had only to give him the right impulse. The pupil himself did not have to think; through a sort of suggestion thoughts were implanted in his soul. A definite spiritual form had to stand before his soul, and the pupil had to steep himself in this form. Everywhere the Atlantean initiates gave to their pupils a thought-form, into which the pupils had to immerse themselves over and over again. What kind of picture was this? What did the pupil have to think? What did he meditate on?

We have already pointed to the original condition of the earth, sketching out the whole of evolution and mentioning the light-form in the primeval dust. Had one at that time looked about clairvoyantly, the archetype of the man of, today would have arisen. This grew out of that pollen, out of that primeval atom. Not the form of ancient man or of Atlantean man, but the form of modern man grew out of that atom. And what did the Atlantean initiate do? He placed before the soul of his pupil precisely this archetype that reared itself out of the primeval seed.

The pupil had to meditate on this archetype. The initiate placed before the pupil's gaze the human shape as a thought-form, with all the impulses and feelings that were contained in it. Whether the pupil was of the lion type or of one of the others, he had to hold before himself this picture of what man was to become in post-Atlantean times. He received this thought-picture as an ideal. He had to will the thought, "My physical body must become like this picture." Through the power of this picture his body was so influenced that it became different from the bodies of other men. Certain parts were transformed, and gradually the most advanced pupils became more similar to the man of today.

Thus we look back on remarkable mysteries, the mysteries of ancient Atlantis. No matter how the various men might be formed, there floated before their souls, as a picture, a thing that was already present as a spiritual picture when the sun was still united with the earth. This picture emerged more and more as the meaning of the earth, as what lies spiritually at the foundation of the earth. This picture did not appear to them as this or that form, as the picture of this or that race; it appeared to them as the universal ideal of mankind.

This is the feeling that the pupil was to develop through this picture: "The highest spiritual beings have willed this picture, through which unity comes into mankind. This picture is the meaning of the earth's evolution; to bring this picture to realization the sun separated itself from the earth and the moon detached itself. Through this man could become man. This is the One who will at last appear as the high ideal of the earth." Into this high ideal streamed the feelings that enlivened the pupil in his meditation. So did things stand about the middle of the Atlantean epoch. We will see later how this picture, which stood before the pupil as the human form, transformed itself into something different, and how this was salvaged after the Atlantean catastrophe. This is

what lived again in the Indian initiation-teaching, where it was summed up in the ancient sacred name of Brahm. What the God-head willed as the meaning of the earth was the most sacred thing for the ancient Indian initiate. He spoke of it as Brahma. From this sprang later Zarathustra's teaching and the Egyptian wisdom, both of which will be discussed later. How it transformed itself from Brahma to the Egyptian wisdom we will see tomorrow.

\* Echoes of this term were preserved by many peoples: e.g. Menes in Egypt, Manu in India, Minos in Crete, and Manitu in America.

† The genesis of the human form is much discussed in this and succeeding chapters. The reader will find Dr. H. Poppelbaum's book *Man and Animal* (Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1960) to be a helpful companion in this study.

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# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 4

*The Experiences of Initiation.*

*The Mysteries of the Planets.*

*The Descent of the Primeval Word.*

*September 5, 1908*

GA 106

YESTERDAY we closed with the discussion of an extraordinarily important event in the inner life, in the real spiritual life of man. We attempted to bring before our souls an impression that the seeker for initiation had at the beginning of the last third of the Atlantean epoch. We saw how there stood before the soul of the neophyte an ideal human form, a thought-picture, on which he had to concentrate in meditation, and how this filled the would-be initiate's life of thinking, feeling and willing. This thought-picture had to become ever more the model for the man of the future.

Now we must try to conceive roughly how this thought-picture looked. It was not entirely similar to the man of today. If we can think of a kind of combination of man and woman in which the lower part is omitted, a sort of double figure in which only the upper part of the body is clearly perceptible, then we have the sensible-supersensible picture that stood before the meditating person at that time. This picture worked so strongly that the neophytes could make their external bodies actually resemble it.

It is important that the meditating neophyte had within him, facing him, a sort of human form. If he had been sufficiently prepared to have this picture livingly before him, then he had to realize the following clearly, "As I look upon this picture I transport myself into the earliest condition of the earth's evolution, when earth, moon, and sun were not yet divided. At that time the earth consisted of the primeval atom, but in this atom the clairvoyant could see the picture that now arises before me. This picture was already present at the beginning of the earth when as yet there were no mineral, plant, or animal forms. At that time the earth consisted only of the human atom, of reawakened human beings."

It is true that the first beginnings of the animals were created during the ancient Moon condition of the earth; **animals already existed then.\*** But we know too that a planetary system, when it disappears, goes into a Pralaya, in which all forms are dissolved. Thus, although the ancient Moon was already populated with animal forms, the earth at first contained nothing similar to animals and plants. These first appeared later. Only after the separation of the sun did the animals gradually appear. The earth was purely human in its first beginnings.

The neophyte looked back upon this primeval condition of the earth. He saw in the primeval atom the ideal human form. Keeping this form before him, he realized, "Thus I transport myself into the earliest condition of the earth. What lives in the earth, the ideal human picture or form, tells me that the Godhead works from eternity to eternity. It has poured itself out into these forms. It has breathed out this original human form." Then he asked himself what happened to the animals, plants, and other beings.

In spirit the neophyte saw the primal form of the Godhead. He saw the animals and plants as accompanying forms, which appeared on earth only at a later time. Everything in the

lower kingdoms was regarded by the Atlantean neophyte as having proceeded from the human form. We understand this thought if we recollect how coal is formed. Think of the huge primeval forests that once flourished and are now coal. The plants have remained behind, evolving out of a higher kingdom into a lower one. The plants have hardened into stone.

Thus the pupil of the Atlantean mysteries saw everything in the world about him as the product of the human form. In primeval times, this impression was conjured before the soul of man. These impressions were retained in memory through the time of the flood. The ancient Indian initiators again called up in the souls of their pupils this picture of primeval man, of the man who had been breathed forth by the eternal self. When the Indian pupil had this picture before him, he felt that everything had sprung from it, that what appeared in this picture as the blood had become the waters of the earth, etc. This picture, expanded until it became the foundation of the universe. Then the following was put before his soul. It was said to him, "In this picture you have two things before your eyes. First, the picture itself; but then, also, what lights up in you as your innermost essence when you contemplate this picture. Without is the macrocosm; within you is what you feel as a sort of extract, the microcosm."

When the Greeks, under Alexander, pressed into India and met the last echoes of what the pupils had felt in ancient times, they experienced the following: When the pupil contemplates what is spread out in the universe as man, then he has Heracles before him. The Indians gave the name of *Vach\*\** to what lives as the forces of the world-all. But in man, as a sort of extract of the whole, they felt what they called *Brahman*. Thus the Greeks expounded these echoes of what occurred in the soul of the pupil of the ancient holy Indian culture. This was the fruit of the Greek's campaign to India under Alexander the Great.

Out of precisely this fundamental feeling developed the sacred doctrine of the ancient Indian initiates, which appears like a spiritual image of that primeval state of the earth when it still contained the sun-forces and high beings, for whose sublimity man later yearned. Hence it was a great moment in his spiritual life when the pupil was initiated and could allow to arise within him what was grasped as Brahman. This was a mighty event in the human soul. It was a rising into higher worlds. In no other way could a man be initiated and achieve real vision, than by rising into higher worlds.

The world around us is the physical world. Within and around it surges the astral world. Higher stands Devachan, the world of the gods. The pupil must penetrate to the highest regions of Devachan if he is to feel Brahman, the primeval self, in the macrocosm. Then he is in highest Devachan, the world of the gods, whence springs the noblest that is in man. It was a realm of the highest and most perfect order into which the pupil was transported, a realm that offered much knowledge in addition to what has been described here.

Before we go any further, we must learn to know the teachers also. All of you have heard of the holy Rishis, who were the original founders of the ancient holy Indian culture and had Manu for their own teacher. Who were these seven great teachers of ancient India? As far as possible, we must explain the nature of the holy Rishis. This requires us to look again into the universe. We must be quite clear that what we perceive with the physical senses is a result of what is spiritual. If we think of the entire surrounding world as spiritualised, we can compare it with a primeval etheric mist. This mist then gradually

became denser; it descended into the condition of matter and the various heavenly bodies condensed out of it. Sun, Moon, and Earth detached themselves.

But why did the other Planets split off? For it also occurred that Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and Mercury detached themselves. Why did this happen? We shall understand this if we realize that in the great universe there occurs something similar to an event in our trivial everyday life. It is not only in school that pupils sometimes fail to be promoted, but also in the cosmos there are beings who remain behind and cannot progress with the others. Let us be quite clear about this. There was one group of higher beings who could not continue with 'the earth's tempo. These abstracted the finest substances and formed therefrom the sun as their dwelling-place. These were the highest beings connected with our evolution, although they also had gone through an evolution of their own. Thus there were beings who were in the act of becoming sun-spirits, and others who had remained behind, standing lower than the sun-spirits but higher than man. These could not continue with the sun-spirits because they were not equally mature. They could not go out with the sun, for it would have scorched them. But on the other hand they were too noble for the earth. Therefore they abstracted certain substances, which were between sun and earth in fineness and corresponded to their nature, and built themselves dwelling-places between the sun and the earth. Thus Venus and Mercury were separated off. Here we have two groups of beings who are not as high as the sun-spirits, but are further along than man. They became the spirits of Venus and Mercury. These are the beings who caused the appearance of these two planets. Mars, Jupiter and Saturn were formed earlier for other reasons, and they also became dwelling-places for certain beings.

Thus we, see how spirits caused the appearance of these planets. Now one should not believe that these beings inhabiting the various bodies of the solar system have no connection with the inhabitants of the earth. We must see that the physical boundaries are not the real boundaries, and that it is possible for the beings of the other heavenly bodies to exercise magical influences upon the earth. Thus the influences of the spirits of the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Venus, and Mercury extend into the earth. The two latter stand nearer to the earth, and after the sun had withdrawn they helped men to prepare the earth as we have it today.

Here I would like to add one thing, because misunderstandings have crept into the naming of the planets. In all occult nomenclature, what the astronomers call Venus is called Mercury, and vice versa. Astronomers know nothing of the mysteries behind this, because in the past it was not desired that the esoteric names should be revealed. This happened in order to conceal certain things.

All these spirits of the other planets influence the earth. From every planet influences descend upon man. To begin with, however, these influences had need of an intermediary. Through the great Manu this was provided by the seven Rishis being initiated in such a way that each understood the mysteries and influences of a single planet. Since there were seven planets there were seven Rishis, who collectively formed a sevenfold lodge that could transmit to the pupils the secrets of the solar system. We find hints of this in many ancient occult writings. When, for example, it is said that there are mysteries beyond the seven, the reference is to those preserved by the holy Manu himself concerning the time before the splitting-off of the planets.

The forces preserved by the planets were the subject of the mysteries of the seven Rishis. This choir of seven Rishis, in complete harmony with Manu, cooperated in the wonderful wisdom that was transmitted to the pupils. If we were to characterize this, we would have to say that this primeval teaching contained approximately what we learn today as the evolution of humanity through the planetary conditions of Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth, Jupiter, Venus, and Vulcan. The mysteries of evolution were secreted in the seven members of the lodge, each of whom typified one stage in the progress of humanity. The pupil saw this — not only saw it, but heard it — when he raised himself into Devachan, into the Devachanic world, for this is a world of tones. There he heard the harmony of the spheres, of the seven planets. In the astral world he saw the *picture*; in the Devachanic world he heard the *tone*; and in the highest world he experienced the *word*. When the Indian pupil raised himself into upper Devachan he perceived through the music of the spheres and through the word of the spheres how the primordial spirit, Brahma, is divided through evolution into the seven-fold planetary chain. He heard this out of the primal word *Vach*. This was the designation of the primal tone of creation that the pupil heard. In it he heard the entire world-evolution. The word, split into seven members, the primal word of creation, worked in the soul of the pupil; this was the primal word, which he described to the uninitiated approximately as we today would describe our world evolution. What he perceived is described in an elementary way in my book, *Theosophy, An Introduction to Supersensible Knowledge*. The description we find again in the ancient sacred tradition of the Indians, in what was called the *Veda*,† or the Word. This is the true meaning of the Vedas, and what was later written down is only a last memory of the ancient sacred doctrine of the Word. The Word itself was only passed from mouth to mouth, for an ancient tradition is impaired by being written down. Only in the Vedas can one feel something of what flowed into this culture at that time. When the pupil experienced this in his memory, he could say to himself, “What I experience in my soul as Brahman, what I have in my soul as primal Word, this was already present on ancient Saturn; on Saturn resounded the first breath of the Veda-word.”

Evolution had now progressed through the Sun and Moon stages, as far as the Earth. The word had become continually denser, had taken on ever denser forms, and the picture of man in the primeval seed of the earth was already a condensation of the condition in which the primeval word existed on Saturn. What had happened here?

The divine Word, primeval man, had sheathed itself in ever new coverings, and we must see what sheaths the Word assumed in the evolution of the earth. The pupil knew that nothing in the universe repeats itself exactly, and that each planet has its mission. What on the ancient Sun he saw shape itself as *life*, what on the ancient Moon was injected into the foundation of all things as *wisdom*, was followed by the task or mission of the Earth, which is to develop *love*. This was not yet present on the ancient Moon. What was present on the latter planet in a much more spiritual (but also in a much colder) form, the primal image of man, clothed itself in a warm astral covering. On the Moon, what man was supposed to become was clothed in a warm astral sheath, and it is this part which on Earth enables the inner human life to develop love from the lowest to the highest form. To the Indian pupil the human form, the primal image, became clearly perceptible in higher Devachan. In lower Devachan it then surrounded itself with an astral sheath, which contained the forces for developing love. Love, or Eros, was called *Kama*.†† Thus Kama acquires a meaning for earth-evolution. The divine Word, Brahman, clothed itself



in Kama, and through Kama the primal Word resounded to the pupil. Kama was the garment of love, the garment of the primal Word *Vach*, which lies at the root of the Latin vox.

In his innermost being the pupil felt that the divine Word had taken on an astral garment of love, and he said to himself, "Man, who today consists of four members, physical body, etheric body, astral body, and ego, has his ego as his highest member. This ego descended into the garment of love and formed Kama-Manas for itself. Kama, in which Manas clothed itself, was the innermost essence of man. This was the ego. But we know also that this innermost essence will evolve three higher members. These transform the lower members, transform even the physical body. As Manas grows out of the astral sheath, as Buddhi on a higher stage corresponds to Prana, so will the physical body, when it has been entirely spiritualised, be Atma."

All this already existed germinally in the *Vach*, and a verse of the Veda recalls how the pupil brought the mystery of the innermost being to expression.

We know that the physical body first appeared on Saturn, the etheric on the Sun, the astral on the Moon, and the ego on the Earth. The true and original human germ, the primal *Vach*, however, already contained the three following members in itself. Man may still expect three higher members as well, and then only will he be a true image of the Word of creation, the primal Word. It was pointed out to the pupil that only to the initiate could the true nature of the physical, etheric and astral bodies be made clear. Today man is himself only when he expresses his "I am," when he keeps in mind what is entirely his own. Only then is he fully Man. The other members are manifest, but in them he is still unconscious. In the fourth, however, the *Vach* becomes manifest.

"In the fourth, Man speaks." This was the verse of the Veda. When the word of the ego resounds, the fourth part of the *Vach* resounds. The verse of the Veda reads, "Four parts of the *Vach* are manifest; three are visible; three are now concealed; in the fourth speaks Man."

Here we have a wonderful description of what we have so often heard. This stood before the pupil's spiritual perception. His gaze was directed backward to the condition in which nothing was as yet separate, in which there was still a primeval earth, in which the full *Vach* spoke. This is expressed in another verse of the Veda. "Formerly I knew not what the I am is. Only when the first-born of the earth came upon me did the spirit become filled with light, and I had a share in the holy *Vach*." In this is reproduced the vision that the initiate had.

In all this we have a hint of the experiences of the ancient pupils of the Rishis, of the wonderful teachings that flowed into the Indian culture, were transmitted to the following epochs, and were transformed in accordance with the needs of other peoples. But all of these understood the primeval Word, *Vach*.

We shall understand many things better if we keep in mind one mystery in its full scope. We must imagine that at that time the teacher's influence on the pupil was entirely different from what it is today. Such an influence is now possible only when the pupil has already been brought to a certain stage of initiation. The forces exerted by the teacher on the pupil were much stronger at that time. Not only what the teacher could transmit by word or writing had an effect. In reality, all this worked only on the intellectual soul, but apart from this, mysterious magical forces worked from the teacher to the pupil, and it was essentially the teacher's forces that were able to fill with brightness and living force

the pictures that the teacher called up before the pupil's soul. This singular influence was lost only in the fourth post-Atlantean period, in the Greco-Latin culture. These forces simply change. When one of the old Egyptians confronted a young person, it was quite different from a teacher confronting a pupil today. Entirely different forces worked from age to youth. This will be recognized by anyone who seeks to understand what was still described in ancient Greece. Socrates actually had telepathic powers, which he allowed to work on his pupils while he instructed them. Such things can no longer work in our time, but they are hinted at in Plato's writings. What was entirely justified then would be rejected as a misdemeanor today. Changes take place, and today no one has a right to copy such methods. Certain phenomena today may remind us of this, but they must be considered reprehensible.

In ancient times, forces proceeded from the teacher to the pupil. Even in ancient Egypt there were still a great many people who could absorb forces in this manner. If a person who was especially sensitive stood before someone who had learned to strengthen his thoughts, a strong thought worked in such a way that it appeared as a picture in the soul of the sensitive person. In ancient Egypt such a telepathic influence was eminently possible, and thought-transference was present to a high degree. If a strong will-nature confronted someone who had not been strengthened, this was often the case. In Egypt one was able to guide and direct in a high degree through thoughts, in a way we today cannot imagine at all. Today such forces would be woefully misused. In ancient Egypt, however, initiation rested principally upon forces of this kind. This was likewise true in ancient India and Persia.

These forces also reinforced the method which, if an exoteric expression is desired, might be called medical. By this we do not mean the official medical practice of today. The Egyptian physician and initiate would have laughed to scorn what modern man calls medicine. The Egyptian physician knew one thing — that the conditions that prevailed in ancient Atlantis, and that could still be perceived in initiation, could in a certain sense be reawakened. The consciousness in which man lived in Atlantis was a dim clairvoyant consciousness. At that time (said the Egyptian initiate) the spiritual beings could exert a much greater influence on man. Today, when he sleeps, man knows nothing of the higher worlds, but the Atlantean, in his shadowy clairvoyant consciousness, then lived with the gods. If modern man can raise himself to an ideal, this is better for him than all moral teachings; similarly, the Egyptian initiate worked on his pupil through pictures of higher spiritual events. This had no mere external effect; it worked deeply within, and in such a way that a definite result ensued.

Let us think of a sick person, who is sick because certain bodily functions do not proceed in a normal way. What is the cause of this? A person with occult training knows that when the physical body functions irregularly, the cause does not lie outside the latter. On the contrary, all illnesses that do not come from outside the Physical body, originate in the fact that the etheric body is not in order. But the etheric body is ill because the astral body is out of order. If an Atlantean was threatened with a disorder in the distribution of fluids, this was quickly taken care of. In a sleeping condition he received from the spiritual worlds such force that through his sleep the disturbed functions were restored to order, and he was brought back to health. He rebuilt the healing forces through sleep. The ancient Egyptian physicians did something similar. They reduced the patient's consciousness to a sort of hypnotic sleep, during which they could govern the soul-

pictures that arose around the patient. They guided these pictures in such a way that they were able to work back on the physical body and make it healthy. This was the significance of the temple-sleep that was applied for internal ailments. The patient was given no medicine, but was allowed to sleep in the temple. His consciousness was damped down, and he was allowed to look into the spiritual worlds. Then his astral experiences were guided in such a way that they had the power to pour health into the body. This is no superstition; it is a secret that was known to the initiates. They introduced the spiritual into the patient's experiences. In this medical art, which we find so closely connected with the principle of initiation, the Atlantean conditions were artificially recreated during the healing. Since man did not work against himself through his day-consciousness, those forces could be active that were necessary for healing. This is how the temple-sleep worked.

In the Egyptian culture there still reigned that principle which, in India, reigned among those wise Rishis who guided affairs, who transmitted the planetary forces, who were the pupils of Manu, the great teacher of that first sublime culture. In the first post-Atlantean culture it was the Rishis who brought the sublime teaching that led men into lofty spiritual worlds, even into the world of higher Devachan. In the succeeding cultural periods, what was seen there was led down as far as the physical plane. Until the fourth post-Atlantean period there continued to descend into the physical plane that Being whom we learned to know as Brahman in the Indian period and whom we now designate as Christ. No longer does he transmit the spiritual; he himself became man in order to radiate over all men the mysterious power of the primal Word.

Thus the primal Word descended, in order that it might lead man upward again. Man must understand how that happened, if he is to make himself an instrument through which he can work into the future. We must learn to know what happened before our time, so that we ourselves can cooperate in an ever higher molding of what exists around us and for us.

We must create a spiritual world in the future. To do this, we must first understand the cosmos.

\* Throughout this and the following lectures much is said of the development of human and animal forms. For an attempt to systematize Dr. Steiner's views in this field and to bring them into connection with ordinary scientific knowledge, the reader is again referred to Poppelbaum, *Man and Animal* (Rudolf Steiner Press, London, 1960).

\*\* The Sanscrit word is *Vach* or *Vac*; see Maurice Bloomfield's *Religion of India* (New York, Putnam, 1908), pages 191 and 243. Dr. Steiner uses WHA in German, but the first letter should be pronounced like the English V, hence the WHA becomes VHA in English.

† Selections from the *Vedas* are given in *Sacred Books of the East* (Oxford University Press, 1879-1910) but there seems to be no complete translation or index in English.

†† *Kama* is a Sanscrit word meaning *desire*, the nature of the astral body.

# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 5

*The Genesis of the Trinity  
of Sun, Moon, and Earth.*

*Osiris and Typhon.*

*September 7, 1908*

GA 106

UP to this point in these lectures we have tried to construct a picture of the earth's evolution in connection with the evolution of man, because we had to demonstrate how the earth's past, how the facts of its evolution, were reflected in the knowledge displayed by the various cultural periods of the post-Atlantean time. The deepest experiences of the pupils of the Rishis were characterized, and it was shown how these inner experiences of the neophyte portrayed, in inward clairvoyantly-perceived pictures, the relationships and events that prevailed in the primeval earth, when sun and moon were still contained in it. We also saw what a high stage of initiation such a pupil had to reach in order to build for himself such a world-conception, which appears as a recapitulation of what occurred in the remotest past. We also saw what the Greeks thought when, in the campaigns of Alexander, they became acquainted with what was experienced by such an Indian neophyte, in whose soul arose the picture of the divine-spiritual creative force that began to express itself in the primeval mist when sun and moon were still united with the earth. This picture, the Brahman of the Indians, which was later called I-Brahma (Aham Brahma) and which appeared to the Greeks as Heracles — this picture, we sought to bring before our souls as an inner recapitulation of the facts that actually occurred in the past.

It was also emphasized that the succeeding evolutionary periods of the earth were reflected in the Persian and Egyptian cultures. What occurred in the second epoch, when the sun withdrew from the earth, appeared in pictures to the Persian initiates. All that happened as the moon gradually withdrew became the world-conception and the initiation-principle of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Babylonians, Assyrians.

Now, in order to look quite clearly into the soul of the ancient Egyptian, which is the most important thing for us — and considering the Persian initiation only as a sort of preparation — we must examine a little more narrowly just what happened to our earth during the periods when the sun and moon were separating from it. We shall sketch how the earth itself gradually evolved during these times. We shall disregard the great cosmic events and direct our attention to what happened on the earth itself.

If again we look back on our earth in its primeval condition, when it was still united with sun and moon, we do not find our animals or plants, and especially not our minerals. At first the earth was composed only of man, only of the human germs. Of course it is true that the animal and plant germs were laid down on the old Sun and the old Moon, and that they were already contained in the earliest condition of the Earth, but in a certain way they were still slumbering, so that one could not perceive that they would really be able to bring forth anything. It was only when the sun began to withdraw that the germs that later became animals first became capable of germinating. Not until the sun had completely withdrawn from the earth, leaving earth and moon alone, did the same thing

happen to the germs that later became plants. The mineral germs formed themselves gradually, only when the moon had begun to withdraw. We must keep this clearly in mind.

Now, for once, let us look at the earth itself. When it still had sun and moon within itself, the earth was only a sort of etheric mist of vast extent, within which the human germs were active, while the germs of the other beings — animals, plants, and minerals — slumbered. Since only human germs were present, there were no eyes to behold these events externally, hence the description given here is visible only for the clairvoyant vision in retrospect. It is given on the hypothesis that it is what one would have seen had one been able at that time to observe from a point in universal space.

On ancient Saturn, too, a physical eye would have seen nothing. In that primeval condition, the earth was merely a vaporous mist that could be felt physically only as warmth. Out of this mass, this primeval etheric mist, there gradually took shape a shining ball of vapor, which could have been seen had a physical eye been present. Could one have penetrated this with a feeling-sense, it would have appeared as a heated space, somewhat like the interior of an oven. But soon this mist became luminous, and this ball of vapor that thus took shape contained all the germs of which we have just spoken. We must be quite clear that this mist was nothing like a fog or cloud-formation of today; rather did it contain in solution all the substances which at present are solid or liquid. All metals, all minerals, everything, were then present in the mist in transparent and translucent form. There was a translucent vapor, permeated by warmth and light. Think yourself into this. What had grown out of the etheric mist was a translucent gas. This grew brighter and brighter, and through the condensation of the gases the light grew ever stronger, so that ultimately this vapor-mist appeared like a great sun that shone out into world-space.

This was the period when the earth still contained the sun, when the earth was still irradiated by light and rayed its light into world-space. But this light made it possible, not only that man should live with the earth in that primeval condition, but that in the fullness of the light there should also live all those other high beings who, although not assuming a physical body, were connected with the evolution of man: Angels, Archangels and Principalities. But not only were these present. In the fullness of the light lived still higher beings also: the Powers, or Exusiai, or Spirits of Form; the Virtues, or Dynameis, or Spirits of Motion; the Dominions, or Kyriotetes, or Spirits of Wisdom; those spirits who are called the Thrones, or Spirits of Will; finally, in looser connection with the fullness of the light, more and more detaching themselves therefrom, the Cherubim and Seraphim. The earth was a world inhabited by a whole hierarchy of lower and higher beings, all sublime. What radiated out into space as light, the light with which the earth-body was permeated, was not light only but also what was later the mission of the earth: It was the force of love. This contained the light as its most important component. We must imagine that not only light was rayed forth, not physical light alone, but that this light was ensouled, inspirited, by the force of love. This is difficult for the modern mind to grasp. There are people today who describe the sun as though it were a gaseous ball that simply radiates light. Such a purely material conception of the sun prevails exclusively today. The occultists are the only exception. One who reads a description of the sun today as it is represented in popular books, in the books that are the spiritual nourishment of countless people, does not learn to know the true being of the sun. What

these books say about the sun is worth about as much as if one described a corpse as the true being of man. The corpse is no more man than what astrophysics says of the sun is really the sun.

Just as one who describes a corpse leaves out the most important thing about man, so the physicist who describes the sun today leaves out the most important thing. He does not reach its essence, although he may believe that with the help of spectroanalysis he has found its inner elements. What is described is only the outer body of the **sun**.\* In every sunbeam there streams down on all the inhabitants of the earth the force of those higher beings who live on the sun, and in the light of the sun there descends the force of love, which here on earth streams from man to man, from heart to heart. The sun can never send mere physical light to earth; the warmest, most ardent, feeling of love is invisibly present in the sunlight. With the sunlight there stream to earth the forces of the Thrones, the Cherubim, the Seraphim, and the whole hierarchy of higher beings who inhabit the sun and have no need of any body other than the light. But since all this that is present in the sun today was at that time still united with the earth, those higher beings themselves were also united with the earth. Even today they are connected with earth-evolution. We must reflect that man, the lowest of the higher beings, was at that time already present in the germ as the new child of the earth, borne and nourished in the womb by these divine beings. The man who lived in the period of earth-evolution that we are now considering, had to have a much more refined body, since he was still in the womb of these beings. The clairvoyant consciousness perceives that the body of the man of that time consisted only of a fine mist-form or vapor-form; it was a body of air or gas, a gas-body rayed through and entirely permeated by light. If we imagine a cloud formed with some regularity, a chalice-like formation expanding in an upward direction, the chalice glowing with inner light, we have the men of that time who, for the first time in this earth-evolution, began to have a dim consciousness, such a consciousness as the plant-world has today. These men were not like plants in the modern sense. They were cloud-masses in chalice-like form, illuminated and warmed by the light, with no firm boundaries dividing them from the collective earth-mass.

This was once the form of man, a form that was a physical light-body, participating still in the forces of the light. Because of the refinement of this body there could descend into it not only an etheric and an astral body, not only the ego in its first beginnings, but also the higher spiritual beings who were connected with the earth. Man was, as it were, rooted above in the divine spiritual beings, and these permeated him. It is really not easy to portray the splendor of the earth at that time. We must picture it as a light-filled globe, shone round by light-bearing clouds and generating wonderful phenomena of light and color. Had one been able to feel this earth with his hands, he would have perceived warmth-phenomena. The luminous masses surged back and forth. Within them were all the human beings of today, woven through by all the spiritual beings, who rayed forth light in manifold grandeur and beauty. Outside was the earth-cosmos in its great variety; inside, with the light flowing about him, was man, in close connection with the divine-spiritual beings, raying streams of light into the outer light-sphere. As though by an umbilical cord that sprang from the divine, man hung upon this totality, on the light-womb, the world-womb of our earth. It was a collective world-womb in which the light-plant man lived at that time, feeling himself one with the light-mantle of the earth. In this refined vaporous plant-form, man hung as though on the umbilical cord of the earth-

mother and he was cherished and nourished by the whole mother earth. As in a cruder sense the child of today is cherished and nourished in the maternal body, so the human germ was cherished and nourished at that time. Thus did man live in the primeval age of the earth.

Then the sun began to withdraw itself, taking the finest substances with it. There came a time when the high sun-beings forsook men, for all that today belongs to the sun forsook our earth and left the coarser substances behind. As a result of this departure of the sun, the mist cooled to water; and where there was formerly a mist-earth, now there was a water-sphere. In the middle were the primeval waters, but not surrounded by air; going outward, the waters changed into thick, heavy mist, which gradually became more refined. The earth of that time was a water-earth. It contained various materials in a soft state, which were enveloped by mists that became ever finer until, in the highest spheres, they became extremely rarefied. Thus did our earth once appear and thus was it altered. Men had to sink the formerly luminous gas-form into the turbid waters and incarnate there as shaped water-masses swimming in the water, as previously they had been air-forms floating in the air. Man became a water-form, but not entirely. Never did man descend entirely into the water.

This is an important moment. It has been described how the earth was a water-earth, but man was only partially a water-being. He protruded into the mist-sheath, so that he was half a water, half a vapor-being. Below, in the water, man could not be reached by the sun; the water-mass was so thick that the sunlight could not penetrate it. The light of the sun could penetrate into the vapor to some extent, so that man dwelt partly in the dark light-deprived water and partly in the light-permeated vapor. Of one thing, however, the water was not deprived, and this we must describe more minutely.

From the beginning, the earth was not only glowing and shining, but was also resounding, and the tone had remained in the earth, so that when the light departed the water became dark, but also became drenched with tone. It was the tone that gave form to the water, as one may learn from the well-known experiment in physics. We see that tone is something formative, a shaping force, since through tone the parts are arranged in order. Tone is a shaping power, and it was this that formed the body out of the water. That was the force of tone, which had remained in the earth. It was tone, it was the sound that rings through the earth, out of which the human form shaped itself. The light could reach only to the part of man that protruded out of the water. Below was a water-body; above was a vapor-body, which the external light touched, and which, in this light, was accessible to the beings who had gone out with the sun. Formerly, when the sun was still united with the earth, man felt himself to be in their womb. Now they shone down on him in the light and irradiated him with their power.

We must not forget, however, that in what remained behind after the separation of the sun other forces, the Moon-forces, were present. The earth had to separate these forces from itself.

Here we have a period during which only the sun was withdrawn, when the plant-man had to descend gradually into the water-earth. This stage, at which man had then arrived in his body, we see preserved today in a degenerated form in fishes. The fishes that we see in the water today are relics of those men, although naturally in a decadent form. We must think of a goldfish, for example, in a fantastic plant-form, agile, but with a feeling of sadness because the light had been withdrawn from the water. It was a very deep

longing that arose. The light was no longer there, but the desire for the light called up this longing. There was a moment in the earth's evolution when the sun was not yet entirely outside the earth; there one can see that form still permeated with light — man with his upper part still at the sun-stage, while below he is already in the shape preserved in the fishes.

Through the fact that man lived in darkness with half his being, he had in his lower parts a baser nature, for in the submerged parts he had the Moon-forces. This part was not petrified like lava, as in the present moon, but these were dark forces. Only the worst parts of the astral could penetrate here. Above was a vapor-form, resembling the head parts, into which the light shone from outside and gave him form. So man consisted of a lower and an upper part. Swimming and floating, he moved about in the vaporous atmosphere. This thick atmosphere of the earth was not yet air; it was vapor, and the sun could not penetrate it. Warmth could penetrate, but not light. The sun-rays could not kiss the whole earth, but only its surface; the earth-ocean remained dark. In this ocean were the forces that later went out as the moon.

As the light-forces penetrated into the earth, so also did the gods penetrate. Thus we have, below, the godless, god-deserted mantle of waters, permeated only by the force of tone, and, all around this, the vapor, into which extended the forces of the sun. Therefore in this vapor-body, which rose above the surface of the water, man still participated in what streamed to him as light and love from the spiritual world. But why did the world of tone permeate the dark watery core? Because one of the high sun-spirits had remained behind, binding his existence to the earth. This is the same spirit whom we know as Yahweh or Jehovah. Yahweh alone remained with the earth, sacrificing himself. It was he whose inner being resounded through the water-earth as shaping tone.

But since the worst forces had remained as the ingredients of the water-earth, and since these forces were dreadful elements, man's vapor-portion was drawn ever further down, and out of the earlier plant-form a being gradually evolved that stood at the stage of the amphibian. In saga and myth this form, which stood far below later humanity, is described as the dragon, the human amphibian, the lindworm. Man's other part, which was a citizen of the realm of light, is presented as a being which cannot descend, which fights the lower nature; for example, as Michael, the dragon-slayer, or as Saint George combating the dragon. Even in the figure of Siegfried with the dragon, although transformed, we have pictures of man's rudiments in their primeval duality. Warmth penetrated into the upper part of the earth and into the upper part of physical man, and formed something like a fiery dragon. But above that rose the ether body, in which the sun's force was preserved. Thus we have a form that the Old Testament well describes as the tempting serpent, which is also an amphibian.

The time was now approaching during which the basest forces were hurled out. Mighty catastrophes shook the earth, and for the occultist the basalt formations appear as remnants of the cleansing forces that rocked the globe when the moon had to separate from the earth. This was also the time when the water-core of the earth condensed more and more, and the firm mineral kernel gradually evolved. On the one hand, the earth grew denser through the departure of the moon; on the other the upper parts gave off their heavier, coarser substances to the lower. Above, there arose something which, although still permeated by water, became more and more similar to our air. The earth gradually acquired a firm kernel in the middle, around which was the water everywhere. At first,



the mist was still impenetrable for the sun's rays, but by relinquishing its substances the mist grew thinner and thinner. Later, much later, air developed out of this, and gradually the sun's rays, which earlier could not reach the earth itself, were able to penetrate it. Now came a stage that we, must picture correctly. Earlier, man dived down into the water and extended up into the mist. Now, through the condensation of the earth, the water-man slowly acquired the possibility of solidifying his form and taking on a hard bony system. Man hardened himself within himself. Thereby he transformed his upper part in such a way that it became suited for something new. This new thing, which previously was impossible, was the breathing of air. Now we find the first beginning of the lungs. In the upper part there has previously been something that took up the light, but could do nothing more. Now man felt the light again in his dull consciousness. He could feel what streamed down in it as divine forces coming toward him. In this transitional stage man felt that what streamed down upon him was divided into two parts. The air penetrated into him as breath. Previously only the *light* had reached him, but now the air was inside him. Feeling this, man had to say to himself, "Formerly I felt that the force that is above me gave me what I now use for breathing. The light was my breath."

What now streamed into him appeared to man as two brothers. Light and air were two brothers for him; they had become a duality for him. All earthly breath that streamed into man was at the same time an annunciation that he had to learn to feel something entirely new. As long as there was light alone, he did not know birth and death. The light-permeated cloud transformed itself perpetually, but man felt this only as the changing of a garment. He did not feel that he was born or that he died. He felt that he was eternal, and that birth and death were only episodes. With the first drawing of breath, the consciousness of birth and death entered into him. He felt that the air-breath, which had split off from its brother the light-ray, and which thereby had split off also the beings who earlier had flowed in with the light, had brought death to him.

Formerly, man had the consciousness, "I have a dark form, but I am connected with the eternal being." Who was it that destroyed this consciousness? It was the air-breath that entered into man — Typhon. Typhon is the name of the air-breath. When the Egyptian soul experienced within itself how the formerly united stream divided itself into light and air, the cosmic event became a symbolic picture for this soul — the murder of Osiris by Typhon, or Set, the air-breath.

A mighty cosmic event is hidden in the Egyptian myth that allows Osiris to be killed by **Typhon**.† The Egyptian experienced the god who came from the sun and was still in harmony with his brother, as Osiris. Typhon was the air-breath that had brought mortality to man. Here we see one of the most pregnant examples of how the facts of cosmic evolution repeat themselves in man's inner knowledge.

In this way the trinity of sun, moon, and earth came into being. All of this was communicated to the Egyptian pupil in deep and consciously formed pictures.

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\* This sentiment as to the sun is eloquently expressed in English by D. H. Lawrence in his *Apocalypse* (New York, Viking, 1932), pp. 41-46.

† Fairly complete versions of this myth may be found in Padraic Colum: *Orpheus Myths of the World* (New York, Macmillan, 1930) and in Lewis Spence: *Mysteries of Egypt* (London, Rider & Co., 1929).

# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 6

*The Influence of Osiris and Isis.*

*Facts of Occult Anatomy and Physiology.*

*September 8, 1908*

GA 106

MANY of you, in reflecting upon what we have said in the last few days about the evolution of the earth and the solar system in relation to man, will have encountered what seems to you a curious contradiction of many present-day highly prized notions. You will have said to yourselves, “Yesterday we heard that the worst forces in evolution were connected with the moon, that when the moon separated from the earth the worst forces went out with it, and that only through this did the earth achieve a condition in which man could pursue his evolution. When we hear all this, what about the romantic aspect of the moon, what about all the poetry that speaks with such true feeling of the moon's wonderful influences upon man?”

This is only an apparent contradiction. It is resolved if we do not regard the facts one-sidedly, if we place the whole complex of facts before our souls. It is certainly true that if we examined the physical mass of the moon we would find that it was not fitted to support life as we know it here on earth. We must also say that everything of an etheric nature that is connected with the moon and its physical substances appears in large part inferior, even decadent, when compared with the etheric in our own corporeality. Furthermore, if we should observe the astral nature of the individual moon-beings clairvoyantly — and we are entirely justified in speaking of them — we would be convinced that the worst and basest feelings that we have on earth are as nothing compared to what is found on the moon. Thus, in respect of the astral, the etheric, and the physical parts of the moon, we may speak of beings, of elements, that had to be expelled so that our earth could pursue its way, free from injurious influences.

But now we must recognize another fact. We must not forget that we cannot simply stop with what is base or evil, for everything that becomes base or evil in evolution is subject to a significant fact. As long as this is at all possible, everything that has sunk deep down into lower spheres must be purified through other, more perfect beings, must be raised up and purged, so that it may again be used in the economy of the universe. If we find a place in the cosmos where especially base beings congregate, we may be sure that with these baser beings are connected other higher ones, who have so great a power for the good, the beautiful, and the noble that they are fitted to lead 'even the lowest forces toward the good. It is true that all the basest things are connected with the moon's existence, but on the other hand, very high beings also are connected with it. We already know, for example, that the high spiritual personality of Yahweh dwells on the moon. So exalted a being, possessed of such power and glory, has under him vast hosts of ministering beings of a benevolent nature. We must understand that, although the basest forces departed from the earth with the moon, there also remained connected with the moon certain beings who are capable of transforming the bad into good, the ugly into beauty. They could not have done this had they left the ugly in the earth; they had to withdraw it.

But why did evil and ugliness have to come into existence at all? They had to come into existence because without them something else would never have come to birth. Man would never have been able to become a self-forming, self-contained being. Let us recall the foregoing lecture. There we saw how man's lower nature was rooted in the water, how he was half sunk in the dark water-earth. There were no bones at that time, no firm human shape. There was a flower-like form, which perpetually metamorphosed itself. Man would have remained like this if the forces had not developed further, under the influence of the moon. Had the earth remained exposed to the sun alone, the mobility of the human form would have been enhanced to the highest degree. The earth would have attained a tempo impossible for man, and man would never have been able to develop his present form. On the other hand, if only the moon forces had been influential, man would have rigidified immediately; his form would have been frozen at the moment of birth; he would have become a mummy. Today man evolves between these two extremes, between unlimited mobility and complete rigidity. Because the forming forces are in the moon, the physical moon has become slag. Only the exalted and powerful beings who are connected with the moon can extend their influence into these forms.

Thus two types of forces influence the earth; the sun-forces and the moon-forces, the one stimulating and the other mummifying. Let us imagine that a giant steals the sun away. In that moment we would all become stiff like mummies, so stiff that we would never again be able to lose this form. But if the giant took the moon away, all the beautiful measured movements that we have today would become convulsive. We would become inwardly entirely mobile; we would see our hands prolong themselves to the gigantic, and then shrink up again. The power of metamorphosis would be vastly intensified. Now, however, man is inserted between these two forces.

Within this cosmos, many things are wisely arranged, not only in the various forms and substances but in the relations of things to each other. In order to bring this endless wisdom before our souls we shall now consider a relationship associated with the figure of Osiris.

In the figure of Osiris, the Egyptian saw the influence of the sun upon the earth in the time when mists and vapors still covered the earth, when there was still no air, and he saw that when breathing began in man, the unitary being, Osiris-Set, split. Set or Typhon caused the breath to enter into us. Typhon separated himself from the light of the sun, while Osiris worked only as the light of the sun. But this is also the moment when birth and death entered into the being of man. Into what was forming and unforming, which was previously like putting on and taking off a garment, a great change had entered. If man had been able to experience the effects of those high beings who later went out from the earth with the sun in the time when the influences proceeding from the sun had not yet left the earth, he would have looked up with thankfulness to these sun-beings. But as the sun separated itself from the earth more and more, and as the vapor-sphere — which for man at that time was the realm of his higher nature — refined itself more and more, then man, who was able to perceive the direct influence of the sun less and less, acquired the consciousness of what the forces in his lower nature were, and he came to the point of grasping his ego there. When he dived down into his lower nature, he became conscious of himself for the first time.

Why has the being whom we know as Osiris become darkened? The light ceased to work when the sun departed, but Yahweh remained with the earth until the moon split off. Osiris was the spirit who contained the force of the sunlight in such a way that, when the moon later departed, he accompanied it and received the task of reflecting the sunlight from the moon to the earth. Thus at first we see the sun depart; Yahweh remains behind on earth with his hosts, with Osiris. Man learns to breathe, and at the same time the moon departs. Osiris withdraws with the moon and is given the task of reflecting the sunlight from the moon to the earth. Osiris is laid into a chest, i.e., he withdraws with the moon. Until this time man had received the Osiris-influence from the sun. At this point he begins to feel that what previously came to him from the sun now streams down upon him from the moon. Man said to himself when the moon shone down, "Osiris, it is you who from the moon send me the light of the sun, which belongs to your nature." But this light of the sun is reflected in a different form every day. We have the first form when the moon appears as a tiny crescent in the heavens. On the next day it has grown to the second form, and so on through fourteen days until we have the fourteenth form in the full moon. In fourteen days Osiris turns himself toward the earth in the fourteen forms of the illuminated moon-disk. It is of deep significance that the moon, i.e., Osiris, takes on fourteen forms, fourteen phases of growth, in order to guide the light of the sun to us. In the cosmos this activity of the moon is connected with the concurrent fact that man has learned to breathe. Only when this phenomenon was fully established in the heavens was man able to breathe. Thereby he was attached to the physical world, and the first germ of the ego could originate in the being of man.

The later Egyptian knowledge felt all that has been described here, and recounted it by saying, "Osiris ruled the earth in past times. Then arose Typhon, the wind. (This is the time when the waters sink so far that the air appears, through which man becomes an air-breather.) Typhon overcame the Osiris-consciousness, killed Osiris, laid him in a chest, and committed him to the sea."

How could the cosmic event be better described in a picture? First, the sun-god Osiris reigns, then he is driven out with the moon. The moon is the chest that is pushed out into the ocean of cosmic space; thereafter Osiris is in cosmic space. But we recall that in the myth it is told that when Osiris was found again, when he arose again in cosmic space, he appeared in fourteen forms. The myth says that Osiris was cut into fourteen pieces and was buried in fourteen graves. Here in this profound myth we have a wonderful reference to the cosmic event. The fourteen aspects of the moon are the fourteen pieces of the dismembered **Osiris**.\* The complete Osiris is the whole moon-disk.

At first this appears as though it were all only a symbol. But we shall see that it had a real significance. Now we come to something without which the mysteries of the cosmos will never be clear to us. If such a constellation of sun, moon, and earth had not arisen, if the moon had not appeared in fourteen aspects, then something else could not have arisen, for these fourteen aspects caused something special. Each of them has had a great and powerful influence on man in his evolution on earth. Now I must tell you something that is strange, but true.

At the time when all this had not yet happened, when Osiris had not yet withdrawn, man in his light-form did not have the foundation for something that today is of the greatest importance. We know that the spinal cord is important. The nerves proceed from it. Not even the beginnings of these were present in the time when the moon had not yet

departed. These fourteen aspects of the moon, in the order in which they follow on one another, were the cause of fourteen nerve-filaments being annexed to the human spinal cord. The cosmic forces worked in such a way that these fourteen nerve-filaments correspond to the fourteen phases or aspects of the moon. This is the result of the Osiris influence. But something else also corresponds to the moon-evolution. These fourteen phases are only half the phenomena of the moon. The moon has fourteen phases from new moon to full moon, and fourteen phases from full moon to new moon. During the fourteen days leading to the new moon, there is no Osiris influence. Then the sun shines upon the moon in such a way that the latter gradually turns its unilluminated surface to the earth as the new moon. These fourteen phases from full moon to new also have their result, and for the Egyptian consciousness this result was achieved through Isis. These fourteen phases are ruled by Isis. Through the Isis influence fourteen other nerve-filaments proceed from the spinal cord. This makes a total of twenty-eight nerve-filaments, corresponding to the different phases of the moon. So we see, from the viewpoint of cosmic events, the origin of specific members of the human organism. Many will now object that this does not account for all the nerves, but only for **twenty-eight of them.**† There would have been only twenty-eight had the moon-year coincided with the sun-year. But the sun-year is longer, and the difference between the two caused the surplus nerves. Thus from the moon the influences of Isis and Osiris were built into the human organism. But something further is connected with this.

Up to the moment when the moon began to work from outside, there had been no duality of sex. There had been only a human being who was both male and female. The division occurred first through the alternating influences of Isis and Osiris from the moon.

Whether a person became male or female depended upon whether the Osiris nerves or the Isis nerves exercised a certain influence on the organism. An organism in which the Isis influence predominated was male, whereas a body in which the Osiris influence prevailed became female. Naturally, both forces, Isis and Osiris, work in every man and in every woman, but in such a way that in men the etheric body is female, while in women it is male. Here we have something of the wonderful Connection between the single being and the situation in the cosmos.

We have seen that man is influenced not only through the forces but also through the constellations, or positions, of the heavenly bodies. All that belongs to the male or female organisms formed itself under the influence of these twenty-eight nerves proceeding from the spinal cord. Now we will bring forward something that will give an insight into the cosmos and its connections with human evolution. These forces form the human shape, but man does not rigidify in it; an equilibrium is achieved between sun and moon influences. In the following, we must not think that we are dealing with mere symbols; it is solid facts that concern us.

What is the original Osiris, the undismembered Osiris? What is the divided Osiris? What previously was a unity in man is now divided into the twenty-eight nerves. We have seen how in ourselves he lies dismembered. Without this, the human form could never have come into being. What formed itself under the influence of the sun and moon? Through the joint working of all the nerves there was brought into being, not only the externally male and female, but also within man something arose through the influence of the male and female principles. There arose the inner Isis-result, and this is the lungs. The lungs are the regulator of the influences of Typhon or Set. What works on man from Osiris, by

stimulating the female influence in a masculine way, causes the lungs to be made productive through the breath. Through the influences that proceed from sun and moon, the masculine and feminine principles are regulated: in every female, something masculine — the larynx; in every male, something feminine — the lungs.

Isis and Osiris work inwardly in every person, in respect to his higher nature. Thus every person is double-sexed, having both lungs and larynx. Every person, whether man or woman, has the same number of nerves.

After Isis and Osiris had thus torn themselves out of the lower nature, they bore the son, the creator of the future earth-man. Together they produced Horus. Isis and Osiris begot the child, which was sheltered and nurtured by Isis: the human heart, sheltered and nurtured by the lung-wings of Mother Isis. Here in this Egyptian image we have something that shows us that in these ancient mystery-schools what had become the higher nature of man was looked upon as male-female, which is what the Indian recognized as Brahma. The Indian pupil was shown, in the original man, what later appears as that loftier form. Horus the child was shown to him, and he was told that all this had arisen through the primeval sound, through the Vach, the primeval sound that differentiates itself into many sounds.

What the Indian pupil experienced has been preserved for us in a remarkable verse in the Rig-Veda. In this is a passage that says, “And there come over man the seven from below, the eight from above, the nine from behind, the ten from out the foundations of the rocky vault, and the ten from within, while the mother cares for the suckling child.” This is a remarkable passage. Let us imagine Isis, whom I described as the lungs, and Osiris, whom I described as the breathing-apparatus, and let us think how the voice works into this, differentiating itself into throat-sounds, lung-sounds, as in the letters of the alphabet. These letters come from different sides; seven come from below out of the throat, and so on. The singular working of everything connected with our air-apparatus is shown here. The place where the sound differentiates and divides is the higher mother, who fosters and nurses the child: the mother — the lungs; the child — the human heart, which is molded by all the influences, and from which come impulses to ensoul the voice.

Thus the mysterious working and weaving within the cosmos was revealed to the neophyte. Thus it built itself up in the course of time, and we shall see how the other members of man built themselves into this web. In this Egyptian occult teaching we have a chapter of occult anatomy as this was cultivated in an Egyptian mystery-school, insofar as man had knowledge of cosmic forces, of cosmic beings, and their connection with the human physical body.

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\* For confirming material see E. A. Wallis Budge: *Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection* (London, P. L. Warner, 1911), pp. 19-21.

† There are generally thirty-one pairs of spinal nerves.

# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 7

*Evolutionary Events in the Human  
Organism up to the Departure  
of the Moon.*

*Osiris and Isis as Builders of the  
Upper Human Form.*

*September 9, 1908*

GA 106

IN the preceding lectures we have brought before our eyes, in connection with the nature of man, a long series of facts related to the evolution of the earth and of the whole solar system. In the last two lectures we directed our particular attention to bringing forward those facts of the evolution of sun, moon, and earth which had a sort of resurrection in the Egyptian mysteries, and which the pupil of these mysteries, as well as the whole Egyptian people, learned to know. In his clairvoyant seeing the pupil actually learned to know all the things mentioned here, as well as those that will be brought out today.

The greater part of the people, who were unable to raise themselves to clairvoyance, learned about all this in a most significant picture. We have often touched upon this picture, which was the most important one in the Egyptian world-view. It is embodied in the myth of Isis and Osiris. We are all acquainted with this picture, and no one who knows anything believes that it is without **significance**.\* It was not only a picture for these people, but it was much more. What was contained in the Isis myth was told approximately as follows.

In earlier times Osiris long ruled the earth, to the blessing of humanity. This continued up to a particular moment, later characterized as the point when the sun stood in the sign of the Scorpion. Then it was that Typhon, or Set, killed his brother Osiris by inducing him to lay himself down in a chest, which Typhon then closed and committed to the sea. Isis, the sister and wife of Osiris, searched for her brother and husband, and after finding him brought him to Egypt. But the evil Typhon, still striving for the destruction of Osiris, cut him in pieces. Isis gathered the fragments together and buried them in various places. (Various graves of Osiris are still shown in Egypt.) Then Isis bore Horus, who avenged his father on Typhon. Osiris was now again admitted into the world of the divine spiritual beings and is no longer active on earth, but he aids men when they sojourn in the spiritual world between death and a new birth. Therefore in Egypt the path of the dead was called the way to Osiris.

This is the myth, which is one of the most ancient components of the Egyptian conception of life. Although there were later additions and changes, this legend pervaded all the cults of Egypt as long as any life remained in the Egyptian religious views.

Having directed our attention to this myth, into which was compressed what the pupil saw as a real event in the holy secrets of the mystery schools, we must now turn our attention to what we began yesterday and try to gain a clearer understanding of what was produced in man through the influence of the various aspects of the moon. We have spoken of the twenty-eight nerves proceeding from the spinal cord, which stem from the positions of the moon during the twenty-eight days that the moon requires to return to its

first form. We have probed the mystery of how, through the cosmic forces, these twenty-eight pairs of nerves were formed in man from outside. Now I beg you to heed well the following.

So far as possible in a short discourse, we shall now describe, as precisely as possible, what the Egyptian pupil learned about human evolution in a still broader sense. Those who are too strongly infected by modern anatomy will say that this description is pure nonsense from the contemporary point of view. They may say this, but they should be aware that this is the doctrine that the Egyptian neophyte not only learned, but clairvoyantly observed. I shall speak to those who are perceptive enough to be able to follow. This teaching was not only the result of the vision of the Egyptian in the mysteries, but it is also accepted as true by the modern occultist of today.

Let us recall what was said in the last lectures about how the earth, while still at the beginning of its evolution, consisted entirely of human germs, which formed the primeval earth-mist. The Indian clairvoyant, as well as the Egyptian, could see the entire subsequent human form sprout forth spiritually out of this spiritual human germ. All that later grew out of this human germ could be seen clairvoyantly at that time. But one could also look back on those parts of man that first arose out of the germ. The first that arose out of this germ, when the sun was still connected with the earth, was actually like a sort of plant, which opened its chalice upward. These forms filled, so to say, the whole earth as they shaped themselves out of the primeval mist. But in the earliest time in which this arose, like a sort of flower corolla opening itself into cosmic space, this corolla was scarcely visible; man would only have been able to perceive it by feeling its presence as a chalice-shaped warmth-body. This was present at first as a warmth-body. While the earth was still connected with the sun, the inner part of this human formation began to light up and to shine into cosmic space. If at that time one had been able to see with the eyes of today, on approaching such a light-form one would have seen a sparkling sphere, like a glittering sun, which cast its gleams into space in a regular form. Today, one can hardly form a clear picture of what existed at that time. This would only be possible if one could conceive of the pure atmosphere of our earth as completely filled with fire-flies raying their light out into cosmic space. Thus would the first beginnings of man have shone into cosmic space when the earth was still connected with the sun. But this was not all that existed. At about the same time a sort of gas-body took form, outside and around the chalice form. Many substances were present in this, in solution, just as today we find fluid and solid substances in the human and animal bodies. At that time, however, they were air-forms. Soon after all this had arisen, other germs came out of the common earth-mass, germs that were the first indications of our present animal kingdom. Thus the human kingdom came forth first; then came the germs that gave rise to the animal kingdom. The earth still consisted of an air-mass, of gleaming light-disseminating bodies, which shone into cosmic space. Within this air-mass emerged the first traces of sexless animals, which stood at the lowest stage of the present animal kingdom. We shall see that these animals, then arising in their first outlines, had a certain significance for man.

The important thing is that these animals, which then made their appearance, composed the thickest of the gas-masses, like thick clots of gas. These animals developed through most diverse forms to a certain level, and when the sun had just gone forth from the earth, the highest animal form was the fish, although not the fish of today. The form of the animals of that time was entirely different from that of the present fishes, but it stood at



the same stage. In the course of evolution our fishes have retained what could be achieved while the sun was still in the earth. Now the earth condensed to a water-earth and the densest forms, the animals, swam in this water-earth. Something singular now came about. Certain of the primitive fish-forms remained animals and troubled themselves no further about the progress of evolution. Others, however, retained a certain relation to the human shapes in the following way.

At the same time that the sun went out from the earth, the earth began to turn on its axis so that at one time one side of the earth would be shone upon by the sun, and at another time it would not be shone upon; thus day and night began. But at that time, the days and nights were much longer than today. At the time when the moon had not yet split off, whenever such a human form (already considerably condensed) was on the sunny side, there was organized into this gas-mass something of such an animal form below in the water-earth. Human and animal forms were combined so that there was a human form above and an animal form below. The upper part protruded toward the sun, but the lower parts were weaker, and the animal body joined itself to them. The upper part protruded out of the water-earth, and the sun influence, proceeding through the flower-men, worked on the inner forces of earth and moon. Because here an animal form was joined to the human body, which was then at the fish level, it was said that the sun, which illuminated the human body, stood at the sign of the Fish. The first hint of this formation actually coincided with the sun's being in the sign of the Fish, but the sun passed many times through this sign before the next formation took place. The beginning of this formation, however, was the time when the sun stood in the zodiacal sign of the Fish, and this sign received its name because beings at the fish stage united themselves with man at that time.

Now, as we know, evolution proceeded in such a way that moon and earth formed one body. At the separation of the sun, Yahweh remained with the earth along with the moon forces, and among his ministers was the godly form the Egyptians called Osiris. Until the moon left the earth, evolution proceeded in a strange way.

We know that the earth was a water-earth, and the formation in the water attained an ever lower stage during the time preceding the departure of the moon. When the moon withdrew, man's lower nature was at about the stage of a great amphibian. This is what the Bible calls the serpent, and what is elsewhere called the lindworm or dragon. During the time when the moon was withdrawing, more and more of the animal kingdom had worked itself into the lower human form. When the moon finally left, man had a hideous animal-like form in his lower parts, although above he still had the last remnants of a light-form into which the forces of the sun flowed from without. It was still possible for the light-beings to work into man. He moved about in the primal ocean, floating and swimming, with this remarkable light-form protruding out of the water-earth. What was this light-form? In the course of time it had transformed itself into a powerful and comprehensive sense-organ. When the moon withdrew, this transformation was complete. When man swam in the primal ocean, if some dangerous being approached him, he could perceive it with this organ. Especially could warmth and cold be perceived with it. This organ later shriveled up, so that today it is the so-called pineal gland. At that time man moved within the earth-mass, floating and swimming, using this organ as a sort of lantern. In very young children we still find a soft place in the head, and it was from there that this organ protruded into cosmic space.

There were ever higher animal forms, which man took into himself. At one time, what had developed out of the fish was called the Water-man, because it lived in the water and contained the germ of the later man. A still higher form that developed could be called the Goat. The singular thing is that what corresponded to man in his lower members actually gave the name to the then prevailing constellation. The feet are actually the original Fish; the calves or shanks are the Water-man, which for a long time enabled man to steer while swimming; the knee we find to be related to the sign of the Goat. The animal kingdom evolved more and more, and what became the thigh was designated as the Archer. It would lead too far if I attempted to explain this expression, but we shall try to give a picture of how man looked when the animal kingdom corresponded to the Archer.

Man was an animal then, which for the first time could move about on the islands that were forming in the water. In his upper parts he became ever finer, and at the top he actually preserved the flower-form. He was illuminated from above by an organ that he carried on his head like a lantern. The then human form is rightly conceived if we see the upper part as etheric and the lower part as animal-like. In older pictures of the Zodiac, the form of the Archer is shown as an animal below and a man above. These signs portray the stage of evolution at which man then stood, even as the centaur reflects an actual stage of evolution-upward man and downward horse. The horse must not be taken literally, but as a representative of the animal kingdom. This was the artistic principle in earlier times; the artist portrayed what the clairvoyant described to him or what he himself had seen. Artists were often initiates. It is said that Homer was a blind seer, but that means that he was clairvoyant. He could look back into the Akashic Record. Homer, the blind seer, was much more seeing in the spiritual sense than were the other Greeks. Thus, the centaur was once an actual human form. When man looked like this, the moon had not yet withdrawn. The moon force was still in the earth, and in man was still what had formed itself during the sun period, the shining pineal gland, which he bore like a lantern on his head.

When the moon withdrew from the earth, sexuality appeared. The centaur-man was still sexless. Sexuality appeared when the sun stood in the sign of the Scorpion, and this is why we always connect sex with this sign. The Scorpion is what in the animal kingdom corresponds to the stage of evolution at which man stood when he had developed sexuality. In his upper half, man was turned toward the cosmic forces, but in his lower half he was a bisexual being. He had become a sexual being. When the clairvoyant pupil of the Egyptian mysteries directed his gaze toward this period of earth-evolution, he saw the earth peopled by men whose lower bodily form was becoming denser, in harmony with their baser nature, but who had a luminous human shape above.

Then began the time when, through the forces of the moon, the nerve-filaments appeared in the region where the spine now is. The formation above the spine, the present head-region, had condensed and changed itself into the human brain; that was the completely transformed light-organ. Attached to this was the spine, from which the nerves proceeded, and attached to this in turn was the lower man whom we have described. This was revealed to the Egyptian pupil, and it became clear to him that any being wishing to incarnate on the earth would have to assume the corresponding human form. Osiris, as spirit, often visited the earth and incarnated as a man. Men felt that a god had descended, but he had a human form. Every exalted being who visited the earth appeared in the

shape that man then had. This shape was then such that one still, saw that light-body, that remarkable head-ornament, the **lantern of Osiris,\*\*** which has been described in a pictorial way as the eye of Polyphemus. This is the organ, the lantern, which at first was outside the human body, and which then transformed itself into an inner organ in the brain. Everything in early art is a symbol of actual forms.

When the Greek initiates became acquainted with these mysteries of the Egyptians, they had already learned many things. Basically, they had learned the same things as the Egyptian initiates, but they gave them different names in their language. The initiates of the Egyptians had developed the clairvoyant gifts to a high degree, so that many of their pupils could look back clairvoyantly into those most ancient times. The Egyptian initiate had a direct connection with those mysteries, hence the Greek priests seemed to him to be only childish stammerers. This is illustrated by the words that an Egyptian priest once spoke to Solon, “O Solon, Solon, you Hellenes remain always children, and there is not an old man among you. In spirit you are all young; there is no old opinion handed down among you from ancient tradition, nor any science that is **hoary with age.**”† Thus did the Egyptian point out that his wisdom stood infinitely far above anything that can be experienced materially. Only in the Eleusinian mysteries did the Greeks progress equally far, but only a few participated in them.

In his study of earth-evolution, the Egyptian initiate saw that the god Osiris had separated himself from the sun and had gone to the moon, whence he reflected the light of the sun. What this god did was also sacred to the Greeks. They too knew that it was this god, Osiris, who formed the twenty-eight moon-aspects, and thereby laid the groundwork for the twenty-eight nerves in man. Through Osiris, the nervous system is built onto the spinal column, thereby forming the whole upper body of man. For what appears as muscle can maintain its form only because the nerves are its shapers. All we have as muscles, cartilage, and other organs such as heart and lungs, maintains its form only through the nerves. Thus through the earlier sun-activity appeared what took form as brain and spinal column, and on this spinal column the twenty-eight aspects of Isis and Osiris work from outside. Isis and Osiris are the shapers of all this, and in the tentacles that the brain sends down into the spinal column, Osiris works upon the spine. The Greeks experienced this also, and as they became acquainted with the Egyptian mysteries they recognized that Osiris was the same as the god whom they called Apollo. They said that the Egyptian Osiris was Apollo, and that, like Osiris, Apollo worked upon the nerves so as to achieve a soul-life within man.

Now in a simple way, let us try to view this formation. Let us think of the brain as it might be sketched. This continues itself into the spine, and there the twenty-eight arms of Osiris enter in; there Osiris with his twenty-eight hands plays upon the spine as upon a lyre. The Greeks had a significant image for this — the lyre of Apollo. We need only think of it as transposed. The lyre is the brain, the nerves are the strings on which the hands of Apollo play. Apollo plays on the cosmic-lyre, on the mighty work of art that the cosmos has formed, and that causes to resound in man the tones that compose his soul life. For the Eleusinian initiate, this was what the Egyptians had given in their pictures. From such a picture we can see that these things should not be expounded too rigidly, or we shall merely be forcing fantasies into them. For as a rule, our experience should be that these pictures are actually much deeper than anything we can dream into them by means of the intellect. If the Greek clairvoyant spoke of Apollo, he had before his mind

the mystery of Osiris-Apollo and the human musical instrument. Osiris stood before the Egyptian pupil when he was initiated into the mysteries of earth-existence. Thus we must say that these symbols, these pictures, which have been preserved for us and which characterize what has been taken from the primeval mysteries, mean much more than can be expounded by the intellect. This lyre was seen, the hands of Apollo were seen. The important thing is that we should relate every symbol to some actual vision, to something really seen. There are no symbols, no legends, that have not first been seen.

The Egyptian pupil could penetrate to such mysteries only after a long time. He was first prepared through a definite course of instruction, which was somewhat similar to basic theosophy. Then only was he admitted to the real exercises. There he experienced a sort of ecstatic condition which, although not yet true clairvoyance, was more than a dream. In this condition he beheld what he was later to see in the form of pictures. The pupil actually beheld in a mighty living dream the departure of the moon, and of Osiris with it, and Osiris's working upon the earth from the moon. He dreamed the Osiris-Isis legend. Every pupil dreamed this Osiris-Isis dream. He had to dream it, for otherwise he would not have been able to come to a perception of the true facts. The pupil had to go through the picture, the imagination. The legend of Isis and Osiris was inwardly experienced. This ecstatic soul-condition was a preliminary to the true vision, a prelude to his seeing what takes place in the spiritual world. What has been described today could be read by the pupil in the Akashic Record only when he had reached a high degree of initiation. Tomorrow we shall speak further of this, and also of the other signs of the Zodiac and their significance.

\* In classical antiquity this feeling of baffling importance was already present. See Plutarch, *On Isis and Osiris*.

\*\* Pictures of this ornament may be found in E. A. Wallis Budge, *Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection* (London, P. L. Warner, 1911), pages 42 and 49.

† See the opening passages of Plato's *Timaeus*.

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# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 8

*The Stages of Evolution of the Human Form*

*The Expulsion of the Animal Beings.*

*The Four Human Types.*

*September 10, 1908*

GA 106

WE have become acquainted with significant events in the evolution of the human organism. We have followed the organism from its beginning to the point of time when the moon departed from the earth. When we say "point of time", we are not speaking literally, for these events occupied long periods. From the first moment when the moon began to show signs of withdrawing, until its departure had been completely accomplished, long stretches of time passed and many things occurred in evolution. But we have observed man until about the departure of the moon. We have understood man's form which, as its lower part, approximately from the middle of the trunk to the height of the hips, manifested a configuration not entirely unlike his present shape. This body, although soft, could have been seen with modern eyes, whereas the upper parts were visible only to clairvoyant consciousness. We have already pointed out how something of man's nature at that time has been preserved by myth, religion, and art in the centaur. The various parts of the body, the members that gradually evolved into feet, shanks, knees, thighs, represent the animal forms of our earth at that time. These animal forms, however, remained stuck at certain stages of evolution, beyond which man was able to progress. Let us try to understand this thoroughly.

In the earliest times, when the sun departed, no animal forms had yet appeared. After the sun had left, the highest form of animal was a type that stood at the level of our present fish. When we say that the human feet corresponded to this fish-form, when we look at the feet in connection with fish, what does this mean? It means that the feet were the only part of man that was physically perceptible at the time when certain forms were left behind which swam about like fish in the water-earth. The remaining parts were present only in a finer etheric form. What we have described as the chalice or blossom form, the light-organ, was entirely etheric, an illuminated air-form. Only the lowest part of man was able really to wade through the water-earth like the fish that had remained behind. Thereafter there were higher animals, which are depicted in the image of the Water-man, the man whose body was visible as high as the shanks. Man has been formed in such a way as to leave behind him, at every stage of his existence, certain animal forms, beyond which he slowly progressed. When the moon began to withdraw, man was so far along that he had given his lower half, his lower nature, a physical shape, whereas the upper half remained entirely pliable. Then, we see taking hold, from the moon, that influence of the moonlight which the Egyptians called Osiris, which can work upon man through the different aspects of the moon. We see how the most important formations of the upper body, i.e., the nerves that bring about the present upper body, are worked into man from the moon. The nerves, going out from the spine, formed the upper body. At first, through the tones that Osiris-Apollo played on the human lyre, the mid-part, the hip-region,

comes into form. All that had to remain stuck at this point, beyond which man progressed, appears in later evolution in the forms of the amphibians.

As long as the moon was connected with the earth, it more or less pushed man's evolution down. The fish form was still connected with the sun, which is the reason for the feeling that every healthy person today has toward fish. Think of the pleasure of seeing a beautiful glittering fish, a shining water-animal, and then think of the antipathy one feels toward a frog, toad, or snake, although these stand higher than the fish. The forms of that time appear in their decadence as the present amphibians, but man once had such forms in his lower corporeality. As long as man had only a lower corporeality to the hips, he was a sort of dragon. It was only later, when the upper body assumed solid form, that by use of this he transformed the lower. We may say that the fish reflects the form that man possessed through the forces he received while the sun was still united with the earth. Until the sun departed, man stood at the level of the fish.

Now the great beings, the leaders of evolution, departed as they shaped their sun, to reunite with the earth only at a much later time. One of the Spirits, one who went out with the sun, the highest of the guiding Sun Spirits, was the Christ. We feel a deep reverence when we realize that up to this time man was united with this Being who, as the noblest spirit, once departed from the earth with the sun. One felt that through the form of the fish one could characterize the time of the sun's departure from the earth, and also the forms given through the Christ himself. Earlier, man on earth was united with the sun, and as the latter departed he saw, preserved in the fish-shape, the form that he owed to the sun spirits. As he progressed further, the sun spirits were no longer with him. The Christ departed from the earth when man still had the fish-shape. The initiates of the first Christian period preserved this form. In the Roman catacombs the fish appeared as the symbol of Christ, to remind men of the great cosmic event in evolution when the Christ was still united with them in the earth. Man had progressed to the fish-form when the sun split off, and the first Christians felt a reference to the Man-Christ-form in the fish symbol as something of great profundity. Such a significant sign, which we view as a symbol of an epoch of cosmic evolution, is far removed from the external explanations that are often given. The true symbols refer to higher spiritual realities. They did not merely "mean" something to the early Christians. Such a symbol is a picture of this or that which one can really see in the spiritual world, and no symbol is rightly interpreted unless one can point to what can be seen in the spiritual world in connection with it. All speculation is at most preparatory, and the expression "it means" does not touch the point; for one first really understands the symbol when one shows how a spiritual fact is portrayed in it.

Now let us proceed further with the evolution of humanity. Man took on the most diverse forms, and when he had developed upward to the hip-level he was at his ugliest in his physical form. The shape he then had is preserved in a decadent form in the snake. The time when man had reached the amphibian form, when the moon was still in the earth, is the time of shame and degeneracy in the evolution of mankind. Had the moon not then departed from the earth, the race of men would have succumbed to a horrible fate, failing increasingly into evil forms. Hence the feeling that the naive and unspoiled person has toward the snake, which retains the form that man had at his lowest point, is entirely justified. Precisely the unspoiled soul-attitude, which does not assert that there is nothing ugly in nature, feels a revulsion before the snake, because it is the document of human

shame. This is not meant in a moral sense, but points to the lowest stage in human evolution.

Man had now to pass beyond this low point. He could do this only by abandoning the animal form and beginning to condense his spiritual upper part. We have seen that all the nobler parts could develop only through the intervention of the Isis and Osiris forces. In order for the Osiris forces to work in him, in order for the nobler part to develop, something important was necessary. Man's upper part had to find the possibility of bringing the spine out of the horizontal into the vertical. All this occurred through the influence of Isis and Osiris. Man was led from stage to stage by sun and moon, which kept themselves in balance. When half of man had become physical, sun and moon were in balance; therefore the hip region is designated as the Balance. At that time the sun was in the sign of the Balance.

Now we must not imagine — and this must be emphasized — that after the sun had stood in the sign of the Scorpion, and then in the sign of the Balance, the hips immediately developed. This would show the tempo of evolution as proceeding much too rapidly. The sun travels through the whole zodiac in a period of 25,920 years. At one time the sun rose in spring in the Ram, earlier in the sign of the Bull. The vernal point was always moving, going through the sign of the Bull, and so on. About 747 BC the sun again entered into the Ram; in our time it rises in the sign of the Fish. The time during which the sun traverses a sign has some significance, but such a period would not suffice for the change that had to take place in order for man to progress from sexuality under the sign of the Scorpion to the evolving of his hips under the sign of the Balance. We should have a false picture of this, if we thought that it could have occurred in *one* transit of the sun. The sun goes once through the zodiac, and only after this complete circuit does the forward step occur. In earlier times it had to make the transit oftener before the forward step could take place. Therefore we cannot apply to more ancient epochs the familiar time-reckonings of post-Atlantean times. The sun had first to go completely around — in earlier ages even several times — before evolution could progress a step. For those members that required a stronger molding, the time lasted even longer.

Man rises ever higher through this evolution. The next stage, during which the lower parts of the human trunk were formed, is designated by the sign of the Virgin.

We shall best understand evolution if we make it quite clear that, while man was becoming ever more human, animal beings remained stuck at certain stages. We have already said that man developed lungs, heart, and larynx through the influence of the moon forces. We have also shown to what extent Osiris and Isis participated in this. Now we must be quite clear that the higher organs, such as heart, lungs, larynx, and others, could develop only through the fact that the higher members of man — etheric body, astral body, and also the ego — cooperated in a definite way as the really spiritual members of man. After the point that was reached under the Balance, these higher members cooperated much more than in the preceding epochs. Thus the most manifold forms could appear. For example, the etheric body, or the astral, or the ego, could work especially strongly. It could even happen that the physical body might predominate over the other three members. Through this four human types developed. A number of men appeared who had worked out the physical body especially. Then there were men who had received their stamp from the etheric body, others whose astral nature predominated, and also ego-men, strongly marked ego-men. Each man showed what predominated in

him. In the ancient times when these four forms originated, one could meet grotesque shapes, and the clairvoyant discovers what is present in the different types. There are representations, although these are not well known, in which the memory of this has been preserved. For example, those men in whom the physical nature became especially strong and worked on the upper parts, bore the mark of this in their upper part. Something was formed that was entirely suited to the baser form, and through what was thus active there appeared the shape that we see retained in the apocalyptic picture of the Bull, although not the bull of today, which is a decadent form. What was governed principally by the physical body at a certain time, remained stuck at the stage of the bull. This is represented by the bull and all that belongs to this genus, such as cows, oxen and so on. The human group in whom the etheric rather than the physical body was strongly marked, in whom the heart region was especially powerful, is also preserved in the animal kingdom. This stage, beyond which man has progressed, is preserved in the lion. The lion preserves the type that was worked out in the group of men in whom the etheric body was intensely active. The human stage in which the astral body overpowered the physical and etheric is preserved for us, although degenerated, in the mobile bird-kingdom, and is portrayed in the Apocalypse in the picture of the Eagle. The predominating astrality is here repelled; it raised itself from the earth as the race of birds. Where the ego grew strong, a being evolved that should actually be called a union of the three other natures, for the ego harmonizes all three members. In this group the clairvoyant actually has before him what has been preserved in the Sphinx, for the Sphinx has the lion-body, the eagle-wings, something of the bull form — and in the oldest portrayals there was even a reptilian tail, pointing to the ancient reptile form — and then at the front there is the human face, which harmonizes the other parts.

These are the four types. But in the Atlantean time the man-form predominated, as the human shape gradually constructed itself out of the eagle, lion, and bull natures. These transmuted themselves into the full human form, and this gradually transmuted itself into the shape that was present in the middle of Atlantis. Something else occurred through all these events. Four different elements, four forms, merged harmoniously in man. One is present in the physical body, in the bull nature; these are the predominating forces that evolved up to the evolutionary period of the Balance. Then we have the lion nature in the etheric body; in the astral body, in the predominating forces of the astral, the eagle or vulture nature; finally, the predominating forces of the ego, the true human nature. In single beings, one or another of these members had the upper hand. Through this the four types arose. But one could meet still other combinations. For example, the physical, astral, and ego might be equal, while the etheric predominated; that is a particular type of mankind. Then there were beings in whom the etheric, astral, and ego had the upper hand, while the physical was less developed, so that we have men in whom the higher members prevail over the physical body. Those human beings in whom the physical, astral, and ego predominated, are the physical ancestors of the males of today, while those in whom the etheric, astral, and ego predominated, are the physical ancestors of the females of today. The other types disappeared more and more; only these two remained, and evolved into the male and female forms.

How was it possible that gradually just these two forms evolved? This occurred through the differing effects of the working of the Isis and Osiris forces.



We have seen that in the phases of the new moon, when the moon is dark, Isis is characterized, but that Osiris is characterized in the shining phases of the full moon. Isis and Osiris are spiritual beings on the moon, but we find their deeds on the earth. We find them on the earth because it is through these deeds that the human race divided into two sexes. The female ancestors of human beings were formed through the influence of Osiris; the ancestors of men were formed through the workings of Isis. The influence of Isis and Osiris on mankind occurs through the nerve filaments, through the working of which mankind is developed into male and female. In the myth this is shown through Isis's seeking Osiris; the male and the female seek each other on the earth. Over and over again we see that wonderful events of cosmic evolution are hidden in these myths. When the stage of the Balance had been passed, there gradually evolved in the upper members of the human being the differentiations we describe as male and female. Man remained unisexual much longer than the animals. What had long since occurred in the other animals now for the first time took place in man. There was a time when there was a unified human form, containing nothing of the method of propagation that later developed. During this time the nature of man contained both sexes in one being. "And God created man male-female," is the way it stands in the Bible, not **"Male and female created he them."**\* He created both in one. It is the worst possible translation when we say, "Male and female created he them." This has no sense in face of the real facts. Thus we look into a time when human nature was still a unity, when every person was virginally reproductive. This stage of evolution is portrayed in Egyptian traditions drawn from the vision of the initiates. I have already pointed out that the older representations of Isis were as follows: Isis is suckling Horus; but behind her stands a second Isis with vulture wings, who holds out the *Ankh* to Horus to indicate that man stems from a time when these types were still separate and that later the other astral being also sank down into man. This second Isis points to how the astral element predominated at one time. What was later united with the human form is here portrayed behind the mother, as the astral form that would have had vulture wings if it had followed only the astrality. But the time when the etheric body predominated is portrayed in a third Isis, lion-headed, behind the others. This threefold Isis is thus presented out of a deep vision. From this point of view we shall also understand something else. There must have been a period of transition between unisexuality and the division into two sexes; there could have been an interim condition between the virginal propagation in which fructification occurred as a result of the forces living in the earth — which at the same time were fertilizing substances — and the other method of bisexual propagation. This bisexual propagation emerged completely only in the middle of the Atlantean epoch. Earlier there was an intermediate stage. At a certain epoch in this intermediate stage, a change of consciousness took place. Man then required much longer spans of time than today to go through an alternation of consciousness. That was a time in which consciousness was especially strong when, at night, man experienced himself as a spiritual being among his spiritual companions. Day-consciousness, on the other hand, was weak. This condition of consciousness changed in another period, when man's consciousness while in the physical body became strong, while his soul life became weaker upon leaving the physical plane at night. Now there were times in human evolution in which we must recognize a transitional stage. Man's consciousness for the physical world was still damped down, and it was in

this damped-down state that fructification occurred. In the periods of subdued consciousness, when man rose out of the physical world into the spiritual, fructification took place, and man noticed this only through a symbolical dream-act. In tender, noble fashion he felt that fertilization had occurred in his sleep, and in his consciousness there was only a delicate and wonderful dream; for example, that he threw a stone, that the stone fell into the earth, and that a flower rose out of the earth.

It is of special interest that in this time we have also to take into account those who had achieved this stage earlier. When we say that certain beings remained at the Bull stage, others at the Lion, others at the Eagle, and so on, what does this mean? It means that if these beings had been able to wait, if they could have developed their full love for the physical world only at a much later time, they would have become human beings. If the lion had not willed to enter into the earthly sphere too early, it would have become a man; the same is true of the other animals that had split off up till then. Let us repeat it in this way: All that was human at the time when the lion formed itself said either, "No, I will not yet take up the lower substances; I will not go down into physical humanity," or, "I will go down; I wish what has evolved to come into existence." Thus we must think of two beings. The one remains above in the etheric realm of the air and only in its earthly parts reaches down to earth, while the other strives to descend completely to the earth. The latter might become a lion; the former became a man. Just as the animals remained fixed at a certain stage, so now certain men remained fixed. It was not the best men who became human too early. The better ones were able to wait; they remained for a long time without descending to the earth and there carrying out the act of fructification consciously. They remained in that state of cognition in which this act of fructification was a dream.

One may say that these men lived in Paradise. We find that the men who descended earliest to earth had especially strongly formed bodies, with crude and brutal countenances; while the men who wished first to mold the nobler parts had a much more human form. What is here described was preserved in a wonderful myth and rite. The rite is mentioned by **Tacitus**† and is well known as the myth of the goddess Nerthus (Hertha), who descended every year into the sea in a boat. But those who drew the boat had to be killed. Nerthus is thought of (as is often done today) as a phantom of the imagination, as some kind of goddess to whom a cult had been dedicated on some island. It has been believed that the Nerthus shrine could be found in Lake Hertha on Rügen. It was thought that the place where the chariot sank might be found there. This is a remarkable fantasy. The name of Lake Hertha is a new invention. Earlier it was called the Black Lake because of its color, and it never occurred to anyone to call it Lake Hertha and relate it to the goddess.

There are much deeper things in this myth. Nerthus is the transitional stage between the virginal fructification and the later propagation. Nerthus, who dives down into a shadowy consciousness, perceives her immersion in the sea of passion only in a tender, symbolic act; she perceives only a reflection of it. But although the higher humanity still felt things in this way, those who had already descended at that time had lost their original naïveté. They already saw this act; they were lost for the higher human consciousness, and were worthy of death. The memory of this event of primeval times was preserved in rites in countless regions of Europe. A ceremony was carried out at certain times in commemorative festivals. This was the chariot of the Nerthus image, which dived down

into the sea of passion, and it was the gruesome custom that those who had to serve, who drew the chariot and could see what went on, had to be slaves and were killed during the rite, as a sign that these were mortals who saw the act. Only the initiated priests could remain present during the ceremony without being harmed. From this example we see that in the time when what is here described was known in certain regions, the Nerthus cult existed. In these regions there was a consciousness that shaped this myth and the rite. Thus mankind evolved through the most manifold forms, and thus what are real facts were presented in pictures. It has already been said that such pictures should not be regarded as allegories, that their content has a relation to the real facts. Such pictures arose like dreams. So the Osiris myth also was dreamed before the pupil could actually see the facts of human evolution, and only what prepares the way for real seeing is a symbol in the occult sense. A symbol is a description of real events in pictures. In the next lecture we shall discuss the effect of these descriptions.

\* Most texts are silent on this question, but the *International Critical Commentary* (New York, Scribner's, 1895), in discussing *Genesis I:27*, at least shows that others have entertained the male-female hypothesis. See also the curious remarks in the speech of Aristophanes in Plato's *Symposium*.

† Tacitus's *Germania*, Section 40, reads in part as follows:

“On an island of the ocean is a holy grove, and in it a consecrated chariot, covered with robes. A single priest is permitted to touch it. He interprets the presence of the goddess in her shrine, and follows with deep reverence as she rides away drawn by cows. Then come days of rejoicing and all places keep holiday, as many as she thinks worthy to receive and entertain her. They make no war, take no arms; every weapon is put away; peace and quiet are then, and then only, known and loved, until the same priest returns the goddess to her temple, when she has her fill of the society of mortals. After this the chariot and the robes — if you are willing to credit it, the deity in person — are washed in a sequestered lake: slaves are the ministrants and are straightway swallowed by the same lake: hence a mysterious terror and an ignorance full of piety as to what that may be which men behold, only to die.”

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# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 9

*The Influence of the Sun and Moon Spirits,  
of the Isis and Osiris Forces.  
The Change in Consciousness.  
The Conquest of the Physical Plane.  
September 11, 1908*

GA 106

IN the preceding lectures we reviewed in some detail a number of facts concerning the evolution of humanity. I tried to show how man developed in the period of evolution that stretches approximately from the moment when the sun withdrew from the earth to the time when the moon also departed. Today something will be added to these facts, which could be called “facts of occult anatomy and physiology.” In order to understand everything properly, however, today we must throw a little light on certain other facts of the spiritual life, for we must not forget that what is really to be demonstrated is the relation between the Egyptian myths and mysteries, between the whole Egyptian cultural period, and our own time. Therefore it is necessary that we be entirely clear about how evolution progressed further through the various epochs.

Let us again recall what was described as the working of the sun and moon spirits, especially of the Osiris and Isis forces, through whose activities the human body first appeared and was built up. Remember that this occurred in the remote past, that our earth as yet had scarcely crystallized out of the water-earth, and that a great part of what was described actually took place in the water-earth. Man at that time was in a condition that we should bring clearly before our minds so that we may form a clear conception of how things looked to human vision during man's progress through evolution.

I have described how man's lower members, the feet, shanks, knees, etc., appeared as physical forms as early as the time when the sun had shown indications of withdrawing from the earth. But we must always remember what has been said so often: all this would have been visible had there been a human eye to see it. But such an eye did not exist. It appeared only much later. While man was still in the water-earth, he perceived only by means of the organ described as the pineal gland. Perception by means of the physical eye began only after the hip region had been formed. Thus we may say that man already had the lower part of the human form, but possessed nothing whereby he could have seen the body. At that time man could not see himself. Only at the moment when his body, building itself up from below, passed the region of the hips, did man receive the capacity of seeing himself. When he was shaped as far as the sign of the Balance, man's eyes were opened for the first time. Then he began to see himself as in a mist. Then he developed the vision of objects. Until the hip region evolved, all human perception, all seeing, was of a clairvoyant astral-etheric nature. At that time man could not yet see physical things. Human consciousness was still dark and shadowy, though of a dreamy clairvoyant nature. Then man passed over to that condition of consciousness in which sleeping and waking alternated. When he was awake man saw darkly what was physical, but as though it were wrapped in mist and surrounded by an aura of light. In his sleep man rose to the spiritual worlds and the divine spiritual beings. He alternated between a clairvoyant

consciousness, which grew ever weaker, and a day-consciousness, an object-consciousness, which grew stronger and stronger and is the head-consciousness of today. Gradually he lost the capacity of clairvoyant perception, together with the faculty of seeing the gods in sleep. However, the clarity of day-consciousness waxed in the same proportion, and the consciousness of self, the I-feeling, the I-perception, grew stronger. If we look back into the Lemurian time, into the time before, during, and after the moon's exit from the earth, we find that man then had a clairvoyant consciousness in which he had no inkling of what we today call death. For if, at that time, man withdrew from his physical body, whether through sleep or through death, his consciousness did not diminish. On the contrary, he received a higher consciousness and, in certain ways, one more spiritual than his consciousness when in his physical body. He never said to himself, "Now I am dying," or, "I am falling into unconsciousness" — that did not exist in those times. Man did not yet rely on his own feeling of self, but he felt himself immortal in the womb of divinity, and for him all that we describe here today were obvious facts.

Let us imagine that we lie down to sleep, that the astral body removes itself from the physical, and that all this happens in the full moon. We have the physical and etheric bodies lying in bed, the astral body hovering above, and all of this in the full moonlight. Now the situation is not so that an astral cloud simply becomes visible there for the clairvoyant. On the contrary, what he actually sees is streams from the astral body into the physical, and these streams are the forces that remove fatigue in the night. They bring to the physical body replenishment for the wear and tear of the day, so that it feels refreshed and quickened. At the same time one would see spiritual streams proceeding from the moon, and these streams are permeated by astral powers. One would see how there actually proceed from the moon spiritual effects that permeate and strengthen the astral body and influence its working on the physical body.

Let us assume that we are men of the old Lemurian time. Then the astral body would have perceived this streaming-in of the spiritual forces, would have gazed upward and said, "This is Osiris who strengthens me, who works on me. I see how his influence goes through me." We would have felt ourselves sheltered in Osiris during the night; we would have lived, so to say, in Osiris with our ego. We would have felt, "I and Osiris are one." Had we been able to give words to what we felt at that time, we would have described it approximately thus, when we returned into the physical body, "Now I must descend again into the physical body that waits for me there below; this is a time when I must dive down into my lower nature." We should have rejoiced when the time came when we could leave the physical body once again, and rise up to rest in the lap of Osiris, or in the lap of Isis, where we again united our ego with Osiris.

As the physical body evolved further, and especially after the development of the upper members, man could see more physically, could perceive the objects in the physical world about him. In the same proportion, however, he had to tarry longer when he descended into his physical body. He took more interest in the physical world. His consciousness grew darker for the spiritual world as his consciousness in the physical body became clearer. He became disaccustomed to the spiritual world. Thus the life of man in the physical world evolved further, and in the conditions that prevailed between death and a new birth consciousness grew darker and darker. In the Atlantean time man lost almost entirely the feeling of being at home with the gods, and when the great

catastrophe was past, a great part of mankind had completely lost the natural ability to gaze into the spiritual world at night. But in place of this they gained the capacity of seeing ever more sharply by day, so that the objects around them appeared in ever clearer outlines. We have already pointed out that, among the men who had remained behind, the gift of clairvoyance was still preserved, even into the post-Atlantean cultures. At the time when Christianity was founded, remnants of this clairvoyance still existed, and even today there are occasional persons who have preserved it as a natural gift. But this clairvoyance is entirely different from that which is gained through esoteric training. Thus night gradually grew dark for man in Atlantis, while day-consciousness began to light up. The night was without consciousness for the people of the first post-Atlantean culture, whom we tried to characterize in all their greatness, in the spirituality that entered through the holy Rishis. In the earlier lectures we examined these people, and now we must describe them from another side.

Let us try to enter into the souls of the pupils of the holy Rishis, into the souls of the people of the Indian culture in general, in the time immediately after the last traces of the great Atlantean water-catastrophes had vanished. A sort of memory of the ancient world still lived in the soul, a memory of that world in which man experienced and saw the gods who worked on his body, a memory of how Osiris and Isis worked on him. Now he had emerged from this world, out of the womb of the gods. Formerly all this had been present to him as the physical is present to him today. Like a memory this passed through the mind of the Indian man of the first post-Atlantean times, to whom the Rishis still could speak of how things actually had been. He knew that the Rishis and their pupils still could see into the spiritual world, but he also knew that for the normal person of the Indian culture the time was past when he could see into the spiritual world.

Like a painful memory of his old true home, this went through the soul of the ancient Indian when he saw himself transplanted into the physical world, which is only the outer shell of the spiritual world. He yearned to be out of this external world. He felt, "Unreal are the mountains and valleys, unreal the cloud-masses in the air, unreal even the firmament. All this is only like a sheath, like the physiognomy of a real being, and we cannot see the reality behind this, the gods and the true form of man. What we see is Maya, is unreal; the real is veiled." The feeling grew ever keener that man had sprung from the truth and had his real home in the spiritual; that the things of sense were untrue, were Maya, and that the physical world of the senses was the **night around him**.\* When one feels so strongly the contrast between the spiritual and the unreal physical, the religious mood will tend to produce little interest in the physical world and to lead the spirit toward what the initiates see, as to which the holy Rishis could give knowledge. The ancient Indian longed to escape from this hard reality, which for him was nothing but illusion, for to him the true was not what his senses perceived, but what lay beyond that. Therefore the first post-Atlantean culture entertained little interest for what occurred externally on the physical plane.

Things were already different among the Persians in the second cultural period, out of which arose Zarathustra, the great pupil of Manu. If we wish to characterize in a few strokes the difference between the Indian and Persian cultures, we may say that a member of the Persian culture felt the physical to be not merely a burden, but a task to be fulfilled. He also looked up into the regions of light, into the spiritual worlds, but he turned his gaze back into the physical world and in his soul he saw how everything divides into the

powers of light and the powers of darkness. The physical world became for him a field of work. The Persian said to himself, "There is the beneficent fullness of light, the god Ahura Mazdao or Ormuzd, and there are the dark powers under the leadership of Angramainyush or Ahriman. From Ahura Mazdao comes salvation for men; from Ahriman comes the physical world. We must transform what comes from Ahriman; we must unite with the good gods and vanquish Ahriman, the evil god in matter, by transforming the earth, by becoming beings capable of working upon the earth. By thus vanquishing Ahriman, we make the earth into a medium for the good." The first step toward redeeming the earth was taken by the members of the Persian culture. They hoped that the earth would become a good planet one day, that it would be redeemed, and that a glorification of Ahura Mazdao, the highest being, would come about.

Thus a man felt who did not gaze up into the sublime heights like the Indian, but planted his feet firmly on this physical earth. A member of the Indian culture, who did not plant his feet in this way, would not have thought thus.

The conquest of the physical plane proceeded further in the third cultural epoch, in the Egyptian-Babylonian-Assyrian-Chaldean culture. At this time, hardly anything remained of the ancient repugnance with which the physical world was felt to be Maya. The Chaldeans looked up to the heavens, and the light of the stars was not merely Maya for them; it was the script that the gods had imprinted on the physical plane. On the paths of the stars the Chaldean priest pursued his way back into the spiritual worlds, and when he was initiated, when he learned to know all the beings who inhabited the planets and the stars, he lifted up his eyes and said, "What I see with my eyes when I gaze up to the heavens is the outer expression of what is given me by occult vision, by initiation. When the initiating priest endows me with the grace of the perception of the divine, then I see God. But all I see externally is not mere illusions; I see in it the handwriting of the gods." The initiate felt as we would feel if we had been long separated from a friend, then received a letter from him and recognized his familiar handwriting. We see that it was our friend's hand that formed these signs, and we observe the feelings of his heart expressed in them. Approximately thus felt the Chaldean initiate (and also the Egyptian) who was inducted into the holy mysteries and who, while he was in the mystery temple, saw with his spiritual eye the spiritual beings that are connected with our earth. When he went out again, after seeing all this, and cast his eyes on the world of stars, this appeared to him like a letter from the spiritual beings. He perceived a script of the gods. In the blaze of the lightning, in the rolling of the thunder, in the tempest, he saw a revelation of the gods. The gods manifested themselves for him in all that he saw externally. As we feel about the letter from a friend, so did he feel in regard to the outer world. Thus did he feel when he saw the world of the elements, the world of plants, animals, and mountains, the world of the clouds, the world of the stars. Everything was deciphered as a divine script. The Egyptian had confidence in the laws that man could find in the physical world, through which man can master matter. By this means arose geometry, mathematics. With the help of this, man could rule the elements because he trusted in what his spirit could find, because he believed that he could imprint the spirit upon matter. Thus he could build the pyramids, the temples, and the sphinxes. This was a mighty step in the conquest of the physical plane that was accomplished in the third cultural period. Man had progressed so far that for the first time he was able rightly to respect the physical plane.

The physical world began to mean something to him. But what kind of teachers did he require for this?

Man had always needed teachers. Even the initiates had teachers, as in the old Indian time. What kind of teachers did the initiates need? It was necessary that the initiate should be artificially led to see again, during initiation, what man had been able to see previously in his dark clairvoyant consciousness. The neophyte had to be led back into the spiritual world, into the earlier home of the spirit, so that he could communicate to others what he learned from his experiences. For this he needed teachers. The pupils of the Rishis needed teachers who could show them what happened in ancient Lemuria and Atlantis, when man was still clairvoyant. The same was also true of the Persians. It was different with the Chaldeans, and even more different with the Egyptians. They also had teachers who aided the pupil to develop his powers so that he could see, through clairvoyant vision, into the spiritual world behind the physical world. These were the initiators, who showed what lay behind the physical. But a new teaching, a wholly new method, became necessary in Egypt. In ancient India man had troubled himself little about how what happened in the spiritual world was imprinted upon the physical plane, about the correspondence between gods and men. But in Egypt something else was needed. It was necessary that through initiation the pupil should see the gods, but also that he should see how the gods moved their hands in writing the starry script, how all physical forms had evolved. The ancient Egyptians had schools entirely on the model of those of the Indians, but they also learned how the spiritual forces were correlated with the physical world. Thus they taught new subjects. In ancient India the pupil was shown the spiritual forces through clairvoyance, but in Egypt he was also shown what corresponded physically with the spiritual deeds. He was shown how every member of the physical body corresponded to some spiritual labor, how the heart, for example, corresponded to some spiritual work. The founder of this school, in which was shown not only the spiritual but also its work upon the physical, was the great initiator, *Hermes Trismegistos*. It was he, the thrice-great Thoth, who first showed to men the entire physical world as the handwriting of the gods. Here we see how piece by piece our post-Atlantean cultures embodied their impulses in human evolution. Hermes appeared to the Egyptians like a divine ambassador. He gave then what had to be deciphered as the deed of the gods in the physical world.

In all of this we have somewhat characterized the first three cultural epochs of the post-Atlantean time. Men had learned to value the physical plane.

The fourth epoch, the Greco-Latin, is the period when man came even more into contact with the physical plane. In this time man progressed so far that he not only saw the script of the gods in the physical world, but he also inserted his own self, his spiritual individuality, into the objective world. Such artistic creations as we find in Greece were not known earlier. That man could portray himself in sculpture, creating therein something like his physical self — this was achieved in the fourth cultural period.

In this time we see man's inward spiritual elements step out of him onto the physical plane and flow into matter. This marriage between the spiritual and the material may be seen most clearly in the Greek temple. For everyone who can look back and see this temple, it is a wonderful work. The Greeks had the greatest architectonic gifts. Every art has its climax at some point, and here architecture had its high point. Modeling and painting reached their climax elsewhere. Despite the gigantic pyramids, the most



wonderful architecture appears in the Greek temple. For what is attained here? A weak echo may be experienced by one who has an artistic feeling for space, who feels how a horizontal line is related to one that moves in the vertical. A number of cosmic truths light up in the soul that can simply feel how the column carries what is above it. One must be able to feel how all these lines were already invisibly present in space. The Greek artist saw the column as though clairvoyantly, and simply filled what he saw with matter. He saw space as altogether composed of life, as something permeated by living forces.

How can the man of today get some impression of the liveliness that this space-filling had? We see a faint reflection of it in the old painters. For example, we can find paintings where angels float in space, and we have the feeling that the angels support each other. Today little remains of this feeling for space. I shall make no objection to **Boecklin's colors,\*\*** but all occult space-feeling is missing in him. Such a being as we find above his *Piet&aaccent;* — you cannot tell if it is supposed to be an angel or some other being — must waken in the observer the feeling that at any minute it may fall on the group below it. This must be emphasized when one tries to explain something of which hardly an inkling can be conveyed today, such as the space-feeling of the Greeks. It must be expressly stated that this was of an occult nature. In a Greek temple it was as if space had given birth to itself out of its own lines. The result of this was that the divine beings for whom the temple was built, and with whom the Greek as a clairvoyant was acquainted, really descended into the temple, really felt comfortable in it. It is true that Pallas Athena, Zeus, etc., were actually within the temples. They had their bodies, their material bodies, in these temples. For since these beings could incarnate only as far as an etheric body, they found their dwelling-place in the physical world in these temples. Such a temple could become their physical body, in which their etheric body felt at home.

One who understands the Greek temple knows that it differs profoundly from a Gothic cathedral. This is not a criticism of the Gothic, for the Gothic cathedral is a sublime work of art. But an understanding person can well imagine of a Greek temple, that even if it stood in a solitude with no people anywhere near, even if it were quite alone, it would be a whole. A Greek temple is complete even when nobody is praying in it. It is not soulless, it is not empty, for the god is in it. It is inhabited by the god.

But a Gothic cathedral is only half complete if there are no worshippers within. One who understands this cannot think of a Gothic cathedral, standing alone, without a congregation of the faithful, whose thoughts stream into it. All the Gothic forms and ornaments belong to what streams from it. No god, no spiritual being, is close to the Gothic cathedral when the prayers of the faithful are not present. Only when the praying congregation is assembled is the cathedral filled with the divine. This is shown in the very word **“Dom,”†** for this is connected with the “dom” in Christendom and similar words, which signifies something collective. Even the word **“Duma”††** is related to this. The Greek temple is not a house for the faithful. It is shaped as a house that the god himself inhabits; it can stand alone. But in the Gothic cathedral one feels at home only when it is filled by the believing throng, when the pious congregation is assembled, when the light of the sun shines through the colored window-panes and the colors are diffused by the fine dust-particles. Then, as often happened, the preacher in the cathedral pulpit would say, “Even as the light is split into many colors, so is the single spiritual light, the divine force, divided among the crowds of souls and split into the diverse forces of the

physical plane.” Such words were often heard from the preacher. When perception and spiritual experience flowed together in this way, the cathedral was something complete. As in the great temple buildings, so was it in everything artistic among the Greeks. The marble of their sculptures took on the appearance of life. The Greek expressed in the physical what lived in his spiritual. Among the Greeks the marriage of the spiritual with the physical was a fact.

The Roman went a step further in the conquest of the physical plane. The Greek had the capacity of embodying the soul-spiritual in his works of art, but he still felt himself as part of a whole, of the *polis*, the city-state. He did not yet feel himself as a personality. This was also the case in the earlier cultures. The Egyptian did not feel himself as a separate person, but as an Egyptian, as a member of his people. Thus in Greece we find that a man laid little worth on feeling himself to be a person, but it was his greatest pride to be a Spartan or an Athenian. To be a personality, to be something in the world through the self, was felt for the first time in Rome. That a personality could be something for itself was first true for the Roman. The Romans worked out the concept of the *citizen*, and it was among them that jurisprudence, the science of law, arose. This is correctly regarded as a Roman invention. Only modern jurists, who know nothing of these facts, have had the lack of judgment to assert that law, in this sense, existed earlier. It is nonsense to speak of oriental lawgivers, such as Hammurabi. There were no legal rules earlier; there were only **divine commands**.‡ One would have to use harsh words if one were to speak objectively about this kind of science.

The concept of the citizen first became a real feeling in ancient Rome. By that time man had brought the spiritual into the physical world as far as his own individuality. The last Will and Testament was invented in ancient Rome. The will of the single personality had become so strong that even beyond death it could determine what should be done with its property, its own things. The single personal man was now the determining factor. With this deed man, in his own individuality, had brought the spiritual down to the physical plane. This was the lowest point of evolution.

Man stood at his highest in the Indian culture. At this highest point the Indian still moved in spiritual heights. In the second culture, the ancient Persian, man had already descended a little. In the third culture, the Egyptian, still more. In the fourth culture man descended entirely to the physical plane, into matter. There came a point when man stood at the parting of the ways. Either he could sink lower and lower, or he could achieve the possibility of working up again, of fighting his way back into the spiritual world. But for this a spiritual impulse had to appear on the physical plane, a mighty thrust that could lead man back into the spiritual world. This mighty thrust was given through the appearance of Christ Jesus on earth. The divine-spiritual Christ had to come to men in a physical human body, had to go through a physical appearance in the physical world. Now, when man was wholly in the physical world, the god had to descend to him so he might find the way back into the spiritual world. Previously this would not have been possible.

Today we have followed the evolution of the cultures of the post-Atlantean time down to their lowest point. We have seen how the spiritual impulse occurred through the Christ at the lowest point. Now man must rise again, transfigured by the Christ principle. We shall go on to show how the Egyptian culture emerges again in our time, but permeated by the Christ principle.

\* For a clear expression of this sentiment, see *Sacred Books and Early Literature of the East* (New York, Parke, Austin, & Lipscomb; 1917), Vol. 9, p. 104.

\*\* Arnold Böcklin (1827-1901), Swiss painter.

† *Dom* is the German word for cathedral.

†† The *Duma* was a short-lived parliament in late Czarist Russia.

‡ Our best modern scholars agree with the views here expressed. See Wigmore, *Panorama of the World's Legal Systems* (Washington Law Book Company, 1936).

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# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 10

*Old Myths as Pictures of Cosmic Facts.  
Darkening of Man's Spiritual Consciousness.  
The Initiation Principle of the Mysteries.  
September 12, 1908*

GA 106

THERE are many myths and sagas of the ancient Egyptians that were well-known to the spiritual-scientific world conception and are again becoming known, but are not transmitted by the external historical traditions touching on the Egyptians. Some of these myths were preserved for us in the form in which they became domesticated in Greece, for most of the Greek legends that do not relate to Zeus and his family, stem from the Egyptian mysteries. We shall occupy ourselves today with all sorts of mythical things that we can put to good use, despite the assertion of modern cultural history that Greek mythology contains little of value.

Why should we examine this other side of human evolution, the spiritual side? All that we see on the physical plane always remains an event and fact of the physical plane. But in the science of the spirit, we are interested not only in what lives on the physical plane, but also in all that occurs in the spiritual worlds. From what we have heard in our lectures we know what happens to man between death and a new birth. We need only recall that in death man enters the condition of consciousness that we call kamaloka, in which, although he has become a spiritual being, he is held fast by the astral body. This is the time when man still demands something from the physical world, when he suffers from the fact that he is no longer in the physical world. Then comes the time when he must prepare himself for a new life, the consciousness-condition of Devachan, where he is no longer immediately connected with the physical world and with physical impressions. In order to understand how life in kamaloka differs from life in Devachan, let us consider two examples. We know that as soon as he has died, man does not lose his cravings and desires. Let us assume that during his life a person was a gourmet, taking great pleasure in choice food. When he dies, he does not at once lose this desire for enjoyment, this craving for dainties. These wishes do not live in the physical body, but in the astral. Therefore, since man retains his astral body after death, he also retains the craving, but he lacks the organ with which to satisfy this craving, the physical body. The craving for food depends on the astral body rather than on the physical, and after death the person feels a real lust for what pleased him most in life. For this reason he suffers after death until he has weaned himself of the desire for enjoyment, until he has sloughed off all the cravings that he had cultivated through the physical organs. Throughout this period he remains in kamaloka. Then begins the time when he no longer makes demands of the type that can be satisfied only through physical organs. Then he enters into Devachan. In the same proportion that man ceases to be fettered to the physical world he begins to develop a consciousness for the Devachanic world. This world becomes more and more illuminated, but he does not yet have an ego-consciousness there, such as he had in this life. He is not yet independent there. In the Devachanic life he feels like a limb, like an organ, of the entire spiritual world. As the hand, if it could feel, would feel itself to be a

member of the physical organism, so man feels in his Devachanic consciousness that he is a limb of the spiritual world, a limb of the higher beings. He must grow toward his independence. But he already cooperates in the cosmos; he works on the plant kingdom from out the spiritual world. Man cooperates in all this, not for his own account, but as a ministering member of the spiritual world.

When we thus describe what man experiences between death and a new birth, we must not imagine that the events of the Devachanic world are not also subject to change. People are apt to believe privily that, although our earth is changeable, everything up yonder, beyond death, remains the same. This is by no means the case. When we describe the sojourn in Devachan in this way, this means only that this is approximately the way things are there at the present time. But let us remember how it was when our souls were incarnated during the Egyptian culture. Then we looked upon the gigantic pyramids and the other mighty buildings. In earlier times things looked very different on this side, on the physical side. The countenance of the earth has changed greatly since then. We need only look into materialistic science and we shall find, for example, how a few thousand years ago there were entirely different animals in Europe, how Europe looked quite different. The face of the earth is constantly changing, whence it comes that man is always entering into new conditions of existence. This is obvious to everyone. But when we describe the conditions of the spiritual world, people are prone to believe that what happened there when they died a thousand years before Christ, is exactly the same as what happens when they are reborn and die again today. Just as the physical plane changes, so do things change in the other world. When man entered into Devachan from an Egyptian or a Greek life, his sojourn there was something quite different from what it is today. Evolution occurs there also. It is only natural that we should describe the present conditions in Devachan, but these have changed. This could have been surmised from what was brought before us in the last lecture.

We have seen how, when we go back to the Atlantean time, man lived more in the spiritual world, how he moved about in the spiritual world during sleep. We found that this decreases steadily after that time. But if we go back far enough we find that man once lived entirely in the spiritual world. In ancient times the difference between sleep and death was not great. In primeval antiquity man had long periods of sleep, approximately as long as the time now consumed by an incarnation and the life after death. Through the fact that man descended to the physical plane, he became ever more entangled in this physical plane. We have shown how the Indian gazed into a high world and how, in Persia, man already attempted to conquer the physical plane. Man descended ever further, and in the Greco-Latin time there occurred a marriage between spirit and matter, between the spiritual worlds and the physical plane. The more man approached the middle of this last epoch, the more he learned to love the physical world and take an interest in it. As this occurred, everything that we call experiences between death and a new birth also changed.

If we go back to the first part of the post-Atlantean period, we find that men took little interest in the physical world. The initiates of that time could withdraw into lofty worlds, into the Devachanic worlds, and they communicated their experiences to the others. In the man who, with all his thoughts and all his senses, felt himself withdrawn into the true world, into his real home, the effect was that he took little interest in the conditions of the physical plane. But when he rose into Devachan, after having barely connected himself

with the physical world, he possessed in Devachan a comparatively clear consciousness. When such a man incarnated again in the Persian culture, he felt himself more connected with physical matter, and he lost some of the clarity of his consciousness in Devachan. In the Egypto-Chaldean time, when man began to feel some affection for the external physical world, his consciousness in Devachan already became clouded and shadowy. This consciousness was still of a nature higher than that of his consciousness in the physical world, but it declined steadily in degree and became ever darker up to the Greco-Latin time. During all this time the Devachanic consciousness became ever darker and more shadowy. It was not a dream consciousness; this was never the case. It was a consciousness of which man was fully aware. In the course of evolution it became darkened.

The mysteries existed principally in order to enable man again to illuminate his consciousness, rather than have only a shadowy consciousness in the spiritual world. Let us reflect that if there had been no mysteries there would have been no initiates, in which case man would have had an increasingly vague and shadowy consciousness in the spiritual worlds. Only through the fact that, parallel with the darkening of Devachanic consciousness, initiation into the mysteries continued, together with the acquisition of certain faculties with which selected persons could look into the spiritual worlds in full clarity — only through the fact that the initiates could speak of this in myths and sagas, was it possible for a ray of light to penetrate into the Devachanic consciousness between death and a new birth. But all those who had made themselves comfortable in the physical world experienced this fading away of consciousness in the spiritual world. It was no fairy tale but plain truth, that the initiates in the Eleusinian mysteries were able to have a special experience. The principle of initiation is that, even during his life, man can ascend to the spiritual worlds and learn what takes place there. The initiate of that time was actually able to learn directly from the shades in the spiritual world. The following is really the statement of an initiate: “Better a beggar on earth than a king in the **realm of shades.**”<sup>\*</sup> This statement is made out of the initiates' experience. We cannot take such things deeply enough, and we only understand them when we know the facts of the spiritual world.

Now let us bring into more concrete form what we touched upon abstractly yesterday. Had nothing occurred other than man's descent into the physical world, consciousness between death and a new birth would have grown ever darker. Ultimately men would have entirely lost their connection with the spiritual world. Now, however singular it may appear to those who are only slightly infected with some form of materialism, what I am about to say is true. Had nothing else intervened in human evolution, mankind would have succumbed to spiritual death. But there is a possibility of illuminating the consciousness between death and a new birth, and this illumination can be achieved either through initiation or (to a lower degree) through man's participating in the spiritual world during this life, having experiences that do not die out with his bodies, but remain connected with the eternal core of his being, even in the spiritual world. This was the concern of the mysteries and of all spiritual development. It was the concern of the great initiates before Christ and, above all, of the Being whom we call Christ. All other initiates were in a certain sense forerunners of the Christ; they were harbingers who pointed to the coming of the Christ.

The advent of the Christ-figure will now be described. Let us imagine a man who has never heard anything of the Christ, who has never been able to absorb the mysteries of the Gospel of John, who has never been able to say, "I will imitate the life and work of the Christ; I will try to take his precepts into my own being." If we add that the Christ had never approached this man, he would not be able to take with him into the spiritual world the treasure that the man of today must take with him if he is to avoid the darkening of his consciousness. What man takes with him as a picture of Christ is a force that brightens the consciousness after death, that saves man from the fate that all men would have had if Christ had not appeared. If Christ had not appeared, the human essence would have been maintained, but the consciousness after death could not have been illuminated. This is what gives real meaning to the advent of the Christ, that something was embodied into the core of man's being that has a wide significance. The event of Golgotha preserves man from spiritual death if he makes it one with his own being.

We should not think that the other great leaders of mankind did not have a similar significance. There is no question of claiming some exclusive dogma for Christianity. That would be an offense against true Christianity, for anyone acquainted with the facts knows that Christianity was also taught in the ancient mysteries. Such words as those of Augustine are profoundly true: "What is called the Christian religion today existed already among the ancients and was present with the beginnings of the human race. But when Christ appeared in the flesh the true religion, which was already in existence, received the name of Christian." What is important is not the name, but that we rightly understand the significance of the Christ impulse. Christ was the figure that appeared at the lowest point in evolution, but Buddha, Hermes, and the other great beings were in complete possession of the prophetic consciousness that the Christ would come, that he lived in them.

We can see this clearly when we study the figure of Buddha, and we must be quite clear as to what he was. What was Buddha, in reality? Here we must touch on something that can be said only among students of the science of the spirit. It is customary for people, even for theosophists, to conceive the mysteries of reincarnation in much too simple a way. One should not imagine that a soul that is embodied today in its three sheaths was embodied in the same way in a foregoing incarnation, and again in one before that, always according to the same scheme. The secrets are much more complicated. Although H. P. Blavatsky took great pains to show her intimate pupils how complicated these secrets were, the matter is still not rightly understood today. People think simply that a soul goes into a body ever and again. But it is not so simple. Often we cannot fit a historical figure into such a scheme if we wish to understand it correctly. We must go about the matter in a much more complicated way.

Already in Atlantis we meet beings who were among men as our fellows are today, but whom man saw and learned to know when he was in the spiritual world, severed from the body. We have already pointed out how man learned to know Thor, Zeus, Wotan, Baldur as actual companions. By day he lived in the physical world, but in the other condition of consciousness he learned to know spiritual beings who were going through a stage of evolution different from his. In this primeval period of the earth man did not yet have so solid a body as today; there was as yet nothing like a bony skeleton. The Atlantean body could be seen with physical eyes only to a certain extent. But there were beings who descended only so far as to incarnate in an etheric body. Then there were beings who still

embodied themselves at that time, when the air was permeated by water-vapors. When man still lived in the water-fog atmosphere, these incarnations were possible for them. Such a figure was the later Wotan, for example. He said to himself, "If man incarnates in this fluid matter, then I can also." Such a being assumed a human form and moved about in the physical world. But as the earth condensed and man took on ever denser forms, Wotan said, "No, I shall not go into this dense matter." Then he remained in invisible worlds, in worlds removed from the earth.

This was the general case with the divine spiritual beings. But from then on, they could do something else. They could enter into a sort of connection with men who approached them, who evolved upward from below. We may imagine it thus. Man's evolutionary course was such that he was approaching his lowest point of development. Up to this point the gods had proceeded in company with men. Now they took another path, which was invisible for men on the physical plane. But men who lived according to the directions of the initiates, thereby purifying their finer bodies, approached them in a certain way. A man who was incarnated in the flesh, if he purified himself, could do this in such a way that he could be overshadowed by such a being, who could not descend as far as the physical body. The physical body would have been too coarse for such a being. The result for such a man was that the astral and etheric bodies were permeated by a higher being, which had no other human form for itself but could enter into another being and proclaim itself through this other being.

When we are familiar with this phenomenon, we shall not regard incarnation as such a simple matter. There can perfectly well be a person who is the reincarnation of an earlier man, who has developed himself so far and purified his three bodies to such an extent that he is now a vessel for a higher being. Buddha became such a vessel for Wotan. The same being who was called Wotan in the Germanic myths, appeared again as Buddha. Buddha and Wotan are even related linguistically.

So we can say that much of what was in the mysteries of the Atlantean time continued in what the Buddha was able to announce. This is in harmony with the fact that what the Buddha experienced is something that the gods had experienced in those spiritual spheres, and that men also had experienced when they were still in those spheres. As the teaching of Wotan thus appeared again, it was a doctrine that paid little attention to the physical plane, emphasizing that the physical plane is a place of woe, and that redemption from it is important. Much of the Wotan-being spoke in the Buddha. Hence it is that stragglers from Atlantis have shown the deepest understanding for the Buddha-teaching. Among the Asiatic population there are races that have remained at the Atlantean level, although externally they must, of course, move ahead with the earth evolution. Among the Mongolian peoples much of Atlantis has remained. They are stragglers from the old population of Atlantis. The stationary character in the Mongolian population is a heritage from Atlantis. Therefore the teachings of the Buddha are especially serviceable to such peoples, and Buddhism has made great strides among them.

The world moves onward, following its course. One who can look deeply into the evolution of the world does not make choices, does not say that he has more inclination for this or that. He says that what religion a people has is a spiritual necessity. The European population, because it has ensnared itself in the physical world, finds it impossible to feel its way into Buddhism, to identify itself with the innermost teachings of the Buddha. Buddhism could never become a religion for all of humanity. For him



who can see, there is no sympathy or antipathy here, but only a judgment in accordance with the facts. It would be an error to wish to spread Christianity from a center in Asia, where other peoples are still settled, and Buddhism would be equally false for the European population. No religious view is right if it is not suited to the innermost needs of the time, and such a view will never be able to give a cultural impulse. These are things that we must grasp if we want to understand all the real connections.

But one should not believe that the historical appearance of the Buddha immediately reveals all that lies within it. If I were to expound all this, I would need several hours. As yet we are far from having unraveled the complications of the historical Buddha.

Something still lived in the Buddha. This is not only a being who came over out of the Atlantean time and incarnated in him who incidentally was also a human Buddha. In addition to this something else was contained in him, something of which he could say, "I cannot yet comprehend this. It is something that ensouls me, but I only participate in it." This is the Christ-being. This had already ensouled the great prophets. It was a well-known being in the more ancient mysteries, and everywhere and always men had pointed to him who was to come.

And he came! But again he came in such a way that he accommodated himself to the historical necessities that lie behind evolution. Without special preparation he could not incarnate himself in a physical body. It was still possible for him to incarnate in a sort of subconsciousness in the Buddha. But he could incarnate to live on the earth only if a physical body, and etheric body, and an astral body were specially prepared for him. The Christ had the greatest powers, but he could incarnate only if, through another being, a physical, an etheric, and an astral body had been completely cleansed and purified. Thus the incarnation of the Christ could occur only if another being appeared who had developed himself to this point. This was Jesus of Nazareth. He had proceeded so far in his evolution that he was able, during his life, to purify his physical, etheric, and astral bodies in such a way that it was possible for him, in the thirtieth year of his life, to abandon these bodies, yet to leave them capable of life, usable for a higher being.

Often, when I have stated that a high stage of development was necessary for Jesus to be able to sacrifice his bodies, people have made a strange objection: "But that is not a sacrifice; nothing could be more beautiful! One cannot speak of a sacrifice when it is a question of turning over his bodies to such a high Being!" Yes, it is beautiful, and the sacrifice is not great when one looks at it abstractly; but only try to do the deed. Everyone would like to make the sacrifice, but only let them try it. One must have extraordinary forces if one is to purify the bodies in such a way as to leave them while they are capable of life, and to attain these forces, many sacrifices are necessary. To be able to do this, Jesus of Nazareth had to be an extraordinarily high individuality. The Gospel of John indicates where Jesus abandoned his physical, etheric, and astral bodies and entered into the spiritual world, and where the Christ-being entered into the threefold corporeality.

This happened at the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan. At this moment something significant occurred in the corporeality of Jesus of Nazareth. For the materialistic mind, what I now say is bound to be an abomination. Something special occurred in the physical body of Jesus of Nazareth. If we wish to understand what occurred at the moment of the baptism, when the Christ entered into Jesus, we must turn our attention to something that will appear singular, but is nevertheless true.

In the course of human evolution, the various organs have developed bit by bit, gradually working out their form. We have seen how, when the organs had reached the level of the hips, certain structures and functions appeared in man. Then, too, as the human individuality became more self-reliant, a hardening of the bony system set in. The more independent man became, the more his bony system hardened and the greater became the power of death. We must bear this in mind if we are to understand the following in the right way. Whence comes it that man must die and the body must completely disintegrate? It comes from the fact that in the human body something can be burned, even down to the bones. Fire has power over the human bone-substance. Man has no power, at least no conscious power, over his bones. This power still lies outside man's abilities. In the moment when, at the baptism in Jordan, the Christ drew into the body of Jesus of Nazareth, in that moment the bony system of this being became something entirely different from what it is in other men. This was something that had never happened before and has not happened again to this day. With the Christ-being there entered into the Jesus-being something that had power over the forces that burn up the bones. Today the building up of the bones has not yet been placed within man's discretion. But this power reached right down into the bones. The conscious power of the Christ-being extended into the bones. This is part of the meaning of the baptism by John. Therewith something was implanted in the earth that can be called the supremacy over death, for death first appeared in the world with the bones. Through the fact that power over the bones entered the human body, the victory over death also came into the world. Here a deep mystery is expressed. Something in the highest degree holy entered into the bony system of Jesus of Nazareth through the Christ. Therefore it was not to be touched. For this reason the scripture had to be fulfilled: "A bone of him shall **not be broken.**"† That would have allowed human power to meddle in divine forces. Here we are gazing into a deep mystery of human evolution.

Here we come to a significant concept of esoteric Christianity, which can show us how this Christianity is permeated with the highest truths. We come to the remainder of what confronts us in the baptism. Through the fact that the Christ-being took possession of the three bodies in which the ego-being of Jesus formerly abode, a Being was bound up with the earth that had earlier had its dwelling-place on the sun. It had formerly been bound up with the earth until the moment when the sun departed from the earth. At that time the Christ also departed, and from then on he could exercise his power upon the earth only from outside, in the moment of the baptism, the high Christ-spirit again united himself in the full sense with the earth. Formerly he worked from outside, overshadowing the prophets and working in the mysteries. Now he was actually incarnated in a physical human body on the earth. If a being had been able to look down for thousands of years from a remote point in the universe, such a being as could see not only the physical earth but also its spiritual streams, its astral and etheric bodies, it would have seen significant events in the moment of the baptism by John, and in the moment when the blood flowed from Christ's wounds on Golgotha. The earth's astral body was profoundly changed thereby. At this moment it took up something different; it took on different colors. A new force was implanted in the earth. What earlier had worked from without, again became united with the earth, and thereby the attractive power between sun and earth will grow so strong that sun and earth will again unite, and man will unite with the sun-spirits. It

was the Christ who gave the possibility that the earth can again unite with the sun and be in the bosom of the Godhead.

This is the event that occurred, and its meaning. We had to expound this in order to understand what entered into the earth with the Christ. Through this we can grasp how, through union with the Christ, man can absorb something by which his consciousness will again be illuminated after death. If we keep this in mind we shall also be able to grasp how there is evolution for the period between death and a new birth. Now let us ask for whose sake all this took place.

At first, man lived in the bosom of the Godhead. Then he descended to the physical plane. Had he remained above, he would never have achieved his present consciousness of self. He would never have received an ego. Only in the physical body could he kindle the consciousness of self in its bright clarity. He had to encounter external objects and become able to distinguish himself from the objects; he had to descend into the physical world. Only for the sake of man's ego did it happen that man descended. In respect to his ego man stems from the gods. This ego descended out of the spiritual world; it was forged on the physical body so that it might become bright and clear. It is precisely the hardened matter of the human body that has given man his self-conscious ego, that has made it possible for him to attain knowledge. But it also chained him to the earth-mass, to the rock-mass.

Before he achieved his ego, man had physical body, etheric body, and astral body. As the ego gradually evolved in these three bodies, it transformed them. We must be quite clear that all man's higher members work on the physical body. The physical body is as it is because the etheric, astral, and ego work on it. In a certain way all the organs of the physical body are as they are because the higher members have also been altered.

Through the domination of the astral body, the backward beings became the different animal forms — the birds, for example. Through the fact that the ego became ever more conscious of itself, it also altered the astral body. We have already said that men separated themselves into groups. What we call the apocalyptic beasts are types, in which this or that higher member has the upper hand. The ego gained predominance in the man-form. All the organs are adapted to man's higher members. When the ego entered into the astral body and wholly permeated it, certain organs took form in man and in the animals that branched off later. Thus, for example, a particular organ may stem from the fact that an ego made its entry upon the earth. On the moon, no ego was connected with the beings in human evolution. Certain organs are connected with this development: the gall and the liver. The gall is the physical expression of the astral body. It is not bound up with the ego, but the ego works on the astral body, and from this the forces work on the gall.

Now let us draw together the entire picture that the initiate made so clear to the Egyptian. The self-conscious man has been shackled to the earth-body. Imagine the man fettered to the earth-rock, fettered to the physical body — and in the course of evolution something arises that gnaws at his immortality. Think of the functions that have called forth the liver. They have arisen through the fact that the body was chained to the rocks of earth. The astral body gnaws at it.

This is the picture that was given to the pupil in Egypt and made its way into Greece as the saga of Prometheus. We must not lay rough hands upon such a myth. We must not rob the butterfly of the dust on its wings. We must leave the dust on its wings. We must leave the dew on the blossoms instead of twisting and torturing such pictures. We should

not say that Prometheus means this or that. We should try to present the real occult facts, and then try to understand the pictures that have arisen out of the occult facts and have passed over into the consciousness of man.

The Egyptian initiate led his pupil up to the point where he could grasp man's ego-development. Such a picture was intended to shape his spirit. But the pupil was not to seize the facts with heavy hands. The picture was to stand bright and livingly before him, and the initiate did not wish to press dry banal concepts into the truths he could give. He wanted to present truth in pictures. Poetry has done much for the Prometheus saga, beautifying and ornamenting it. We should add nothing to the occult facts, but leave this delicate embellishment to the artist.

We must still point to something else. Man, when he arrived on earth, was not yet endowed with the ego. Before the ego was secreted into the astral body, other forces had possession of this body. Then the light-flowing astral body was permeated by the ego. Before the ego entered therein, the astral forces of divine-spiritual beings had been sent into man from outside. The astral body was also present, but illuminated by divine-spiritual beings. The astral body was pure and bright, and it flowed around what was present as the rudiments of the physical and etheric bodies. It flowed around and through these, and was quite pure. But egoism entered with the advent of the ego, and the astral body was darkened and lost its golden flow. This was lost more and more, until man had descended to the lowest point of the physical plane in the Greco-Latin time.

Then men had to consider how they could win back the pure flow of the astral body, and there arose in the Eleusinian mysteries what was known as the search for the original purity of the astral body. One aim of the Eleusinian mysteries, and also of the Egyptians, was to recapture the astral body in its pristine golden flow. The quest for the Golden Fleece was one of the probationary initiations of the Egyptian initiations, and this has been preserved for us in the wonderful saga of the voyage of Jason and the Argonauts. We have seen the development. When the form of the lower organs still resembled the boats of which we have spoken, the astral body in the water-earth still had a golden sheen. In the water-earth, man's astral body was permeated with golden light. The search for the astral body is portrayed in the voyage of the Argonauts. In a refined and subtle way we must bring the quest for the Golden Fleece into connection with the Egyptian myth.

External historical facts are linked with spiritual facts. One should not believe that this is mere symbol. The voyage of the Argonauts actually took place, just as the Trojan War actually took place. Outer events are the physiognomy for inner events; all these are historical events. For the Greek neophyte the historical fact took place anew inwardly: the journey after the Golden Fleece, the achieving of the pure astral body.

This is what we wanted to bring before our souls today. On this basis we shall become acquainted with other things from the mysteries, and then we shall find how the Egyptian mysteries are connected with the life of today.

\* These are the words of Achilles in Book XI of the *Odyssey*.

† The reference is to the Gospel of John, XIX:36.

# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 11

*The Ancient Egyptian Doctrine of Evolution.*

*The Cosmic View of the Organs*

*and their Coarsening in Modern Times.*

*September 13, 1908*

GA 106

AT various points in this cycle of lectures we have tried to present the facts of post-Atlantean evolution, and we have indicated that in our time there is a kind of repetition or resurrection of the experiences that mankind went through during the Egypto-Chaldean culture. It has been stated that the Indian period will repeat itself in the seventh period, the Persian in the sixth, the Egyptian in our time, and that the fourth, the Greco-Latin, stands by itself, so to say. Now, connecting the Egyptian time and our own, we shall try to indicate how a certain recrudescence of outer and inner experiences is to be seen when we bring our time into connection with the Egyptian.

We have seen that in the spiritual worlds there exist mysterious forces, to which there correspond certain other forces in the physical world which effectuate the appearance of these repetitions. Thus do these resurrections of outer and inner experiences originate. In the middle between these stands the Greco-Latin period, during which the Christ appeared upon the earth and the Mystery of Golgotha took place. It was also pointed out that not only the external evolutionary relationships on the physical plane had changed, but that also the relationships in the spiritual world had become different. I have described how the soul was in the Egyptian time, when it looked upon the gigantic pyramids, how different it was when it reincarnated in the Greco-Latin period, and how different it is in our time. We have seen that not only does this occur, but that also for the period between death and a new birth, in kamaloka and Devachan, there takes place a sort of progress or transformation, so that the soul does not experience the same thing when it enters into kamaloka or Devachan from an Egyptian, a Greek, or a modern body.

Externally the world of the physical plane alters, but progress also occurs in the spiritual world so that the soul always experiences something different there.

It is primarily from the standpoint of this "beyond" that today we shall consider the mighty event of the Christ's appearance on our earth. We shall approach in a much deeper way the question, What significance has the advent of the Christ on our earth? What significance has the Christ's appearance for the dead souls, for the life on the other side, the spiritual side, of existence? For this purpose we must explore many different things that affected souls in the Egyptian period both within and beyond the physical plane. From our studies of the earlier great epochs of earth evolution we can derive that the Egypto-Chaldean period furnishes a mirroring in knowledge and experience of what happened in the Lemurian time, of what happened on the earth during and after the departure of the moon. What men experienced then, they experienced again as a memory in what the Egyptian initiates gave them. The Egyptian initiate himself experienced during his initiation events that man otherwise experiences only when he passes through the portal of death. To be sure, the Egyptian initiate experienced this in a different way than does the ordinary person who dies. He experienced it differently and in a much fuller

way. It will be well for us now, as a basis for these considerations, to describe the essence of Egyptian initiation in a few words. This initiation is essentially different from that of the time after Christ, for through his advent initiation was fundamentally altered.

We have seen that men had to descend further and further into the material world, gaining increasing interest in the physical world. In the same proportion, however, the experience in the spiritual world between death and a new birth became more pale and shadowy. The livelier man's consciousness became in the physical world, the more he enjoyed being there, the, more he discovered the laws of the physical plane, the dimmer his consciousness in the spiritual world became. The consciousness in the spiritual world reached its low point in the Greco-Latin time. But even before man had fully descended into these depths of matter, it had become impossible for him, within the physical body, to experience completely what one must experience if, during the period between birth and death, one seeks to gain insight into the spiritual world.

The initiation event may be briefly described, and it is the same for initiations before and after Christ, although the conclusion is different. Initiation is nothing other than man's gaining the capacity of developing organs of vision in his higher bodies. Today man sees darkness when it is night; he is in the dark. This is because man has no organs of perception in his astral body. As the eyes and ears have formed themselves into physical organs of perception, so supersensible organs must be developed out of the higher members and assimilated into them. This occurs through certain exercises of concentration and meditation being given to the pupil. These exercises are performed after the pupil has first surveyed the knowledge of the spiritual worlds that can be given by the initiates. It has always been the case that the pupils had to learn what we today would call elementary theosophy. Much more strongly than today it was required that the pupils become acquainted with the truth in a regular progression. When there was enough theoretical preparation, and when the pupils were sufficiently mature, the exercises were given to them. These exercises have a definite purpose.

When in his daily life man lets the impressions of the senses work upon him, these impressions bring certain fruits for the ordinary life on the physical plane. These impressions pass over into the astral body, which in turn transmits them to the ego. But these impressions are such that man cannot hold them fast when, with his astral body and ego, he slips out of his physical and etheric bodies during the night. What man receives in this way from the physical plane does not penetrate into him so strongly that he can retain it as a permanent impression. But when a person performs the exercises of meditation and concentration, these are so adjusted, in accordance with thousands of years of experience, that the astral body no longer loses the impressions, but retains them when it slips out of the physical body in the night. Through the exercises the astral body receives plastic impressions, which shape and member it as the physical organs have been membered. Thus the astral body is worked on for certain periods through these exercises. Thereby the supersensible organs of vision are imprinted on the astral body. It would be a long time, however, before man could use his organs of vision if they were imprinted only into his astral body. Something further must take place so that the astral body, when it returns into the etheric body, may stamp upon that body, like the impression of a seal, what has taken shape within itself. Only when what has taken shape in the astral body imprints itself upon the etheric body, only then does the illumination take place that makes it possible for the person to see the spiritual world as he sees the physical world today.

Here we can begin to grasp what kind of an impulse we have received through the appearance of Christ on earth. In the old initiations the astral body had the strength to work upon the etheric body only when the etheric body had been lifted out of the physical body. This was because at that time the etheric body, had it remained connected with the physical body, would have exerted so much resistance that it could not have received the imprint of what the astral body had formed within itself. In the ancient initiations, therefore, for a period of three and a half days, the candidate was put into a deathlike condition in which the physical body was deserted by the etheric body while this latter, freed from the physical, united itself with the astral body. The astral then stamped into the etheric all that had been built into the astral through the exercises. When the Hierophant again awakened the candidate, the latter was illuminated. He knew what took place in the spiritual world, for he had made a remarkable journey during the three and a half days. He had been led through the fields of the spiritual world. He had seen what went on there, and he knew from direct experience what another person could learn only through revelation. A person thus initiated could, out of his own experiences, give knowledge of the beings who were in the spiritual world, beyond the physical plane. When man had not yet descended so far into the physical plane, he could learn what was experienced in the spiritual world. There the candidate became acquainted with the true form of Osiris, Isis, and Horus. The initiate saw the contents of the myths during this journey into the spiritual world. He could then transmit this to other persons when he had dressed it as myth or saga. He saw all this; he saw in what a special way the Osiris influences had shaped themselves when the moon had withdrawn from the earth; he saw how Horus issued from Isis and Osiris; he saw the four human types, the bull, the lion, the eagle, and the true man. He also saw what happened to man between death and a new birth. The Sphinx appeared to him as a real form; he experienced it. He could say, "Oh, I have seen the Sphinx, man as he was when he still had an animal-like form, and his etheric body — similar to the human — only projected out of this animal-like form!" The Sphinx was a real experience for the initiate. He even heard the question of the Sphinx with its enigmatic content. He saw how the human body prepared itself out of the animality, at a time when the head was only an etheric form, the ether-head of the Sphinx. This was truth for the initiate, as were also the older forms of the gods, who had, so to speak, taken a different course of evolution.

It has recently been said that certain beings pursued a different path in evolution. The individuality of Wotan, for example, takes such a different course. Up to a certain stage it travels together with man, but then it does not descend so deeply. Man descends further into matter and only later will he again join these beings, who are completing their evolution in the earth-time. We have seen that a time came when Wotan no longer walked on our earth. Such beings, however, were not like Osiris and Isis. These latter were beings who had branched off still earlier, who completed their evolution on a higher level in full invisibility. These forms went through their special experiences.

Let us look back into the Lemurian period. At that time the etheric was not yet manlike in its form. In his etheric body man was still similar to the animals, and the gods who descended then had to accommodate themselves to the same animal forms in which man lived on the earth. If a being wishes to enter into a certain plane, it must fulfill the conditions of that plane. This is also the case here. The divine beings who were connected with the earth during the departure of the sun and moon, who were on the

earth, had to take on a form that was possible at that time, an animal-like form. And since the Egyptian religious views present in a certain way a recapitulation of the Lemurian time, the Egyptian initiate looked upon the gods, Osiris and Isis for example, as having animal-like forms. He still saw the higher gods with animal heads. Therefore from an occult view it was quite correct when such forms were represented with the head of a hawk or a ram in accordance with what the initiates knew. The gods were portrayed in the forms they had when they walked the earth. The outer images could only resemble what the initiate saw, but they were faithfully reproduced. The various divine beings changed a good deal. The forms in Lemuria were different from those in Atlantis. In those times beings went through much more rapid changes than they do now. In addition, these forms were still filled with spirit. When one looks back on them one sees them in their three bodies, but illuminated and rayed through by the astral and etheric light. This was accurately portrayed in the pictures. Modern men may laugh over the forms that were represented, but they do not know how **realistic they were.**\*

There was one being who performed special services in that period of human evolution when, through the cosmic-tellurian powers, the combining intellect was being organized in man. At that time the physical brain was prepared in such a way that man was able to develop intelligence later. This capacity was implanted in man and reckoned as one of the deeds of the god Manu. What was worked into man as intelligence was connected with this. If today we examine a person in whom a well-formed ability for judging and combining is present, if we examine him clairvoyantly, we find a strong expression and reflection of this fact in a green glittering and shining of the astral body, of the astral aura. The capacity for combining shows itself in green colors in the aura, especially in those who have keen mathematical understanding. The ancient Egyptian initiates saw the god who implanted the faculty of intelligence in men, and in portraying him they **painted him green**† because they saw the green shimmering of his luminous astral and etheric form. Today this is still the color that glitters in the aura when the person's intelligence is stirred. Much time could be devoted to these connections if people really wanted to study this wonderful realism of the forms of the Egyptian gods. These representations of the divine forms, through the fact that they were so realistic and not at all arbitrary, had magical power; and one who could see more deeply would perceive that many mysteries were present in the coloring of these ancient forms. Here one can, see deep into the workings of human evolution.

We have seen how what the initiates saw was retained in the Sphinx. Of course, this was not retained in a photographic way, yet it was realistic. But the forms were always changing. The form of the Sphinx gives an image of how man once looked. His present form has been shaped by man himself. We know that through evolution on the earth various animal forms have been split off. What is an animal form? It is a form that has remained static, while man proceeded further in evolution. In these forms we see arrested stages of evolution, to the extent that these forms have become physical. In the spiritual something else has taken place. What man is spiritually has nothing to do with his physical forebears. Only the physical is connected with that. Man does not descend from the animals; the animal forms have remained unchanged. In man, however, the shape has been transformed to a certain level. The animals are previous physical human forms fallen into decadence. The situation is different in another realm of evolution. Not only have the physical forms of the animals remained unchanged, but also the rudiments of the



etheric and astral forms as well. Just as the lion, at the time when it split off, looked quite different than now, so certain soul-spiritual forms degenerate in the course of time when they remain at a particular stage. It is a law of the spiritual world that anything that stands still on the same level of spirit or soul becomes more and more decadent.

If, for example, the Sphinx stands still, it degenerates and receives a form that is like a caricature of what it originally was. The Sphinx has been preserved in this way on the astral plane up to our own time. To those who, as initiates or in some other lawful manner, penetrate into the higher worlds, these decadent forms have little interest, being only decayed vagabonds in the spiritual world. But when, in exceptional cases, persons equipped with inferior clairvoyant gifts are led into the astral world, such decadent forms approach them. The true Sphinx approached Oedipus, but it has not died even yet. Up to today it has not died; it only approaches man in another form. When persons who have remained standing at a certain stage of evolution, among the peasants perhaps, rest in the fields at midday in the hot glow of the summer sun, and fall asleep, they may have what could be called a latent sun-stroke. Through such an impact on the physical body, the astral and etheric are loosened from a part of the physical. Then such persons are translated to the astral plane and they see this last decadent offspring of the Sphinx. This apparition is called by different names. In certain regions it is called the midday woman. Many people in the country will recount that they have met the midday woman. She appears in many regions under many different names. She is a descendent of the ancient Sphinx, and as the ancient Sphinx put questions to the men who experienced her, so this midday woman also asks questions. You may hear it told how the midday woman asks endless questions of the men whom she meets. This torment by questions is a relic of the old Sphinx. The midday woman has grown out of the ancient Sphinx. This indicates how evolution proceeds beyond the physical world, how whole tribes of spiritual beings decline until at last they are mere shadows of what they were originally. Here we see another characteristic of the way in which things are connected in evolution. We have mentioned this so it may be seen how manifold evolution is.

Now, to understand everything correctly, we must give some thought to the fact that in the course of time man has organized the fourth member, the ego, into what he brought with him at the beginning of earth evolution as his physical, etheric, and astral bodies. I have shown how this ego permeates the astral body, claims it for itself so that it dominates it as higher spiritual beings formerly dominated it. It is a deed of the higher beings that this ego was implanted in the astral body. If evolution had proceeded further in accordance with the views of certain higher beings, it would have been a different evolution from what has actually taken place. However, certain beings remained unchanged. They had not become capable of collaborating in implanting the ego in the astral body.

When man appeared on the earth he consisted of the physical, etheric, and astral bodies, all of which he shaped further. Now he was endowed with egohood by certain sublime beings who had their dwellings mainly on the sun and moon. These beings collaborated, so to speak, on the ego. But there were certain other beings who, during the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions, had not raised themselves so far that they could take part in this organizing of the ego. They could do only what they had learned on the moon. They had to limit themselves to working on the astral body, hence there was implanted in man's astral body something that did not belong to his noblest qualities, did not come from the

higher sublime beings but from the retarded intruders who had remained behind. Had these beings done this on the moon, it would have been something lofty. But through the fact that they did this on earth as stragglers, they worked into the astral body something that placed it lower than it would have been otherwise. It became endowed with instincts and passions, and with egoism. We must heed this fact that man was influenced from two sides, that he received impacts in his astral body through which the latter became debased.

Such a thing does not influence the astral body alone. Man is so constituted that the astral body transmits such an influence to the etheric body, and this again to the physical body. The astral body is active in all parts, hence these spirits work on the etheric and physical through the astral body. Had these spiritual beings not been able to exercise such an influence, something would not have appeared in man at that time. This is an enhanced selfhood in man, an increased ego-feeling. What this caused in the etheric body was all that appeared as darkening of judgment, as the possibility of error. All that the astral body accomplished in the physical body is the basis of what appeared as illness. That is the spiritual cause of illnesses in man; among animals, becoming ill is something different. We see how illness has been transplanted into man; illness is connected with the causes we have indicated here. And since the physical and etheric bodies are connected with the facts of heredity, so the principle of illness proceeds through the hereditary line. Let us again emphasize, however, that we must distinguish between inner illnesses and external injuries. If a man is run over, that is something entirely different. Also, certain internal illnesses can be connected with external causes; for example, if one eats something that upsets the stomach, that is something external.

Before the above-mentioned beings gained influence over man in the course of evolution, he was so organized that he reacted far more powerfully than today toward evil pressing upon him from without. But in proportion to the influence that they gained over him, he lost the instincts he had possessed for what was not right. Formerly, man's whole organization was such that he had fine instincts as to what was not right for him.

Substances that are taken into the stomach today and there cause illness were then rejected simply through instinct. Gazing backward in time we come to periods when man stood in a delicate relationship to the forces of his environment, reacting sensitively to the forces in his surroundings. In this respect man grew ever less sure, less capable of rejecting what was not serviceable to him.

This is connected with something else. As man grew more inward, something occurred in the world outside; what we know as the three other kingdoms of nature arose. The three kingdoms around us arose gradually. At first, only man was present. Then the animal kingdom was added; then the plant kingdom, and finally the mineral kingdom. If we were to look back on the primeval earth when the sun was still united with it, we would find a human being in and out of whom all the substances of the physical world moved. Man still lived in the womb of the gods: everything still agreed with him, so to say. Then he had to leave behind what was precipitated as the animal kingdom. Had he carried this with him, he would not have been able to develop further. He had to expel the animal kingdom, and later the plant kingdom. What exists outside in the animals and plants is nothing other than temperaments, passions, certain traits of men that they had to expel. And when man formed his bones he expelled the mineral world. After a certain length of time, man could look upon his environment and say, "Formerly I could endure you;

formerly you went in and out of me as air now does. When I still lived in the water-earth I could endure you; I digested you. Now you are outside, and I can no longer endure you, no longer digest you.” As man became enclosed in his skin, as he became a self-contained separate being, he saw, in the same proportion, these kingdoms around him. If these beings had not worked on man, something else would not have happened. As long as man is healthy, he will stand in a normal relationship to the outer world. When he has disturbed forces within him, these must be driven back by the powers that man has. If his powers are too weak for this, if he cannot provide the normal resistance, then something must be infused into him from outside. Something must be implanted into him to furnish the resistance that he still had at the time the forces from outside breathed in and out of him. It may be necessary, when a person is ill, that the forces of a metal, for example, should be injected into him. It is because man was in connection with metals earlier, in connection with plant juices and similar things, that we are justified in applying them as medicaments.

When the Egyptian initiates could look back over the whole course of world evolution, they knew precisely how the individual organs of the human body corresponded with the substances of the external world. They knew which plants and which metals had to be administered to the patient. A great treasure of occult wisdom in the domain of medicine will be raised to light one day, wisdom that mankind formerly possessed. Not only are many things bungled in medicine today, but often special healing powers are ascribed to this or that in a one-sided way. The true occultist will never be one-sided. How often must we reject efforts that would make a compromise with the science of the spirit! 'the latter cannot support a one-sided method: on the contrary, it seeks to establish diversified research. It is one-sided to say, “Away with all poisons!” People who say this do not know the true healing forces. Naturally many stupid things are done today, for the professionals in most cases cannot grasp all the relationships, and a certain tyranny in medical science excludes what can proceed from occultism. If there were no campaigns against the oldest methods of medicine, against the injection of metals, there could be a reform. With modern experimentation nothing is discovered that can hold its own against the traditional remedies, which only a lay ignorance can oppose as strongly as is often done. The ancient Egyptian initiates excelled in these secrets. They had an insight into the real relationships of evolution, and if today certain physicians speak in a condescending way of Egyptian medicine, you can soon tell from their tone that they know nothing about it. Here we touch upon something in the Egyptian initiation that should be known. It was such things as these that went over into the folk-consciousness. Now we must reflect that the same souls that are in our bodies today were also incarnated in that ancient time. Let us remember that these souls saw all the images that the initiates made of what they knew through vision in the spiritual world. We know that what a soul takes into itself from incarnation to incarnation, ever and again bears fruits in one or another way. Even though man cannot remember it, it is still true that what lives in the soul today lives in it because it was deposited there earlier. The soul is formed both within and beyond the physical life. When it was between birth and death, when it was between death and a new birth, Egyptian ideas were influential and modern ideas have proceeded from these. Today certain definite ideas are developing out of the Egyptian ideas. What is called Darwinism today did not arise because of external reasons. We are the same souls who, in Egypt, received the pictures of the animal forms of man's forebears. The old views

have awakened again, but man has descended more deeply into the material world. He remembers that it was said to him, "Our ancestors were animal forms." But he does not remember that these forms were gods. This is the psychological basis for the emergence of Darwinism. The figures of the gods appear in materialistic form. Thus there is an intimate spiritual connection between the old and the new, between the third and the fifth cultural periods.

Now it is not the whole destiny of our time that man should see in material form what previously he saw in the spiritual. That would have been our fate had not the Christ-impulse entered into human evolution in the meantime. This was not significant only for life on the physical plane. Today we shall see what significance the events of Palestine had for the other side of life, where the souls of the Egyptians sojourned after death. Here on the physical plane occurred the things we have already discussed. But the three years of Christ's activity, like the event of Golgotha and the baptism in Jordan, were of significance equally to the souls incarnated on earth and to those who were in the condition between death and a new birth.

Let us recall the fact that the external physical expression for the ego is the blood. What works physically in the forces of the blood is the physical expression of the ego. In the course of evolution too strong a measure of egoism made its appearance, which means that the egohood impressed the blood too powerfully. This "surplus" of egoism had to be expelled again if spirituality was to be restored to mankind. On Golgotha the impulse was given for this expulsion of egoism. In the same moment when the Redeemer's blood flowed on Golgotha, still other events were taking place in the spiritual world. The Redeemer's blood flowed out in the material world, while the superfluity of egoism passed over into the spiritual world. The superfluous egoism had to vanish from the world, and the impulse for this was given on Golgotha. In place of egoism, universal human love entered into mankind.

But what was this event of Golgotha? What was this event of a three-and-a-half-day death on the physical plane? It was the enactment on the physical plane of what also had been experienced in spiritual development by one who was initiated. He was dead for three and a half days. One who had gone through this symbolical death could say to mankind, "There is a conquering of death. There is something eternal in the world." Death was conquered by the initiates, and they felt themselves to be victors over death. The event of Golgotha signifies that what had often taken place in the mysteries of ancient times became, for once, an historical event: the conquering of death through the spirit. This was taken out into the world on the physical plane. If we let this work upon our souls, we sense what happened with the Mystery of Golgotha as something new, but also as an image of the ancient initiation. We feel this unique event entering into the world historically.

What was the consequence of this? What could the initiate do? Out of his own experiences he could say to his fellow men, "I know there is a spiritual world, that man can live in the spiritual world. I have lived in it for three and a half days and bring you tidings thence. I bring you the gifts of the spiritual world." These gifts were useful and healing to mankind.

On the other hand, one who had lived as an initiate in the physical world could bring nothing similar to the dead. To the dead he could only say, "All that happens on the physical plane is so ordered that man ought to be redeemed." Thus it was when, in the

spiritual world, the ancient initiates held converse with the dead, to whom they could give only the teaching that “Life is suffering; only redemption will bring healing.” Thus did Buddha still teach. Thus did the initiate teach both the living and the dead. But through the event of Golgotha death was conquered in the physical world, and this signified something for those who had died and were in the spiritual world. Those who take up Christ in their innermost parts illuminate again their shadowy life in Devachan. The more man experiences here of the Christ, the brighter it becomes over there in the spiritual world. After the blood had flowed from the wounds of the Redeemer — this is something that belongs to the mysteries of Christianity — the Christ-spirit descended to the dead. This is one of the deepest mysteries of mankind. Christ descended to the dead and said to them, “Over there something has happened, of which it cannot be said that what happens there is not so important as what happens here. What man brings with him into the spiritual realm as a consequence of this event is a gift that can be brought out of the physical world into the spiritual world.” These are the tidings that Christ brought to the dead in the three and a half days. He descended to the dead in order to redeem them. In the ancient initiation one could say that the fruits of the spiritual were reaped in the physical. Now an event occurred in the physical world that produced its fruits and did its work in the spiritual world. One can say that it was not in vain that man completed his descent to the physical plane. He completed it so that here in the physical world fruits could be produced for the spiritual world. That these fruits could be produced came to pass through Christ, who was present among the living and among the dead, who gave an impulse so intense and so powerful that it shook the whole world.

\* Fantastic speculation on the reason why the Egyptians worshipped animal-headed gods began in classical times. See Plutarch, *On Isis and Osiris*, Sec. 72.

† For pictures of the Green Osiris, see the frontispieces in both volumes of Budge, *Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection*, and in Volumes II, X, and XII of Maspero and Rappaport, *History of Egypt* (London, Grolier, 1901). See also text in Budge, Vol. II, p.355.

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# Egyptian Myths and Mysteries

## LECTURE 12

*The Christ Impulse as Conqueror of Matter.*

September 14, 1908

GA 106

IN order to complete the task that we have envisioned, we must now study the character of our own time in the same sense in which we have studied the four post-Atlantean epochs up to the appearance of Christianity. We have seen how, after the Atlantean catastrophe, there evolved the ancient Indian epoch, the ancient Persian epoch, and the Egypto-Chaldean epoch. In the description of the fourth epoch, the Greco-Latin, we have seen that in a certain connection man at that time worked his way into the physical plane and that this working into the physical world then reached its low point. Why is this time, which from one side we call the low point of human evolution, nevertheless so attractive, so sympathetic, for the modern observer? Because this low point became the point of departure for many significant events of the present cultural epoch. We have seen how, in this Greco-Latin culture, a marriage was achieved between spirit and matter in Greek art. We have seen how the Greek temple was a building where the god could dwell, and that man could say, "I have brought matter so far that for me it can be an expression of the spirit, so that in every detail I can feel something of this spirit." Thus it is with all Greek works of art. Thus it is with everything we have to say about the life of the Greeks. This world of artistic creations, into which the spirit was implanted, made matter so terribly attractive that among us in Middle Europe the great Goethe, in his *Faust* tragedy, sought to portray his own union with this epoch of culture.

If in the succeeding time the progress of culture had continued in the same direction, what would have been the result? We can make this clear through a simple sketch. In the Greco-Latin time man had descended to his lowest point, but in such a way that in no piece of matter was the spirit lost to him. In all the creations of this time, the spirit was incorporated in matter. When we look at the figure of a Greek god, we see everywhere how the Greek creative genius imprinted the spiritual on the external matter. The Greek had conquered matter, but the spirit had not been lost. The normal course of culture would have been that man should descend below this level, plunging down below matter so that the spirit would become the slave of matter. We need only turn an unprejudiced glance on our environment and we shall see that, on one side, this has actually happened. The expression of this descent is materialism. True, in no period has man mastered matter more than in our time, but only for the satisfaction of bodily needs. We need only consider with what primitive means the gigantic pyramids were built, and then compare this with the boldness and loftiness with which the Egyptian spirit moved among the mysteries of world-existence. We need only think of the deep sense in which, for the Egyptians, their pictures of the gods were images of what took place in the cosmos and on earth in the remote past. One who, at that time in Egypt, could look into the spiritual world, lived in something that became invisible in the Atlantean time but was a fact of evolution in the Lemurian time. One who was not an initiate, who belonged to the common people, could still participate in these spiritual worlds with his whole feeling and his whole soul. Yet how primitive were the means with which these men had to work

externally on the physical plane. Compare this with our own time. We need only read the innumerable eulogies that our contemporaries write about the enormous strides made in modern times. The science of the spirit makes no objection to this. Human achievements are increasing through the conquest of the elements. But let us look at the thing from another side.

Let us look back to far-distant times when men ground their corn between simple stones, yet could look up into tremendous heights of the spiritual life. The majority of men today have no inkling of the heights that were surveyed at that time. They have no inkling of what a Chaldean initiate experienced when, in his special manner, he saw the stars, animals, plants, and minerals in connection with man, when he recognized the healing forces. The Egyptian priests were men to whom the physicians of today could not hold a candle. The men of today cannot penetrate into these heights of the spiritual world. Only through the science of the spirit can an idea be formed of what the ancient Chaldean-Egyptian initiates saw. For example, what we are offered today by way of interpretation of the inscriptions, in which deep mysteries are contained, is only a caricature of the ancient significance. Thus we find that in ancient times man had little power over the tools and equipment for labor on the physical plane, but he had enormous forces in relation to the spiritual world.

Man is descending ever more deeply into matter, and more and more he devotes his spiritual powers to conquering the physical plane. Can we not say that the human spirit is becoming the slave of the physical plane? In a certain way man descends even below the physical plane. Man has devoted enormous spiritual force to inventing the steamship, the railway, and the telephone, but what does he use these for? What a mass of spirit is thus diverted from life for the higher worlds. The spiritual scientist understands this and does not criticize in our time, because he knows that it was necessary to conquer the physical plane. Yet it is true that the spirit has plunged down into the physical world. Is it important for the spirit that, instead of grinding our own corn in a quern, we should be able to call Hamburg by long-distance telephone and order what we want to be sent from America by steamer? Great spiritual force has been applied to building up such connections with America and many other foreign lands, but we may ask whether the aim of all this is not the satisfaction of the material life, of our bodily needs. Since everything in the world is limited, there is not much spiritual force left over whereby man may ascend to the spiritual world after he has devoted so much to the material. The spirit has become the slave of matter. The Greek incorporated the spirit in his works of art, but today the spirit has descended very far. We have proof of this in the many technical and mechanical arrangements of our industry, which serve only material needs. Now let us ask whether this process is completed and whether man has descended too far.

This would have been the case were it not for the occurrence that we discussed in the preceding lectures. At the low point of human evolution something was infused into mankind, through the Christ-impulse, that gave the stimulus to a new ascent. The entry of the Christ-impulse into human evolution forms the other side of culture thereafter. It showed the way to the overcoming of matter. It brought the force through which death can be overcome. Thereby it offered to humanity the possibility of again raising itself above the level of the physical plane. This mightiest impulse had to be given, this impulse which became so efficacious that matter could be overcome in the magnificent

way that is described in the Gospel of John, in the Baptism in Jordan and the Mystery of Golgotha.

Christ Jesus, who was foretold by the prophets, gave the most powerful impulse of all human evolution. Man had to separate himself from the spiritual worlds in order to attach himself to them again with the Christ-being. But we cannot yet understand this if we do not penetrate still more deeply into the connections of human evolution as a whole.

We must point out that what we call the advent of the Christ on earth is an event that could occur only at the low point, when man had sunk so far. The Greco-Latin period stands in the middle of the seven post-Atlantean epochs. No other period would have been the right one. When man became a personality, God also had to become a personality in order to save him, to give him the possibility of rising again. We have seen that in his Roman citizenship the Roman first became conscious of his personality. Earlier, man still lived in the heights of the spiritual world; now he had descended entirely to the physical plane, and now he had to be led upward again through God himself. We must go more deeply into the third, the fifth, and the intermediate period. We shall not study Egyptian mythology in an academic way, but we must pick out the characteristic points in order to get deeper into the feeling-life of the ancient Egyptians. Then we may ask how this illuminates our own time. There is one thing here that must be weighed carefully.

We have seen how, in the Egyptian myths and mysteries, all the mighty pictures of the Sphinx, of Isis, of Osiris, were memories of ancient human conditions. All this was like a reflection of ancient events on earth. Man looked back into his primeval past and saw his origin. The initiate could experience again the spiritual existence of his forebears. We have seen how man grew out of an original group-soul condition. We could point out how these group-souls were preserved in the forms of the four apocalyptic beasts. Man grew out of this condition in such a way that he gradually refined his body and achieved the development of individuality. We can follow this historically. Let us read the *Germania* of **Tacitus**.\* In the times described there, in the conditions of the Germanic regions in the first century after Christ as there portrayed, we see how the consciousness of the individual is still bound up with the community, how the clan spirit rules, how the Cherusker, for example, still feels himself as a member of his clan. This consciousness is still so strong that the individual seeks vengeance for another of the same group. It finds expression in the custom of the blood-feud. Thus a sort of group-soul condition prevailed. This condition was preserved into late post-Atlantean times, but only as an echo. In the last period of Atlantis the group-consciousness generally died out. It is only stragglers whom we have just described. In reality the men of that time no longer knew anything of the group-soul. In the Atlantean time, however, man did know of it. Then he did not yet say *I* of himself. This group-soul feeling changed into something else in the following generations.

Strange as it may seem, in ancient times memory had an entirely different meaning and power. What is memory today? Reflect on whether you can still recall the events of your earliest childhood. Probably you can remember very little, and beyond your childhood you cannot go at all. You will remember nothing of what lies before your birth. It was not like this in Atlantean times. Even in the first post-Atlantean time man could remember what his father, grandfather, and ancestors had experienced. There was no sense in saying that between birth and death there was an ego. The ego reached back for centuries in the



memory. The ego reached as far as the blood flowed down, from the remotest ancestors to the descendants. At that time the group-ego was not to be thought of as extended in space over the contemporaries, but as proceeding upward in the generations. Therefore, the modern man will never understand what appears as an echo of this in the tales of the patriarchs: that Adam, Noah, and others grew to be so old. They counted their ancestors through several generations upward to their ego. The modern man no longer can form any conception of this. In those days there would have been no sense in giving a single man a name between birth and death. In the whole series of ancestors the memory continued upwards for centuries. As far as man could remember through the centuries, so far was he given his name. Adam was, so to say, the ego that flowed with the blood through the generations. Only when we are acquainted with these actual facts do we know how things really were. Man felt sheltered in this series of generations. This is what the Bible means when it says, "I and Father Abraham are one." When the adherent of the Old Testament said this, only then did he rightly feel himself as man within the line of ancestry. Among the first post-Atlanteans, even among the Egyptians, this consciousness was still present. Men felt the community of the blood, and this caused something special for the spiritual life.

When a man dies today he has a life in kamaloka, after which comes a relatively long life in Devachan. But this is already a result of the Christ-impulse. This was not the case in pre-Christian times; then a man felt himself connected with the times of his forefathers. Today a man must wean himself in kamaloka from the wishes and desires to which he has accustomed himself in the physical world; the duration of this condition depends upon this. We cling to our life between birth and death; in ancient times man clung to much more than this. Man was connected with the physical plane in such a way that he felt himself as a member of the whole physical series of generations. Thus, in kamaloka, one did not merely have to work out the clinging to an individual physical existence, but one really had to traverse all that was connected with the generations, up to the remotest ancestor. One experienced this backwards. One result of this was the deep truth underlying the expression: "To feel oneself sheltered in Abraham's bosom." One felt that after death he went upward through the whole row of ancestors, and the road that one had to travel was called "the way to the fathers." Only when one had traversed this path could he ascend into the spiritual worlds and travel the way of the gods. At that time the soul traveled first the path of the fathers and then the path of the gods.

Now the various cultures did not come to abrupt ends. The essence of the Indian culture remained, although it underwent a change. It was preserved alongside the following cultures. In the continuation of the Indian culture that was contemporaneous with the Egyptian, something similar arose. Today we easily confuse what was later with what was earlier. Therefore it was emphasized that I was giving indications only out of the remotest periods. Among other things, the Indians now took up the view of the path of the fathers and the path of the gods.

As a man became more initiated, freed himself more from dependence on home and the fathers, became more homeless, the path of the gods became longer and the path of the fathers became shorter. One who clung closely to the fathers had a long father-path and a short god-path. In the terminology of the Orient, the way of the fathers was called *Pitriyana* and the way of the gods was called *Devayana*. When we speak of Devachan, we should understand that this is only a distorted form of the word *Devayana*, the path of

the gods. An old Vedantist would simply laugh at us if we came to him with descriptions such as we give of Devachan. It is not so easy to find one's way into the oriental methods of thinking and contemplating. As to those who pretend to give out oriental truths, these truths often must be protected from just such people. Many a person today who accepts something as Indian teaching has no idea that he is receiving a confused doctrine. The modern science of the spirit does not claim to be an oriental-Indian teaching. In certain circles people love what comes from far away, perhaps from America, but the truth is at home everywhere. Antiquarian research belongs to scholars, but the science of the spirit is life. Its truth can be checked everywhere at any time. We must keep this before our minds.

What we have just mentioned was practice as well as theory among the ancient Egyptians. What was taught in the great mysteries was also practical., Something special was connected with this, as we shall learn as we penetrate further. The mysteries of the ancient Egyptians strove for something special. Today we may smile when we are told how the Pharaoh was at a certain time a kind of initiate, and how the Egyptian stood in relation to the Pharaoh and to his state institutions. For the modern European scholar it is particularly comical when the Pharaoh gives himself the name, "Son of Horus," or even "Horus." It seems singular to us that a man should be venerated as a god; nothing more abstruse could be thought of. But the man of today does not understand the Pharaoh and his mission. He does not know what the Pharaoh-initiation really was. Today we see in a people, only a group of persons who can be counted. To the man of today a **people\*\*** is a meaningless abstraction. The reality is simply a certain number of persons filling a certain area. But this is not a people for one who accepts the **standpoint of occultism.**† As a single member such as the finger belongs to the whole body, so do the single persons within the people belong to the folk-soul. They are as it were embedded in it, but the folk-soul is not physical; it is real only as an etheric form. It is an absolute reality; the initiate can commune with this soul. It is even much more real for him than are single individualities among the people, far more so than a single person. For the occultist spiritual experiences are entirely valid, and there the folk-soul is something thoroughly real. Let us examine briefly the connection between the folk-soul and the individuals. If we think of the single individuals, the single egos, as little circles, for external physical observation they will be separate beings. But one who observes these single individualities spiritually sees them as though embedded in an etheric cloud, and this is the incorporation of the folk-soul. If the single person thinks, feels, and wills something, he radiates his feelings and thoughts into the common folk-soul. This is colored by his radiations, and the folk-soul becomes permeated by the thoughts and feelings of the single persons. When we look away from the physical man and observe only his etheric and astral bodies, and then observe the astral body of an entire people, we see that the astral body of the entire people receives its color-shadings from the single persons. The Egyptian initiate knew this, but he also knew something further. When he observed this folk-substance, the ancient Egyptian asked himself what really lived in the folk-soul. What did he see therein? He saw in his folk-soul the re-embodiment of Isis. He saw how she had once wandered among men. Isis worked in the folk-soul. He saw in her the same influences as those that proceeded from the moon; these forces worked in the folk-soul. What the Egyptian saw as Osiris worked in the individual spiritual radiations; therein he recognized the Osiris-influence. But Isis he saw in the folk-soul.

Thus Osiris was not visible on the physical plane. He had died for the physical plane. Only when a man had died was Osiris again placed before his eyes. Therefore we read in the *Book of the Dead* how the Egyptian felt that he was united with Osiris in death, that he himself became an Osiris. Osiris and Isis worked together in the state and in the single person, as his members.

Now let us again consider the Pharaoh, remembering that this was a reality for him. Each Pharaoh received certain instructions before his initiation, to the end that he should not grasp this with his intellect only, but that it should become truth and reality for him. He had to be brought to the point where he could say to himself, "If I am to rule this people, I must sacrifice a portion of my spirituality, I must extinguish a part of my astral and etheric bodies. The Osiris and Isis principles must work in me. I must will nothing personally; if I say something, Osiris must speak; if I do something, Osiris must do it; if I move my hand, Osiris and Isis must be active. I must represent Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris."

Initiation is not erudition. But to be able to do something like this, to be able to make such a sacrifice, pertains to initiation. What the Pharaoh sacrificed of himself could be filled up with portions of the folk-soul. The part of himself that the Pharaoh relinquished was just what gave him power. For justified power does not arise through a man's raising his own personality; it arises through his taking into himself something that transcends the boundaries of personality, a higher spiritual power. The Pharaoh took such a power into himself, and this was externally portrayed through the Uraeus-serpent.

Again we have peered into a mystery. We have seen something much higher than the explanations that are given today when the Pharaohs are discussed.

If the Egyptian cherished such feelings, what would have to be his particular concern? It would be his particular concern that the folk-soul should become as strong as possible, rich in good forces, and that it should not be diminished. The Egyptian initiates could not reckon with, what man possessed through blood-relationship. But what the forefathers had accumulated as spiritual riches, was to become the property of the individual soul. This is indicated for us in the judging of the dead, where the man is brought before the forty-two assessors of the dead. There his deeds are weighed. Who are the forty-two judges of the dead? They are the **ancestors**.†† It was believed that each man's life was interwoven with the lives of forty-two ancestors. Therefore he had to answer to them as to whether he actually had taken up what they had offered to him spiritually. In this way, what was contained in the Egyptian mystery-teachings was something that was to become practical for life, but which could also be turned to good account for the time beyond death, for the life between death and a new birth. In the Egyptian epoch man was already entangled in the physical world. But at the same time he had to look up to his ancestors in the other world, and cultivate in the physical world what he had inherited from them. Through this interest he was fettered to the physical plane, since he had to continue working on what his fathers had created.

Now we must reflect that the souls of today are reincarnations of the ancient Egyptian souls. For the souls of today, who experienced it in their Egyptian incarnation, what is the significance of what happened at that time? All that the soul experienced at that time between death and a new birth has been woven into the soul, weaves within it, and has arisen again in our fifth period, which brings the fruits of the third period. These fruits appear in the inclinations and ideas of modern times, which have their causes in the

ancient Egyptian world. Nowadays all the ideas emerge which at that time were laid down in the soul as germs. Therefore it is easy to see that man's modern conquests on the physical plane are nothing more than a coarser version of the transfer of interest to the physical plane that was present in ancient Egypt, only people are now even more deeply ensnared in matter. In the mummifying of the dead we have already seen a cause of the materialistic views that we now experience on the physical plane.

Let us imagine a soul of that time. Let us imagine a soul that then lived as a pupil of one of the ancient initiates. Such a pupil's spiritual gaze had been directed to the cosmos through actual perception. The way Osiris and Isis lived in the moon had become spiritual perception for him. Everything was permeated by divine-spiritual beings. He had taken this into his soul. He is again incarnated in the fourth and fifth periods. In the fifth period such a person experiences all this again. It comes back to him as a memory. What happens to it now? The pupil had gazed up at all that lived in the world of the stars. This sight comes to life again in a certain person of the fifth period. He remembers what he saw and heard at that time. He cannot recognize it again, because it has taken on a material coloring. It is no longer the spiritual that he sees, but the material-mechanical relationships emerge again and he recreates the thoughts in materialistic form as memory. Where he had previously seen divine beings, Isis and Osiris, now he sees only abstract forces without any spiritual bond. The spiritual relationships appear to him in thought-form. Everything arises again, but in material form.

Let us apply this to a particular soul which at that time acquired insight into the great cosmic connections, and let us imagine that there arises again before this soul what it had seen spiritually in ancient Egypt. This appears again in this soul in the fifth post-Atlantean period, and we have the soul of Copernicus. Thus did the Copernican system arise, as a memory-tableau of spiritual experiences in ancient Egypt. The case is the same with Kepler's system. These men gave birth to their great laws out of Their memories, out of what they had experienced in the Egyptian time. Now let us think how such a thing arises in the soul as a faint memory, and let us think also how what such a spirit truly thinks was, in ancient Egypt, experienced by him in spiritual form. What can such a spirit say to us? That it seems to him as though he looked back into ancient Egypt. It is as though he stated all this in a new form when such a spirit says, "But now, a year and a half after the first dawning, a few months after the first full daylight, a few weeks after the pure sun had risen over these most wonderful contemplations, nothing holds me back any longer. I shall revel in holy fire. I shall scorn the sons of men with the simple confession that I am stealing the sacred vessels of the Egyptians to build with them an habitation for my God, far removed from the borders of Egypt." Is this not like an actual memory, which corresponds to the truth? This is Kepler's saying, and in his works we also find the following: "The ancient memory is knocking at my heart." Wonderful are the connections of things in human evolution. Many such enigmatic sayings take on light and meaning when one senses the spiritual connections. Life becomes great and powerful, and we feel our way into a mighty whole when we understand that the single person is only an individual form of the spiritual that permeates the world.

I have already pointed out that what has arisen in our time as Darwinism is a coarser materialistic version of what the Egyptians portrayed as their gods in animal form. I was also able to show that if one understands Paracelsus correctly, his medical lore is a recrudescence of what was taught in the temples of ancient Egypt. Let us contemplate

such a spirit as Paracelsus. We find a remarkable statement by him. One who has steeped himself in Paracelsus knows what a lofty spirit lived in him. He made a remarkable statement, saying that he had learned much in many ways; least of all in the academies, but much from old traditions and from the common people during his journeys through many lands. It is impossible here to give examples of the deep truths that are still present among the common people but are no longer understood, although Paracelsus could still turn them to account. He said that he had found one book containing deep medical truths. What book was it? The Bible! Thereby he meant not only the Old Testament, but also the New. One need only be able to read the Bible to find therein what Paracelsus found. What became of the medicine of Paracelsus? It is true that it is a memory of the ancient Egyptian methods of healing. But through the fact that he absorbed the mysteries of Christianity, the upward impulse, his works are saturated with spiritual wisdom, they are filled with Christ. This is the path into the future. This is what everyone must do who, in modern times, will pave the way back out of the fall into matter. We must not undervalue the great material progress, but there is also the possibility of letting the spiritual flow into it.

One who studies what material science can offer today, who plunges into material science and is not too lazy to steep himself in it, such a man acts wisely also in relation to the science of the spirit. Much can be learned from the purely materialistic investigators. What is found there we can permeate with the pure spirit, which the science of the spirit offers. If thus we permeate everything with the spiritual, then this is properly understood Christianity. It is a slander of the science of the spirit when men say that it is a fantastic view of the world. It can stand firmly on the ground of reality, and it would be only a most elementary beginning in the science of the spirit if one were to concentrate on a schematic representation of the higher worlds. It is not important that the student should simply know the things, learning the concepts by heart. This is not all that counts. The important thing is that the teachings about the higher worlds should become fruitful in men, that the true spiritual-scientific teachings should be introduced into everything, into the everyday life.

It is not so important that one should preach about universal brotherly love. It is best to speak of that as little as possible. Speaking in such phrases is like saying to the stove, "Dear stove, it is your duty to warm this room. Fulfill your duty!" So it is with teachings that are given through such phrases. The important thing is the means. The stove remains cold if I simply tell it that it should be warm. It gets warm when it has fuel. People also remain cold when they are admonished. But what is fuel for the modern man? The specific facts of spiritual teaching are **fuel for man.**‡ One should not be so lazy as to remain content with "Universal brotherhood." People must be given fuel. Then brotherhood will arise of itself. As the plants stretch out their blossoms to the sun, so must we all look up to the sun of the spiritual life.

The important thing is that the matters we have examined here should not be accepted merely as theoretical doctrines, but that they should become a force in our souls. For every man, in every position in practical life, they can give impulses for what he must create. People who look today at the science of the spirit with a certain scorn feel themselves superior to its "fantastic" teachings. They find "unprovable assertions" therein and say that one should cleave to the facts. If the spiritual scientist were made pusillanimous rather than bold through his life in the science of the spirit, it would be

easy for him to lose his sureness and energy when he sees how just those persons who should understand the science of the spirit are the ones who utterly fail to grasp it. Our times easily look down on what the Egyptians recognized as their gods. The latter are said to be meaningless abstractions. But modern man is far more superstitious. He clings to entirely different gods, who are authorities for him. Because he does not actually bend the knee before them, he does not notice what superstitions he cherishes.

My dear friends, when we have thus been together again we should always be mindful that when we disperse we should not take with us only a number of truths, but we should take away a collective impression, a feeling, that can properly take the form of an impulse of will, an impulse to carry the science of the spirit into life and to allow nothing to disturb our confidence in it.

Let us place a picture before our soul. One often hears it said, "Oh, these seekers for the spirit! They assemble in their lodges and pursue all kinds of fantastic rubbish. A man of really modern views can have no part in that." The adherents of the science of the spirit sometimes seem to be a sort of pariah class, regarded as uneducated and untrained. Should we be discouraged because of this? No. We shall place a picture before our souls and arouse the feelings that are connected with it. We can recall something similar in past times; how something similar occurred in ancient Rome. We can see how, in ancient Rome, primitive Christianity spread among a despised class of people. We look with legitimate delight today on such things as the Coliseum constructed by imperial Rome. But we can also look at the people who then regarded themselves as the choicest of their time; we can see how they sat in the Circus and watched while the Christians were burned in the arena and incense was kindled to quench the stink of the burning bodies. Now let us look at those despised ones. They lived in the catacombs, in underground passages. There the spreading Christianity had to hide. There they erected the first Christian altars on the graves of their dead. There below they had their wonderful symbols and shrines. A strange feeling seizes us today when we walk through the catacombs, through that despised underground Rome. The Christians knew what awaited them. That first germ of the Christ-impulse on earth, confined to the catacombs, was despised. But what remains of imperial Rome? It has disappeared from the earth, while what then lived in the catacombs has been exalted.

Let us hope that those who today wish to make themselves the bearers of a spiritual world-view may preserve the confidence of the first Christians. The representatives of the science of the spirit may be despised by contemporary academic learning, but they know they are working for what will bloom and thrive in the future. Let them learn to endure all the vexations of the present day. We are working into the future. This we may feel confidently and without arrogance, firm against the misunderstandings of our time. With such feelings let us try to give permanence to what has passed before our souls. Let us take it away with us as a force, and let us continue to work together fraternally in the right direction.

**\* The passage referred to is probably the following (pages 293 and 295 in the Loeb Classical Library Edition): "Sisters' children mean as much to their uncle as to their father; some tribes regard this blood-tie as even closer and more sacred than that between son and father . . . The more relations a man has and the larger the number of his connections by marriage, the more influence has he in his age; it does not pay to have no ties. It is incumbent to take up a father's feuds or a kinsman's not less than his friendship."**

**\*\* The German word *Volk* has no convenient English equivalent. We shall translate it as *people* or *folk* in different contexts.**

† Rudolf Steiner's fullest discussion of this subject appears in the cycle of lectures, *Mission of the Folk-Souls*, delivered at Oslo in 1910.

†† A full description of these 42 gods is to be found in Budge, *Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection*, Volume I, pp. 316-317. For a fairly good picture, see pages 344-45 of the same work.

‡ This thought is more fully expounded in Rudolf Steiner's booklet, *Anthroposophical Ethics*, comprising three lectures delivered in 1912 in Norrköping.

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# THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY

By  
RUDOLF STEINER

Authorized English translation by G Metaxa  
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## **PREFACE TO THE REVISED EDITION, 1918**

Everything discussed in this book centers around two problems which are fundamental to the human soul-life. One of these problems concerns the possibility of attaining such insight into human nature that knowledge of man can become the foundation of all human knowledge and experience of life. We often feel that our experiences and the results of scientific investigations are not self-supporting; further experiences or discoveries may shake our certitude. The other problem is: Has man any right to ascribe freedom to his will, or is freedom of will an illusion arising out of his inability to recognize the threads of necessity on which his will depends, just like a process in nature? This question is not artificially created. In a certain disposition it arises quite spontaneously in the human soul. And one feels that the soul lacks in stature if it has not at some time faced in deep seriousness the question of free will or necessity. In this book the intention is to show that the inner experiences caused by the second problem depend upon what attitude man is able to take toward the first problem. The attempt will be made to show that it is possible to attain such an insight into man's nature, that this can support all the rest of his knowledge, and further that this insight completely justifies the concept of freedom of will, provided only that first the region of soul is discovered where free will can unfold.

This insight in relation to the two problems is such that, once attained, it can become a living content of man's soul life. A theoretical answer will not be given which, once acquired is merely carried about as a conviction, retained by memory. For the whole manner of thinking on which this book is based, such an answer would be no answer. Such a finished, limited answer will not be given, but a region of experiences within the human soul will be pointed to, where, through the soul's own inner activity, living answers to the questions are to be found ever anew and at every moment when man needs them. Once the region of soul is discovered where these questions unfold, a real insight into this region provides man with what he needs for the solution of these two problems of life so that, with what he has then attained, he can penetrate further into the breadth and depth of life's riddles, as need or destiny leads him. - It will be seen that a knowledge has here been outlined, which proves its justification and validity, not only through its own existence, but also through the relationship it has with the entire soul-life of man. These were my thoughts about the content of this book when I wrote it twenty-five years ago. Today, again I must write similarly if I am to characterize the aim of this book. In the first edition I limited myself to saying no more than was in the strictest sense connected with the two fundamental problems described above. If anyone should be surprised at not finding in this book as yet, any reference to that region of the world of spiritual experience described in my later writings, then he must consider that at that time it was not my purpose to describe results of spiritual research, but first to lay the foundation on which such results can rest. This "Philosophy of Freedom" does not contain any special results of this kind, any more than it contains special results of the natural sciences. But what it contains cannot, in my view, be dispensed with by anyone who strives for certainty in such knowledge. What I have said in this book can also be acceptable to many who, for reasons of their own, will have nothing to do with the results of my spiritual scientific research. But one who can regard these results of spiritual

scientific research as something to which he is drawn, will recognize as important what is attempted here. It is this: to prove that an open-minded consideration of just the two problems I have indicated, problems which are fundamental to all knowledge, leads to recognition of the fact that man is living within the reality of a spiritual world. In this book the attempt is made to justify knowledge of the realm of spirit before entering upon spiritual experience. And this justification is undertaken in such a way that, for anyone able and willing to enter into this discussion, there is no need, in order to accept what is said here, to cast furtive glances at the experiences which my later writings have shown to be relevant.

Thus it seems to me that, on the one hand, this book occupies a position completely independent of my writings on actual spiritual scientific matters, and yet, on the other hand, it is also most intimately connected with them. All this has caused me now, after twenty-five years, to republish the content of this book practically unaltered in all essentials. I have, however, made additions of some length to several chapters. The misunderstandings of my argument which have come to my attention seemed to make these detailed extensions necessary. Alterations have been made only where what I said a quarter of a century ago appeared to me clumsily expressed. (Only ill-will could find in these changes occasion to suggest that I have changed my fundamental conviction.)

The book has been out of print for many years. Nevertheless, and in spite of the fact, apparent from what I have just said, that to me it seems that to-day must be similarly expressed what I did express twenty-five years ago about the problems I have characterized, I hesitated a long time about the completion of this revised edition. Again and again I have asked myself whether at this point or that, I ought not to define my position toward the numerous philosophical views which have been put forward since the publication of the first edition. Yet the heavy demands on my time in recent years, due to purely spiritual scientific research, prevented me doing as I might have wished. Also, a survey, as thorough as possible, of the philosophical literature of the present day has convinced me that such a critical discussion, tempting though it would be in itself, has no place in the context of what this book has to say. All that, from the point of view of the "Philosophy of Spiritual Activity," it seemed to me necessary to say about recent philosophical tendencies, may be found in the second volume of my "Riddles of Philosophy."

April 1918

RUDOLF STEINER

### **THE CONSCIOUS HUMAN DEED**

Is man in his thinking and acting a spiritually free being, or is he compelled by the iron necessity of natural law? Few questions have been debated more than this one. The concept of the freedom of the human will has found enthusiastic supporters and stubborn opponents in plenty. There are those who, in moral fervor, declare it to be sheer stupidity to deny so evident a fact as freedom. Opposed to them are others who regard as utterly

naive the belief that the uniformity of natural law is interrupted in the sphere of human action and thinking. One and the same thing is here declared as often to be the most precious possession of humanity, as it is said to be its most fatal illusion. Infinite subtlety has been devoted to explaining how human freedom is compatible with the working of nature, to which, after all, man belongs. No less pains have been taken to make comprehensible how a delusion like this could have arisen. That here we are dealing with one of the most important questions of life, religion, conduct and science, is felt by everyone whose character is not totally devoid of depth. And indeed, it belongs to the sad signs of the superficiality of present day thinking that a book which attempts to develop a “new faith”<sup>1</sup> out of the results of the latest scientific discoveries, contains, on this question, nothing but the words:

“There is no need here to go into the question of the freedom of the human will. The supposed indifferent freedom of choice has always been recognized as an empty illusion by every philosophy worthy of the name. The moral valuation of human conduct and character remains untouched by this question.”

I do not quote this passage because I consider that the book in which it appears has any special importance, but because it seems to me to express the only view which most of our thinking contemporaries are able to reach, concerning this question. Everyone who claims to have advanced beyond an elementary education seems nowadays to know that freedom cannot consist in choosing at one’s pleasure, one or the other of two possible courses of action; it is maintained that there is always a quite definite reason why, out of several possible actions, we carry out a particular one.

This seems obvious. Nevertheless, up to now, the main attacks by those who oppose freedom are directed only against the freedom of choice. Herbert Spencer, who has views which are rapidly gaining ground, says:

“That everyone is able to desire or not to desire, as he pleases, which is the essential principle in the dogma of free will, is negated by the analysis of consciousness, as well as by the contents of the preceding chapter.”<sup>2</sup>

Others, too, start from the same point of view in combating the concept of free will. The germs of all that is relevant in these arguments are to be found as early as Spinoza.<sup>3</sup> All that he brought forward in clear and simple language against the idea of freedom has since been repeated times without number, but usually veiled in the most complicated theoretical doctrines so that it is difficult to recognize the straightforward train of thought on which all depends. Spinoza writes in a letter of October or November, 1674:

“I call something free which exists and acts from the pure necessity of its nature, and I call that compelled, the existence and action of which are exactly and fixedly determined by something else. The existence of God, for example, though necessary, is free because He exists only through the necessity of His nature. Similarly, God knows Himself and all else in freedom, because it follows solely from the necessity of His nature that He knows

all. You see, therefore, that I regard freedom as consisting, not in free decision, but in free necessity.

“But let us come down to created things which are all determined by external causes to exist and to act in a fixed and definite manner. To recognize this more clearly, let us imagine a perfectly simple case. A stone, for example, receives from an external cause acting upon it a certain quantity of motion, by which it necessarily continues to move after the impact of the external cause has ceased. The continued motion of the stone is a compelled one, not a necessary one, because it has to be defined by the thrust of the external cause. What is true here for the stone is true also for every other particular thing, however complicated and many-sided it may be, namely, that each thing is necessarily determined by external causes to exist and to act in a fixed and definite manner.

“Now, please, suppose that during its motion the stone thinks and knows that it is striving to the best of its ability to continue in motion. This stone which is conscious only of its striving and is by no means indifferent, will believe that it is absolutely free, and that it continues in motion for no other reason than its own will to continue. But this is that human freedom which everybody claims to possess and which consists in nothing but this, that men are conscious of their desires, but do not know the causes by which they are determined. Thus the child believes that he is free when he desires milk, the angry boy that he is free in his desire for vengeance, and the timid in his desire for flight. Again, the drunken man believes that he says of his own free decision what, sober again, he would fain have left unsaid, and as this prejudice is innate in all men, it is not easy to free oneself from it. For although experience teaches us often enough that man, least of all, can temper his desires and that, moved by conflicting passions, he sees the better and pursues the worse, yet he considers himself free, simply because there are some things which he desires less strongly and many desires which can easily be inhibited through the recollection of something else which is often remembered.”

Because here we are dealing with a clear and definitely expressed view, it is also easy to discover the fundamental error in it. As necessarily as a stone continues a definite movement after being put in motion, just as necessarily is a man supposed to carry out an action when urged thereto by any reason. It is only because man is conscious of his action, that he regards himself as its free originator. But, in doing so, he overlooks the fact that he is driven to it by a cause which he has to obey unconditionally. The error in this train of thought is soon found. Spinoza, and all who think like him, overlook the fact that man not only is conscious of his action, but may also become conscious of the causes which guide him. No one will deny that when the child desires milk, he is unfree, as is also the drunken man when he says things he later regrets. Neither knows anything of the causes working in the depths of their organisms, which exercise irresistible power over them. But is it justifiable to lump together actions of this kind with those in which a man is conscious, not only of his actions but also of the reasons which cause him to act? Are the actions of men really all of one kind? Should the deed of a soldier on the field of battle, of the research scientist in his laboratory, of the statesman in complicated diplomatic negotiations, be placed, scientifically, on the same level with that of the child when he desires milk? It is indeed true that it is best to attempt the solution of a problem

where the conditions are simplest. But inability to differentiate has caused endless confusion before now. There is, after all, a profound difference between whether I know why I do something, or whether I do not. At first sight this seems a self-evident truth. And yet those who oppose freedom never ask whether a motive which I recognize and see through, compels me in the same sense as does the organic process in the child that causes him to cry for milk.

Eduard von Hartmann<sup>4</sup> maintains that the human will depends on two main factors: the motive and the character. If one regards all men as alike, or at any rate the differences between them as negligible, then their will appears as determined from without, namely by the circumstances which come to meet them. But if one takes into consideration that men let a representation become a motive for their deeds only if their character is such that the particular representation arouses a desire in them, then man appears as determined from within and not from without. Now, because a representation pressing in on him from without must first, in accordance with his character, be adopted as a motive, man believes himself to be free, that is, independent of external motives. The truth, however, according to Eduard von Hartmann, is that

“even though we ourselves first turn a representation into a motive, we do so not arbitrarily, but according to the necessity of our characterological disposition, that is, we are anything but free.”

Here again, the difference between motives which I allow to influence me only after I have permeated them with my consciousness, and those which I follow without having any clear knowledge of them, is disregarded.

And this leads directly to the standpoint from which the facts will be considered here. Is it at all permissible to consider by itself the question of the freedom of our will? And if not: With what other question must it necessarily be connected?

If there is a difference between a conscious motive of my action and an unconscious impulse, then the conscious motive will result in an action which must be judged differently from one that springs from blind urge. The first question must, therefore, concern this difference, and upon the answer will depend how we are to deal with the question of freedom as such.

What does it mean to know the reason for one's action? This question has been too little considered because, unfortunately, the tendency has always been to tear into two parts what is an inseparable whole: Man. We distinguish the knower from the doer, and the one who really matters is lost sight of: the man who acts because he knows.

It is said: Man is free when his reason has the upper hand, not his animal cravings. Or else: Freedom means to be able to determine one's life and action in accordance with purposes and decisions.

Nothing is achieved by assertions of this kind. For the question is just whether reason, purposes and decisions exercise compulsion over a man in the same way as do his animal cravings. If, without my doing, a reasonable decision emerges in me with just the same necessity as hunger and thirst, then I must needs obey it, and my freedom is an illusion.

Another phrase is: To be free means not that one is able to will what one wants, but that one is able to do what one wants. This thought has been expressed with great clearness by the poet-philosopher, Robert Hamerling.<sup>5</sup>

“Man can, indeed, do what he wants, but he cannot will what he wants, because his will is determined by motives! He cannot will what he wants? Let us consider these words more closely. Have they any sense? Should freedom of will consist in being able to will something without reason, without a motive? But what does it mean to will something, other than to have a reason to do or to strive for this rather than that? To will something without a reason, without a motive, would mean to will something without willing it. The concept of will is inseparable from that of motive. Without a motive to determine it, the will is an empty ability; only through the motive does it become active and real. It is, therefore, quite correct that the human will is not ‘free,’ inasmuch as its direction is always determined by that motive which is the strongest. But, on the other hand, it must be admitted that in contrast with this ‘unfreedom’ it is absurd to speak of a thinkable ‘freedom’ of the will, which would end up in being able to will what one does not will.”

Here again, only motives in general are discussed, without regard for the difference between unconscious and conscious motives. If a motive affects me and I am compelled to act on it because it proves to be the “strongest” of its kind, then the thought of freedom ceases to have any meaning. Should it matter to me whether I can do a thing or not, if I am forced by the motive to do it? The immediate question is not whether I can or cannot do a thing when a motive has influenced me, but whether only such motives exist as affect me with compelling necessity. If I have to will something, then I may well be absolutely indifferent as to whether I can also do it. And if, through my character, or through circumstances prevailing in my environment, a motive is pressed upon me which to my thinking is unreasonable, then I should even have to be glad if I could not do what I will.

The question is not whether I can carry out a decision once made, but how the decision arises within me.

What distinguishes man from all other organic beings is his rational thinking. Actions he has in common with other organisms. Nothing is gained by seeking analogies in the animal world to clarify the concept of freedom of action of human beings. Modern natural science loves such analogies. When scientists have succeeded in finding among animals something similar to human behavior, they believe they have touched upon the most important question of the science of man. To what misunderstandings this view leads is seen, for example, in a book by P. Rée,<sup>6</sup> where the following remark on freedom appears:

“It is easy to explain why the movement of a stone seems to us necessary, while the will-impulse of a donkey does not. The causes which set the stone in motion are external and visible, while the causes which induce in the donkey impulses of will are internal and invisible, that is, between us and the place where they are active there is the skull of the donkey.... The dependence on a cause is not seen and the conclusion, therefore, is drawn that no dependence is present. It is explained that the will is, indeed, the cause of the donkey’s turning round, but that it is itself unconditioned; it is an absolute beginning.”

Here again, human actions in which man is conscious of the reasons why he acts, are simply ignored, for Rée declares:

“Between us and the place where the causes are active there is the skull of the donkey.”

From these words can be seen that Rée had no notion that there are actions, not indeed of the donkey, but of human beings, in which between us and the deed lies the motive that has become conscious. That Rée does not see this he shows again later, when he says:

“We do not perceive the causes by which our will is determined, hence we believe that our will is not causally determined at all.”

But enough of examples which show that many oppose freedom without knowing in the least what freedom is.

That an action cannot be free, of which the doer does not know why he carries it out, is obvious. But what about an action for which we know the reason! This leads us to the question: What is the origin and significance of thinking? For without knowledge of the thinking activity of the soul, it is impossible to form a concept of what it means to know something, and therefore also of what it means to know the reason for an action. When we recognize what thinking in general means, then it will also be easy to become clear about the role that thinking plays in human action. As Hegel<sup>7</sup> rightly says,

“It is thinking that turns the soul, with which the animals are also endowed, into spirit.”

And this is why thinking gives to human action its characteristic stamp.

It is not maintained that all our action springs only from the sober deliberations of our reason. Far be it from me to consider human in the highest sense only those actions which result from abstract judgments. But as soon as our conduct rises above the sphere of the satisfaction of purely animal desires, our motives are always permeated by thoughts. Love, pity and patriotism are motivating forces for deeds which cannot be analyzed away into cold concepts of the intellect. It is said that here the heart and the mood of soul hold sway. No doubt. But the heart and the mood of the soul do not create the motives. They presuppose them and let them enter. Pity enters my heart when the representation of a person who arouses pity appears in my consciousness. The way to the heart is through the head. Love is no exception. Whenever it is not merely the expression of bare sexual instinct, it depends on the representation we form of the loved one. And the more

idealistic these representations are, just so much the more blessed is our love. Here too, thought is the father of feeling. It is said: Love makes us blind to the failings of the loved one. But this also holds good the other way round, and it can be said: Love opens the eyes just for the good qualities of the loved one. Many pass by these good qualities without noticing them. One, however, sees them, and just because he does, love awakens in his soul. He has done nothing other than form a representation of something, of which hundreds have none. They have no love because they lack the representation.

From whatever point we regard the subject, it becomes ever clearer that the question of the nature of human action presupposes that of the origin of thinking. I shall, therefore, turn to this question next.

## **THE FUNDAMENTAL URGE FOR KNOWLEDGE**

Two souls alas are dwelling in my breast;  
And each is fain to leave its brother.  
The one, fast clinging, to the world adheres  
With clutching organs, in love's sturdy lust;  
The other strongly lifts itself from dust  
To yonder high, ancestral spheres.

Faust I, Sc. 2  
Priest translation<sup>8</sup>

In these words Goethe expresses a characteristic feature belonging to the deepest foundation of human nature. Man is not a uniformly organized being. He always demands more than the world gives him of its own accord. Nature has endowed us with needs; among them are some that are left to our own initiative to satisfy. Abundant are the gifts bestowed upon us, but still more abundant are our desires. We seem born to be dissatisfied. Our thirst for knowledge is but a special instance of this dissatisfaction. If we look twice at a tree and the first time see its branches motionless, the second time in movement, we do not remain satisfied with this observation. Why does the tree appear to us now motionless, now in movement? Thus we ask. Every glance at nature evokes in us a number of questions. Every phenomenon we meet sets us a problem. Every experience contains a riddle. We see emerging from the egg a creature like the mother animal; we ask the reason for this likeness. We notice that living beings grow and develop to a certain degree of perfection and we investigate the conditions for this experience. Nowhere are we satisfied with what nature spreads before our senses. Everywhere we seek what we call explanation of the facts.

The something more which we seek in things, over and above what is given us directly in them, divides our whole being into two aspects; we become conscious of our contrast to the world. We confront the world as independent beings. The universe appears to us to have two opposite poles: I and world.



We erect this barrier between ourselves and the world as soon as consciousness first dawns in us. But we never cease to feel that, in spite of all, we belong to the world, that there is a bond of union between it and us, that we are not beings outside, but within, the universe.

This feeling makes us strive to bridge over the contrast. And in this bridging the whole spiritual striving of mankind ultimately consists. The history of man's spiritual life is an incessant search for unity between us and the world. Religion, art and science all have this same aim. In the revelation God grants him, the religious believer seeks the solution of the problems in the world which his I, dissatisfied with the world of mere phenomena, sets him. The artist seeks to imprint into matter the ideas of his I, in order to reconcile with the world outside what lives within him. He, too, feels dissatisfied with the world as it appears to him, and seeks to embody into the world of mere phenomena that something more which his I, reaching out beyond it, contains. The thinker seeks the laws of phenomena, and strives to penetrate with thinking what he experiences by observing. Only when we have made the world-content into our thought-content do we again find the unity from which we separated ourselves. We shall see later that this goal will be reached only when the task of the scientific investigator is understood at a much deeper level than is usually the case. The whole situation I have described here, presents itself to us on the stage of history in the contrast between a unified view of the world or monism,<sup>9</sup> and the theory of two worlds or dualism.<sup>10</sup> Dualism pays attention only to the separation between I and world, brought about by man's consciousness. All its efforts consist in a vain struggle to reconcile these opposites, which it calls spirit and matter, subject and object, or thinking and phenomena. The dualist feels that there must be a bridge between the two worlds, but he is unable to find it. In as far as man is aware of himself as "I," he cannot but think of this "I" as belonging to spirit; and in contrasting this "I" with the world he cannot do otherwise than reckon the perceptions given to the senses, the realm of matter, as belonging to the world. In doing so, man places himself within the contrast of spirit and matter. He must do so all the more because his own body belongs to the material world. Thus the "I" belongs to the realm of spirit, as part of it; the material things and events which are perceived by the senses belong to the "world." All the problems connected with spirit and matter, man finds again in the fundamental riddle of his own nature. Monism pays attention only to the unity and tries either to deny or to efface the contrasts, which are there nevertheless. Neither of these two views is satisfactory, for they do not do justice to the facts. Dualism sees spirit (I) and matter (world) as two fundamentally different entities and cannot, therefore, understand how they can interact upon each other. How should spirit know what goes on in matter, if the essential nature of matter is quite alien to spirit? And how, in these circumstances, should spirit be able to act upon matter, in order to transform its intentions into actions? The most clever and the most absurd hypotheses have been put forward to solve these problems. But, so far, monism has fared no better. Up to now it has tried to justify itself in three different ways. Either it denies spirit and becomes materialism; or it denies matter and seeks its salvation in spiritualism<sup>11</sup>; or it maintains that since even in the simplest entities in the world spirit and matter are indivisibly bound together, there is no need for surprise if these two kinds of existence are both present in the human being, for they are never found apart.

Materialism<sup>12</sup> can never arrive at a satisfactory explanation of the world. For every attempt at an explanation must of necessity begin with man's forming thoughts about the phenomena of the world. Materialism, therefore, takes its start from thoughts about matter or material processes. In doing so, it straightway confronts two different kinds of facts, namely, the material world and the thoughts about it. The materialist tries to understand thoughts by regarding them as a purely material process. He believes that thinking takes place in the brain much in the same way that digestion takes place in the animal organs. Just as he ascribes to matter mechanical and organic effects, so he also attributes to matter, in certain circumstances, the ability to think. He forgets that in doing this he has merely shifted the problem to another place. Instead of to himself, he ascribes to matter the ability to think. And thus he is back again at his starting-point. How does matter come to reflect about its own nature! Why is it not simply satisfied with itself and with its existence? The materialist has turned his attention away from the definite subject, from our own I, and has arrived at a vague, indefinite image. And here again, the same problem comes to meet him. The materialistic view is unable to solve the problem; it only transfers it to another place.

How does the matter stand with the spiritualistic view? The extreme spiritualist denies to matter its independent existence and regards it merely as product of spirit. But when he tries to apply this view of the world to the solution of the riddle of his own human nature, he finds himself in a corner. Confronting the I, which can be placed on the side of spirit, there stands, without any mediation, the physical world. No spiritual approach to it seems possible; it has to be perceived and experienced by the I by means of material processes. Such material processes the "I" does not find in itself if it regards its own nature as having only spiritual validity. The physical world is never found in what it works out spiritually. It seems as if the "I" would have to admit that the world would remain closed to it if it did not establish a non-spiritual relation to the world. Similarly, when we come to be active, we have to translate our intentions into realities with the help of material substances and forces. In other words, we are dependent upon the outer world. The most extreme spiritualist - or rather, the thinker who, through absolute idealism, appears as an extreme spiritualist - is Johann Gottlieb Fichte.<sup>13</sup> He attempts to derive the whole edifice of the world from the "I." What he has actually accomplished is a magnificent thought-picture of the world, without any content of experience. As little as it is possible for the materialist to argue the spirit away, just as little is it possible for the idealist to argue away the outer world of matter.

The first thing man perceives when he seeks to gain knowledge of his "I" is the activity of this "I" in the conceptual elaboration of the world of ideas. This is the reason why someone who follows a world-view which inclines toward spiritualism may feel tempted, when looking at his own human nature, to acknowledge nothing of spirit except his own world of ideas. In this way spiritualism becomes one-sided idealism. He does not reach the point of seeking through the world of ideas a spiritual world; in the world of his ideas he sees the spiritual world itself. As a result of this, he is driven to remain with his world-view as if chained within the activity of his "I."

The view of Friedrich Albert Lange<sup>14</sup> is a curious variety of idealism, put forward by him in his widely read History of Materialism. He suggests that the materialists are quite right in declaring all phenomena, including our thinking, to be the product of purely material processes, only, in turn, matter and its processes are themselves the product of our thinking.

“The senses give us the effects of things, not true copies, much less the things themselves. To these mere effects belong the senses themselves, as well as the brain and the molecular vibrations which are thought to go on there.”

That is, our thinking is produced by the material processes, and these by the thinking of the “I.” Lange’s philosophy, in other words, is nothing but the story - applied to concepts - of the ingenious Baron Miinnchhausen,<sup>15</sup> who holds himself up in the air by his own pigtail.

The third form of monism is the one which sees the two entities, matter and spirit, already united in the simplest being (the atom). But nothing is gained by this, either, for here again the question, which really originates in our consciousness, is transferred to another place. How does the simple being come to manifest itself in two different ways, if it is an indivisible unity?

To all these viewpoints it must be objected that it is first and foremost in our own consciousness that we meet the basic and original contrast. It is we who detach ourselves from the bosom of nature and contrast ourselves as “I” with the “world.” Goethe<sup>16</sup> has given classic expression to this in his essay On Nature, although at first glance his manner may be considered quite unscientific: “We live in the midst of her (nature) yet are we strangers to her. Ceaselessly she speaks to us, and yet betrays not her secrets.” But Goethe knew the other side too: “All human beings are in her and she is in all human beings.”

Just as true as it is that we have estranged ourselves from nature, so is it also true that we feel: We are within nature and we belong to it. That which lives in us can only be nature’s own influence.

We must find the way back to nature again. A simple consideration can show us this way. We have, it is true, detached ourselves from nature, but we must have taken something of it over with us, into our own being. This essence of nature in us we must seek out, and then we shall also find the connection with it once again. Dualism neglects this. It considers the inner being of man as a spiritual entity quite alien to nature, and seeks somehow to hitch it onto nature. No wonder it cannot find the connecting link. We can only understand nature outside us when we have first learned to recognize it within us. What within us is akin to nature must be our guide. This points out our path. We shall not speculate about the interaction of nature and spirit. But we shall penetrate the depths of our own being, there to find those elements which we took with us in our flight from nature.

Investigation of our own being must bring the solution of the riddle. We must reach a point where we can say to ourselves: Here I am no longer merely "I," here I encounter something which is more than "I."

I am aware that many who have read thus far will not have found my discussion "scientific" in the usual sense. To this I can only reply that so far I have not been concerned with scientific results of any kind, but with the simple description of what everyone experiences in his own consciousness. A few expressions concerning the attempts to reconcile man's consciousness and the world have been used only for the purpose of clarifying the actual facts. I have, therefore, made no attempt to use the expressions "I," "spirit," "world," "nature," in the precise way that is usual in psychology and philosophy. Ordinary consciousness is unaware of the sharp distinctions made by the sciences, and up to this point it has only been a matter of describing the facts of everyday conditions. I am concerned, not with how science, so far, has interpreted consciousness, but with how we experience it in daily life.

### **THINKING IN THE SERVICE OF UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD**

When I see how a billiard ball, when struck, communicates its motion to another ball, I remain entirely without influence on the course of this event which I observe. The direction and velocity of the second ball is determined by the direction and velocity of the first. As long as I do no more than observe, I cannot say anything about the motion of the second ball until it actually moves. The situation alters if I begin to reflect on the content of my observation. The purpose of my reflection is to form concepts of the event. I bring the concept of an elastic ball into connection with certain other concepts of mechanics, and take into consideration the special circumstances prevailing in this particular instance. In other words, to the action taking place without my doing, I try to add a second action which unfolds in the conceptual sphere. The latter is dependent on me. This is shown by the fact that I could rest content with the observation and forgo all search for concepts if I had no need of them. If, however, this need is present, then I am not satisfied until I have brought the concepts ball, elasticity, motion, impact, velocity, etc., into a certain connection, to which the observed process is related in a definite way. As certain as it is that the event takes place independently of me, so certain is it also that the conceptual process cannot take place without my doing it.

We shall consider later whether this activity of mine is really a product of my own independent being or whether the modern physiologists are right who say that we cannot think as we will, but that we must think exactly as the thoughts and thought-connections present in our consciousness determine.<sup>17</sup> For the time being we wish merely to establish the fact that we constantly feel compelled to seek for concepts and connections of concepts standing in a certain relation to objects and events given independently of us. Whether this activity is really ours, or whether we accomplish it according to an unalterable necessity, we shall leave aside for the moment. That at first sight it appears to be our activity is beyond doubt. We know with absolute certainty that we are not given

the concepts together with the objects. That I myself am the doer may be illusion, but to immediate observation this certainly appears to be the case. The question here is: What do we gain by finding a conceptual counterpart to an event?

There is a profound difference between the ways in which, for me, the parts of an event are related to one another before and after the discovery of the corresponding concepts. Mere observation can follow the parts of a given event as they occur, but their connection remains obscure without the help of concepts. I see the first billiard ball move toward the second in a certain direction and with a definite velocity. I must wait for what will happen after the impact, and again I can follow what happens only with my eyes. Let us assume that at the moment the impact occurs someone obstructs my view of the field where the event takes place: then - as mere onlooker - I have no knowledge of what happens afterward. The situation is different if before my view was obstructed I had discovered the concepts corresponding to the nexus of events. In that case I can estimate what occurs, even when I am no longer able to observe. An object or event which has only been observed does not of itself reveal anything about its connection with other objects or events. This connection comes to light only when observation combines with thinking.

Observation and thinking are the two points of departure for all spiritual striving of man insofar as he is conscious of such striving. What is accomplished by ordinary human reason as well as by the most complicated scientific investigations rests on these two fundamental pillars of our spirit. Philosophers have started from various primary antitheses: idea and reality, subject and object, appearance and thing-in-itself, ego and non-ego, idea and will, concept and matter, force and substance, the conscious and the unconscious. It is easy to show, however, that all these antitheses must be preceded by that of observation and thinking, as the one the most important for man.

Whatever principle we wish to advance, we must prove that somewhere we have observed it, or express it in the form of a clear thought which can be re-thought by others. Every philosopher who begins to speak about his fundamental principles must make use of the conceptual form, and thereby makes use of thinking. He therefore indirectly admits that for his activity he presupposes thinking. Whether thinking or something else is the main element in the evolution of the world, we shall not decide as yet. But that without thinking the philosopher can gain no knowledge of the evolution of the world, is immediately clear. Thinking may play a minor part in the coming into being of world phenomena, but thinking certainly plays a major part in the coming into being of a view about them.

As regards observation, it is due to our organization that we need it. For us, our thinking about a horse and the object horse are two separate things. But we have access to the object only through observation. As little as we can form a concept of a horse by merely staring at it, just as little are we able to produce a corresponding object by mere thinking.

In sequence of time, observation even precedes thinking. For even thinking we learn to know first by means of observation. It was essentially a description of an observation

when, at the opening of this chapter, we gave an account of how thinking is kindled by an event and of how it goes beyond what is given without its activity. Whatever enters the circle of our experiences we first become aware of through observation. The contents of sensation, of perception, of contemplation, of feelings, of acts of will, of the pictures of dreams and fantasy, of representations, of concepts and ideas, of all illusions and hallucinations are given us through observation.

However, as object of observation, thinking differs essentially from all other objects. The observation of a table or a tree occurs in me as soon as these objects appear within the range of my experience. But my thinking that goes on about these things, I do not observe at the same time. I observe the table; the thinking about the table I carry out, but I do not observe it at the same moment. I would first have to transport myself to a place outside my own activity if, besides observing the table, I wanted also to observe my thinking about the table. Whereas observation of things and events, and thinking about them, are but ordinary occurrences filling daily life, the observation of thinking itself is a sort of exceptional situation. This fact must be taken into account sufficiently when we come to determine the relation of thinking to all other contents of observation. It is essential to be clear about the fact that when thinking is observed the same procedure is applied to it as the one we normally apply to the rest of the world-content, only in ordinary life we do not apply it to thinking.

Someone might object that what I have said here about thinking also holds good for feeling and for all other soul activities. When, for example, we feel pleasure, the feeling is also kindled by an object, and it is this object I observe, and not the feeling of pleasure. This objection, however, is based upon an error. Pleasure does not have at all the same relationship to its object as has the concept which thinking builds up. I am absolutely conscious of the fact that the concept of a thing is built up by my activity, whereas pleasure is produced in me by an object in the same way as, for instance, a change is caused in an object by a stone which falls upon it. For observation, a pleasure is given in exactly the same way as that is given which causes it. The same is not true of concepts. I can ask: Why does a particular event arouse in me a feeling of pleasure? But it is never possible to ask: Why does an event produce in me a certain number of concepts? That simply has no sense. When I reflect about an event there is no question of an effect on me. I learn nothing about myself by knowing the concepts which correspond to the change observed in a pane of glass when a stone is thrown against it. But I very definitely do learn something about my personality when I know the feeling which a certain event arouses in me. When I say of an observed object: This is a rose, I say absolutely nothing about myself; but when I say of the same thing: It gives me a feeling of pleasure, I characterize not only the rose but also myself in my relation to the rose.

There can, therefore, be no question of comparing thinking and feeling as objects of observation. And the same could easily be shown concerning other activities of the human soul. Unlike thinking, they belong in the same sphere as other observed objects and events. It is characteristic of the nature of thinking that it is an activity directed solely upon the observed object and not upon the thinking personality. This can already be seen from the way we express our thoughts, as distinct from the way we express our feelings

or acts of will in relation to objects. When I see an object and recognize it as a table, generally I would not say: I am thinking of a table, but: This is a table. But I would say: I am pleased with the table. In the first instance I am not at all interested in pointing out that I have entered into any relationship with the table, whereas in the second it is just this relationship that matters. In saying: I am thinking of a table, I already enter the exceptional situation characterized above, where something is made an object of observation which is always contained within our soul's activity, only normally it is not made an object of observation.

It is characteristic of thinking that the thinker forgets thinking while doing it. What occupies him is not thinking, but the object of thinking which he observes.

The first thing then, that we observe about thinking is that it is the unobserved element in our ordinary life of thought.

The reason we do not observe thinking in our daily life of thought is because it depends upon our own activity. What I myself do not bring about, enters my field of observation as something objective. I find myself confronted by it as by something that has come about independently of me; it comes to meet me; I must take it as the presupposition of my thinking process. While I reflect on the object, I am occupied with it, my attention is turned to it. This activity is, in fact, thinking contemplation. My attention is directed not to my activity but to the object of this activity. In other words: while I think, I do not look at my thinking which I produce, but at the object of thinking which I do not produce.

I am even in the same position when I let the exceptional situation come about and think about my own thinking. I can never observe my present thinking, but only afterward can I make into an object of thinking the experience I have had of my thinking-process. If I wanted to observe my present thinking, I would have to split myself into two persons: one to do the thinking, the other to observe this thinking. This I cannot do. I can only accomplish it in two separate acts. The thinking to be observed is never the one actually being produced, but another one. Whether for this purpose I observe my own earlier thinking, or follow the thinking process of another person, or else, as in the above example of the movements of the billiard balls, presuppose an imaginary thinking process, makes no difference.

Two things that do not go together are actively producing something and confronting this in contemplation. This is already shown in the First Book of Moses. The latter represents God as creating the world in the first six days, and only when the world is there is the possibility of contemplating it also present: "And God saw everything that he had made and, behold, it was very good." So it is also with our thinking. It must first be present before we can observe it.

The reason it is impossible for us to observe thinking when it is actually taking place, is also the reason it is possible for us to know it more directly and more intimately than any other process in the world. It is just because we ourselves bring it forth that we know the characteristic features of its course, the manner in which the process takes place. What in

the other spheres of observation can be found only indirectly: the relevant context and the connection between the individual objects - in the case of thinking is known to us in an absolutely direct way. Off-hand, I do not know why, for my observation, thunder follows lightning, but from the content of the two concepts I know immediately why my thinking connects the concept of thunder with the concept of lightning. Naturally here it does not matter whether I have correct concepts of thunder and lightning. The connection between those concepts I have is clear to me, and indeed this is the case through the concepts themselves.

This transparent clarity of the process of thinking is quite independent of our knowledge of the physiological basis of thinking. I speak here of thinking insofar as it presents itself to observation of our spiritual activity. How one material process in my brain causes or influences another while I carry out a line of thought, does not come into consideration at all. What I see when I observe thinking is not what process in my brain connects the concept of lightning with the concept of thunder, but I see what motivates me to bring the two concepts into a particular relationship. My observation of thinking shows me that there is nothing that directs me in my connecting one thought with another, except the content of my thoughts; I am not directed by the material processes in my brain. In a less materialistic age than ours this remark would of course be entirely superfluous. Today however, when there are people who believe: When we know what matter is, we shall also know how matter thinks, - it has to be said that it is possible to speak about thinking without entering the domain of brain physiology at the same time. Today many people find it difficult to grasp the concept of thinking in its purity. Anyone who wants to contrast the representation of thinking I have here developed, with Cabanis' 18 statement, "The brain secretes thoughts as the liver does gall or the spittle-glands spittle, etc.," simply does not know what I am talking about. He tries to find thinking by means of a mere process of observation such as we apply to other objects that make up the content of the world. He cannot find it in this manner because as I have shown, it eludes normal observation. Whoever cannot overcome materialism lacks the ability to bring about in himself the exceptional situation described above, which brings to his consciousness what remains unconscious in all other spiritual activities. If a person does not have the good will to place himself in this situation, then one can no more speak to him about thinking than one can speak about color to a person who is blind. However, he must not believe that we consider physiological processes to be thinking. He cannot explain thinking because he simply does not see it.

However, one possessing the ability to observe thinking, - and with goodwill every normally organized person has this ability, - this observation is the most important he can make. For he observes something which he himself brings to existence; he finds himself confronted not by a foreign object, to begin with, but by his own activity. He knows how what he observes comes to be. He sees through the connections and relations. A firm point is attained from which, with well-founded hope, one can seek for the explanation of the rest of the world's phenomena.

The feeling of possessing such a firm point caused the founder of modern philosophy, Renatus Cartesius,<sup>19</sup> to base the whole of human knowledge on the principle, I think,



therefore I am. All other things, all other events are present independent of me. Whether they are there as truth or illusion or dream I know not. Only one thing do I know with absolute certainty, for I myself bring it to its sure existence: my thinking. Perhaps it also has some other origin as well, perhaps it comes from God or from elsewhere, but that it is present in the sense that I myself bring it forth, of that I am certain. Cartesius had, to begin with, no justification for giving his statement any other meaning. He could maintain only that within the whole world content it is in my thinking that I grasp myself within that activity which is most essentially my own. What is meant by the attached therefore I am, has been much debated. It can have a meaning in one sense only. The simplest assertion I can make about something is that it is, that it exists. How this existence can be further defined I cannot say straight away about anything that comes to meet me. Each thing must first be studied in its relation to others before it can be determined in what sense it can be said to exist. An event that comes to meet me may be a set of perceptions, but it could also be a dream, a hallucination, and so forth. In short, I am unable to say in what sense it exists. I cannot gather this from the event in itself, but I shall learn it when I consider the event in its relation to other things. From this, however, I can, again, learn no more than how it is related to these other things. My search only reaches solid ground if I find an object which exists in a sense which I can derive from the object itself. As thinker I am such an object, for I give my existence the definite, self-dependent content of the activity of thinking. Having reached this, I can go on from here and ask: Do the other objects exist in the same or in some other sense?

When thinking is made the object of observation, to the rest of the elements to be observed is added something which usually escapes attention; but the manner in which the other things are approached by man is not altered. One increases the number of observed objects, but not the number of methods of observation. While we are observing the other things, there mingles in the universal process - in which I now include observation - one process which is overlooked. Something different from all other processes is present, but is not noticed. But when I observe my thinking, no such unnoticed element is present. For what now hovers in the background is, again, nothing but thinking. The observed object is qualitatively the same as the activity directed upon it. And that is another characteristic feature of thinking. When we observe it, we do not find ourselves compelled to do so with the help of something qualitatively different, but can remain within the same element.

When I weave an object, given independently of me, into my thinking, then I go beyond my observation, and the question is: Have I any right to do so? Why do I not simply let the object act upon me? In what way is it possible that my thinking could be related to the object? These are questions which everyone who reflects on his own thought processes must put to himself. They cease to exist when one thinks about thinking. We do not add anything foreign to thinking, and consequently do not have to justify such an addition.

Schelling<sup>20</sup> says: "To gain knowledge of nature means to create nature." If these words of the bold nature-philosopher are taken literally, we should have to renounce forever all knowledge of nature. For after all, nature is there already, and in order to create it a second time, one must know the principles according to which it originated. From the

nature already in existence one would have to learn the conditions of its existence in order to apply them to the nature one wanted to create. But this learning, which would have to precede the creating, would, however, be knowing nature, and would remain this even if, after the learning, no creation took place. Only a nature not yet in existence could be created without knowing it beforehand.

What is impossible with regard to nature: creating before knowing, we achieve in the case of thinking. If we wanted to wait and not think until we had first learned to know thinking, then we would never think at all. We have to plunge straight into thinking in order to be able, afterward, to know thinking by observing what we ourselves have done. We ourselves first create an object when we observe thinking. All other objects have been created without our help.

Against my sentence, We must think before we can contemplate thinking, someone might easily set another sentence as being equally valid: We cannot wait with digesting, either, until we have observed the process of digestion. This objection would be similar to the one made by Pascal<sup>21</sup> against Cartesius, when he maintained that one could also say: I go for a walk, therefore I am. Certainly I must resolutely get on with digesting before I have studied the physiological process of digestion. But this could only be compared with the contemplation of thinking if, after having digested, I were not to contemplate it with thinking, but were to eat and digest it. It is, after all, not without significance that whereas digestion cannot become the object of digestion, thinking can very well become the object of thinking.

This, then, is beyond doubt: In thinking we are grasping a corner of the universal process, where our presence is required if anything is to come about. And, after all, this is just the point. The reason things are so enigmatical to me is that I do not participate in their creation. I simply find them there, whereas in the case of thinking I know how it is made. This is why a more basic starting point than thinking, from which to consider all else in the world, does not exist.

Here I should mention another widely current error which prevails with regard to thinking. It consists in this, that it is said: Thinking, as it is in itself, we never encounter. That thinking which connects the observations we make of our experiences and weaves them into a network of concepts, is not at all the same as that thinking which later we extract from the objects we have observed and then make the object of our consideration. What we first unconsciously weave into things is something quite different from what we consciously extract from them afterward.

To draw such conclusions is not to see that in this way it is impossible to escape from thinking. It is absolutely impossible to come out of thinking if one wants to consider it. When one distinguishes an unconscious thinking from a later conscious thinking, then one must not forget that this distinction is quite external and has nothing to do with thinking as such. I do not in the least alter a thing by considering it with my thinking. I can well imagine that a being with quite differently organized sense organs and with a differently functioning intelligence would have a quite different representation of a horse

from mine, but I cannot imagine that my own thinking becomes something different because I observe it. What I observe is what I myself bring about. What my thinking looks like to an intelligence different from mine is not what we are speaking about now; we are speaking about what it looks like to me. In any case, the picture of my thinking in another intelligence cannot be truer than my own picture of it. Only if I were not myself the thinking being, but thinking confronted me as the activity of a being foreign to me, could I say that my picture of thinking appeared in quite a definite way, and that I could not know what in itself the thinking of the beings was like.

So far there is not the slightest reason to view my own thinking from a standpoint different from the one applied to other things. After all, I consider the rest of the world by means of thinking. How should I make of my thinking an exception?

With this I consider that I have sufficiently justified making thinking my starting point in my approach to an understanding of the world. When Archimedes<sup>22</sup> had discovered the lever, he thought that with its help he could lift the whole cosmos from its hinges if only he could find a point upon which he could support his instrument. He needed something that was supported by itself, that was not carried by anything else. In thinking we have a principle which exists by means of itself. From this principle let us attempt to understand the world. Thinking we can understand through itself. So the question is only whether we can also understand other things through it.

I have so far spoken of thinking without considering its vehicle, man's consciousness. Most present-day philosophers would object: Before there can be thinking, there must be consciousness. Therefore, one should begin, not from thinking, but from consciousness. No thinking can exist without consciousness. To them I must reply: If I want to have an explanation of what relation exists between thinking and consciousness, I must think about it. In doing so I presuppose thinking. To this could be said: When the philosopher wants to understand consciousness he makes use of thinking, and to that extent presupposes it, but in the ordinary course of life thinking does arise within consciousness and, therefore, presupposes this. If this answer were given to the World Creator who wished to create thinking, it would no doubt be justified. One naturally cannot let thinking arise without first having brought about consciousness. However, the philosopher is not concerned with the creation of the world, but with the understanding of it. Therefore he has to find the starting point, not for the creation, but for the understanding of the world. I consider it most extraordinary that a philosopher should be reproached for being concerned first and foremost about the correctness of his principles, rather than turning straight to the objects he wants to understand. The World Creator had to know, above all, how to find a vehicle for thinking; the philosopher has to find a secure foundation for his understanding of what already exists. How can it help us to start from consciousness and apply thinking to it, if first we do not know whether it is possible to reach any explanation of things by means of thinking?

We must first consider thinking quite impartially, without reference to a thinking subject or a thought object. For in subject and object we already have concepts formed by thinking. There is no denying: Before anything else a can be understood, thinking must

be understood. To deny this is to fail to realize that man is not a first link in creation, but the last. Therefore, for an explanation of the world by means of concepts, one cannot start from the first elements of existence, but must begin with what is nearest to us and is most intimately ours. We cannot at one bound transport ourselves to the beginning of the world, in order to begin our investigations there; we must start from the present moment and see whether we cannot ascend from the later to the earlier. As long as geology spoke in terms of assumed revolutions in order to explain the present condition of the earth, it groped in darkness. It was only when it made its beginnings from the investigations of those processes at present at work on the earth, and from these drew conclusions about the past, that it gained a secure foundation. As long as philosophy assumes all sorts of principles such as atom, motion, matter, will, the unconscious, it will get nowhere. Only when the philosopher recognizes as his absolute first that which came as the absolute last, can he reach his goal. But this absolute last in world evolution is Thinking.

There are people who say: Whether or not our thinking is right in itself cannot be established with certainty, after all. And to this extent the point of departure is still a doubtful one. It would be just as sensible to raise doubts as to whether in itself a tree is right or wrong. Thinking is a fact, and to speak of the rightness or wrongness of a fact has no sense. At most, I can have doubts as to whether thinking is being rightly applied, just as I can doubt whether a certain tree supplies a wood suitable for making tools for a particular purpose. To show to what extent the application of thinking to the world is right or wrong, is just the task of this book. I can understand anyone doubting whether we can ascertain anything about the world by means of thinking, but it is incomprehensible to me how anyone can doubt the rightness of thinking in itself.

Addition to the Revised Edition (1918): In the preceding discussion, the significant difference between thinking and all other activities of the soul has been referred to as a fact which reveals itself to a really unprejudiced observation. Unless this unprejudiced observation is achieved, against this discussion one is tempted to raise objections such as these: When I think about a rose, then after all, this also is only an expression of a relation of my "I" to the rose, just as when I feel the beauty of the rose. In the case of thinking, a relation between "I" and object exists in the same way as in the case of feeling or perceiving. To make this objection is to fail to realize that it is only in the activity of thinking that the "I" knows itself to be completely at one with that which is active - going into all the ramifications of the activity. In the case of no other soul activity is this completely so. When, for example, a pleasure is felt, a more sensitive observation can quite easily detect to what extent the "I" knows itself to be one with something active, and to what extent there is something passive in it so that the pleasure merely happens to the "I." And this is the case with the other soul activities. But one should not confuse "having thought-images" with the working through of thought by means of thinking. Thought-images can arise in the soul in the same way as dreams or vague intimations. This is not thinking. - To this could be said: If this is what is meant by thinking, then the element of will is within thinking, and so we have to do not merely with thinking, but also with the will within thinking. However, this would only justify one in saying: Real thinking must always be willed. But this has nothing to do with the characterization of thinking as given in this discussion. The nature of thinking may be such that it must

necessarily always be willed; the point is that everything that is willed is - while being willed - surveyed by the "I" as an activity entirely its own. Indeed it must be said that just because this is the nature of thinking, it appears to the observer as willed through and through. Anyone who really takes the trouble to understand all that has to be considered in order to reach a judgment about thinking, cannot fail to recognize that this soul activity does have the unique character we have described here.

A personality highly appreciated as a thinker by the author of this book, has objected that it is impossible to speak about thinking as is done here, because what one believes one is observing as active thinking only appears to be so. In reality one is observing only the results of an unconscious activity, which is the foundation of thinking. Only because this unconscious activity is not observed does the illusion arise that the observed thinking exists through itself, just as when in an illumination made by a rapid succession of electric sparks one believes one is seeing a continuous movement. This objection, too, rests on an inaccurate examination of the facts. To make it means that one has not taken into consideration that it is the "I" itself, standing within thinking, that observes its own activity. The "I" would have to stand outside thinking to be deluded as in the case of an illumination with a rapid succession of electric sparks. Indeed one could say: To make such a comparison is to deceive oneself forcibly, like someone who, seeing a moving light, insisted that it was being freshly lit by an unknown hand at every point where it appeared. - No, whoever wants to see in thinking anything other than a surveyable activity brought about within the "I," must first make himself blind to the plain facts that are there for the seeing, in order to be able to set up a hypothetical activity as the basis of thinking. He who does not so blind himself cannot fail to recognize that everything he "thinks into" thinking in this manner takes him away from the essence of thinking. Unprejudiced observation shows that nothing belongs to thinking's own nature that is not found in thinking itself. If one leaves the realm of thinking, one cannot come to what causes it.

## **THE WORLD AS PERCEPTION**

Concepts and ideas arise through thinking. What a concept is cannot be stated in words. Words can do no more than draw attention to our concepts. When someone sees a tree, his thinking reacts to his observation, an ideal counterpart is added to the object, and he considers the object and the ideal counterpart as belonging together. When the object disappears from his field of observation, only the ideal counterpart of it remains. This latter is the concept of the object. The further our range of experience is widened, the greater becomes the sum of our concepts. But a concept is never found isolated. Concepts combine to form a totality built up according to inherent laws. The concept "organism" combines, for example, with those of "gradual development, growth." Other concepts formed of single objects merge completely. All concepts that I form of lions, merge into the general concept "lion." In this way the single concepts unite in an enclosed conceptual system, in which each concept has its special place. Ideas are not qualitatively different from concepts. They are but concepts that are richer in content, more saturated

and comprehensive. At this particular point I must draw special attention to the fact that thinking is my point of departure, and not concepts and ideas which must first be gained by means of thinking. Concepts and ideas already presuppose thinking. Therefore, what I have said about the nature of thinking, that it exists through itself, that it is determined by nothing but itself, cannot simply be carried over and applied to concepts. (I mention this at this point explicitly because it is here that my difference with Hegel lies. For Hegel, the concept is the primary and original.)

The concept cannot be gained from observation. This can already be seen from the fact that the growing human being slowly and gradually forms concepts corresponding to the objects surrounding him. The concepts are added to observation.

A much-read contemporary philosopher, Herbert Spencer,<sup>23</sup> describes the mental process which we carry out in response to observation, in the following way:

“If, when walking through the fields one day in September, we hear a sound a few yards in advance, and, on observing the ditch-side where it occurs, see the grass move, we shall probably turn toward the spot to learn by what this sound and motion are produced. As we approach, a partridge flutters in the ditch; on seeing this our curiosity is satisfied; we have what we call an explanation of the phenomena. This explanation, please notice, amounts to this: Because we have experienced countless times in life that a disturbance of the stationary position of small bodies is accompanied by the movement of other bodies existing among them, and because we have therefore generalized the relation between such disturbances and such movements, we consider this particular disturbance explained as soon as we find it to be an example of just this relationship.”<sup>24</sup>

A closer examination gives a very different result from what is described above. When I hear a sound, the first thing I do is to find the concept that corresponds to this observation. It is this concept that takes me beyond the sound. Someone who did not reflect further would simply hear the sound and be content with that. But, because I reflect, it becomes clear to me that I have to understand the sound as an effect. It is therefore only when I connect the concept of effect with the perception of the sound that I am induced to go beyond the single observation and look for the cause. The concept of effect calls up that of cause; I then look for the object which is the cause, and in this case I find it to be the partridge. But these concepts, cause and effect, I can never gain by mere observation, however many instances I may have observed. Observation calls up thinking, and it is thinking that then shows me how to fit one individual occurrence to another.

If one demands of a “strictly objective science” that it must take its content from observation alone, then one must at the same time require that it is to desist from all thinking. For by its very nature, thinking goes beyond the observed object.

We must now pass from thinking itself to the being who thinks, for it is through the thinker that thinking is combined with observation. Human consciousness is the stage upon which concept and observation meet one another and become united. In saying this,

we have at the same time characterized human consciousness. It is the mediator between thinking and observation. Insofar as the human being observes an object, it appears to him as given; insofar as he thinks, he appears to himself as active. He regards what comes to meet him as object, and himself as thinking subject. While he directs his thinking to the observation, he is conscious of the object; while he directs his thinking to himself he is conscious of himself, or is self-conscious. Human consciousness of necessity, must be self-conscious at the same time, because it is a thinking consciousness. For when thinking turns its attention to its own activity, then its own essential being, that is, its subject, is its object as well.

It must, however, not be overlooked that it is only with the help of thinking that we can define ourselves as subject and contrast ourselves with objects. For this reason, thinking must never be understood as a merely subjective activity. Thinking is beyond subject and object. It forms these two concepts, just as it forms all others. When therefore as thinking subject, we refer a concept to an object, we must not understand this reference as something merely subjective. It is not the subject that makes the reference, but thinking. The subject does not think because it is subject; rather it appears to itself as a subject because it is able to think. The activity carried out by man as a thinking being is, therefore, not a merely subjective activity. Rather it is neither subjective nor objective; it is an activity that goes beyond both these concepts. I ought never to say that my individual subject thinks; in fact, my subject exists by the very grace of thinking. Thinking, therefore, is an element that takes me beyond myself and unites me with the objects. Yet at the same time it separates me from them, inasmuch as it sets me, as subject, over against them.

Man's twofold nature is due to this: he thinks, and in so doing encompasses himself and the rest of the world; but at the same time, it is also by means of thinking that he defines himself as an individual who confronts the objects.

The next step is to ask ourselves: How does the other element, - that in consciousness meets with thinking - which we have so far simply called the object of observation, enter our consciousness?

In order to answer this question, we must separate from our field of observation all that has been brought into it by thinking. For the content of our consciousness at any moment is already permeated with concepts in the most varied ways.

We must imagine a being with fully developed human intelligence suddenly waking into existence out of nothing, and confronting the world. Everything of which it was aware before its thinking activity began, would be the pure content of observation. The world would then reveal to this being nothing but the mere disconnected aggregate of objects of sensation: colors, sounds, sensations of pressure, warmth, taste and smell, then feelings of pleasure and displeasure. This aggregate is the content of pure, unthinking observation. Over against it stands thinking, ready to unfold its activity if a point of attack can be found. Experience soon shows that it is found. Thinking is able to draw threads from one element of observation to another. It connects definite concepts with these elements and

thereby brings about a relationship between them. We have already seen above how a sound that comes to meet us is connected with another observation by our identifying the former as the effect of the latter.

If we now remind ourselves that the activity of thinking is never to be understood as a subjective activity, then we shall not be tempted to believe that such relationships, established by thinking, have merely a subjective value.

Our next task is to discover by means of thinking reflection what relation the above-mentioned directly given content of observation has to our conscious subject.

The varied ways of using words make it necessary for me to come to an agreement with my readers concerning the use of a word which I shall have to employ in what follows. I shall use the word perceptions for the immediate objects of sensation enumerated above, insofar as the conscious subject becomes aware of them through observation. It is therefore not the process of observation, but the object of observation which I call perception.<sup>25</sup>

I do not choose the word sensation because in physiology this has a definite meaning which is narrower than that of my concept of perception. I can call a feeling in myself a perception, but not a sensation in the physiological sense. But I also become aware of my feelings by their becoming perceptions for me. And the way we become aware of our thinking through observation is such that we can also call thinking, as it first comes to the notice of our consciousness, a perception.

The naive man considers his perceptions, in the sense in which they directly seem to appear to him, as things having an existence completely independent of himself. When he sees a tree he believes, to begin with, that it stands in the form which he sees, with the colors of its various parts, etc., there on the spot toward which his gaze is directed. When in the morning he sees the sun appear as a disk on the horizon and follows the course of this disk, his opinion is that all this actually exists (by itself) and occurs just as he observes it. He clings to this belief until he meets with further perceptions which contradict those he first had. The child who has as yet no experience of distance grasps at the moon, and does not correct his first impression as to the real distance until a second perception contradicts the first. Every extension of the circle of my perceptions compels me to correct my picture of the world. We see this in everyday life, as well as in the intellectual development of mankind. That picture which the ancients made for themselves of the relation of the earth to the sun and to the other heavenly bodies had to be replaced through Copernicus by a different one, because theirs did not accord with perceptions which were unknown in those early times. A man who had been born blind said, when operated on by Dr. Franz,<sup>25a</sup> that the idea of the size of objects which he had formed by his sense of touch before his operation, was a very different one. He had to correct his tactual perceptions by his visual perceptions.

Why are we compelled to make these constant corrections of our observations?



A simple reflection will answer this question. When I stand at one end of an avenue, the trees at the far end seem smaller and nearer together than those where I stand. The picture of my perception changes when I change the place from which I am looking. The form in which it appears to me, therefore, is dependent on a condition which belongs not to the object, but to me, the perceiver. It is all the same to the avenue where I stand. But the picture of it which I receive depends essentially on the place where I stand. In the same way, it is all the same to the sun and the planetary system that human beings happen to consider them from the earth; but the perception-picture of the heavens which human beings have is determined by the fact that they inhabit the earth. This dependence of our perception-picture upon our place of observation is the easiest one to grasp. Matters already become more difficult when we learn how our perceptions are dependent on our bodily and spiritual organization. The physicist shows us that within the space in which we hear a sound, vibrations of the air occur, and also that in the body in which we seek the origin of the sound, vibrating movements of its parts will be found. We perceive this movement as sound, but only if we have a normally constructed ear. Without this, the whole world would be forever silent for us. From physiology we know that there are people who perceive nothing of the splendor of color surrounding us. Their perception-picture shows only degrees of light and dark. Others are blind to one color, e.g., red. Their picture of the world lacks this shade of color, and therefore is actually a different one from that of the average person. I would call the dependence of my perception-picture on my place of observation, a mathematical one, and its dependence on my organization a qualitative one. The first determines the proportions of size and mutual distances of my perceptions, the second their quality. The fact that I see a red surface as red - this qualitative determination - depends on the organization of my eye.

My perception-pictures, then, are subjective to begin with. Knowledge of the subjective character of our perceptions may easily lead to doubt that there is any objective basis for them at all. If we know that a perception, for example, that of the color red or of a certain tone, is not possible without a specific structure of our organism, it is easy to believe that it has no existence at all apart from our subjective organization, that without the act of perceiving - the objective of which it is - it would have no kind of existence. This view found a classical exponent in George Berkeley.<sup>26</sup> His opinion was that man, from the moment he realizes the significance the subject has for perception, is no longer able to believe in the presence of a world without the conscious spirit. He said:

“Some truths there are so near and obvious to the mind that a man need only open his eyes to see them. Such I take this important one to be, viz., that all the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth - in a word, all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world - have not any subsistence without a mind; that their being is to be perceived or known; that, consequently, so long as they are not actually perceived by me, or do not exist in my mind or that of any other created spirit, they must either have no existence at all or else subsist in the mind of some Eternal Spirit.”

According to this view, nothing remains of the perception, if one disregards the fact of its being perceived. There is no color when none is seen, no sound when none is heard. Apart from the act of perception, extension, form and motion exist as little as do color

and sound. Nowhere do we see bare extension or form; these are always connected with color or some other quality unquestionably dependent on our subjectivity. If these latter disappear when our perception of them disappears, then the former, being bound up with them, must likewise disappear.

To the objection that even if figure, color, sound, etc., have no other existence than the one within the act of perception, yet there must be things that exist apart from consciousness and to which the conscious perception pictures are similar, the above view would answer that a color can be similar only to a color, a figure only to a figure. Our perceptions can be similar only to our perceptions, and to nothing else. What we call an object is also nothing but a collection of perceptions which are connected in a particular way. If I strip a table of its form, extension, color, etc., - in short, of all that is only my perception-then nothing else remains. If this view is followed to its logical conclusion, it leads to the assertion that the objects of my perceptions are present only through me and, indeed, only in as far as, and as long as I perceive them. They disappear with the act of perceiving them, and have no meaning apart from it. But apart from my perceptions I know of no objects and cannot know of any.

No objection can be made to this assertion as long as in general I merely take into account the fact that the perception is partially determined by the organization of my subject. It would be very different if we were able to estimate what function our perceiving has in bringing about a perception. We should then know what happens to the perception during the act of perceiving, and could also determine how much of it must already have existed before it was perceived.

This leads us to turn our consideration from the object of perception to its subject. I perceive not only other things; I also perceive myself. The immediate content of the perception of myself is the fact that I am the stable element in contrast to the continually coming and going perception-pictures. The perception of the I can always come up in my consciousness while I am having other perceptions. When I am absorbed in the perception of an object that is given, then, for the time being, I am conscious only of this object. To this, the perception of my self can come. I am then conscious, not only of the object, but also of my own personality, which confronts the object and observes it. I do not merely see a tree, but I also know that it is I who see it. I also realize that something takes place in me while I observe the tree. When the tree disappears from my field of vision, an after-effect of this process remains in my consciousness: an image of the tree. This image became united with my self during my observation. My self has become enriched; its content has taken a new element into itself. This element I call my representation of the tree. I should never be in a position to speak of representations if I did not experience them in the perception of my own self. Perceptions would come and go; I should let them slip by. Only because I perceive my self, and am aware that with each perception the content of my self also changes, do I find myself compelled to bring the observation of the object into connection with the changes in my own condition, and to speak of my representation.

I perceive the representation in my self in the same sense as I perceive color, sound, etc., in other objects. Now I am also able to make the distinction that I call those other objects that confront me, outer world, whereas the content of my self-perception I call inner world. Misunderstanding of the relationship between representation and object has led to the greatest mistakes in modern philosophy. The perception of a change in us, the modification experienced in the self, has been thrust into the foreground and the object which causes this modification is lost sight of altogether. It is said: We do not perceive the objects, but only our representations. I am supposed to know nothing of the table in itself, which is the object of my observation, but only of the changes which occur in my self while I perceive the table. This view should not be confused with that of Berkeley, mentioned above. Berkeley maintains the subjective nature of the content of perceptions, but he does not say that I can know only of my own representations. He limits man's knowledge to his representations because, in his opinion, there are no objects outside the act of representing. What I regard as a table is no longer present, according to Berkeley, when I cease to turn my gaze toward it. This is why Berkeley lets our perceptions arise directly out of the omnipotence of God. I see a table because God calls up this perception in me. For Berkeley, therefore, there are no real beings other than God and human spirits. What we call "world" is present only within spirits. For Berkeley, what the naive man calls outer world, or physical nature, is not there. This view is contrasted by the now predominant Kantian view" which limits our knowledge to our representations, not because it is convinced that there cannot be things in existence besides these representations, but because it believes us to be so organized that we can experience only the modification in our own self, not the thing-in-itself that causes this modification. This conclusion arises from the view that I know only my representations, not that there is no existence apart from them, but only that the subject cannot take such an existence directly into itself; all it can do is merely through

"the medium of its subjective thoughts to imagine it, invent it, think it, cognize it, or perhaps also fail to cognize it."28

This view believes it expresses something absolutely certain, something that is immediately obvious, in need of no proof.

"The first fundamental principle which the philosopher has to bring to clear consciousness consists in the recognition that our knowledge, to begin with, does not reach beyond our representations. Our representation is the only thing we experience and learn to know directly and, just because we have direct experience of it, even the most radical doubt cannot rob us of our knowledge. By contrast, the knowledge that goes beyond our representations - taking this expression here in the widest possible sense, so that all physical happenings are included in it - is open to doubt. Hence, at the very beginning of all philosophizing, all knowledge which goes beyond representations must explicitly be set down as being open to doubt."

These are the opening sentences of Volkelt's book on Kant's Theory of Knowledge.<sup>29</sup> What is put forward here as an immediate and self-evident truth is in reality the result of a line of thought which runs as follows: The naive man believes that the objects, just as

he perceives them, are also present outside his consciousness. Physics, physiology and psychology, however, seem to show that for our perceptions our organization is necessary and that, therefore, we cannot know about anything except what our organization transmits to us from the objects. Our perceptions therefore are modifications of our organization, not things-in-themselves. The train of thought here indicated has, in fact, been characterized by Eduard von Hartmann<sup>30</sup> as the one which must lead to the conviction that we can have a direct knowledge only of our own representations.<sup>31</sup> Outside our organisms we find vibrations of physical bodies and of air; these are sensed by us as sounds, and therefore it is concluded that what we call sound is nothing but a subjective reaction of our organisms to these movements in the external world. In the same way, color and warmth are found to be merely modifications of our organisms. And, indeed, the view is held that these two kinds of perceptions are called forth in us through effects or processes in the external world which are utterly different from the experiences we have of warmth or of color. If these processes stimulate the nerves in my skin, I have the subjective perception of warmth; if they happen to encounter the optic nerve, I perceive light and color. Light, color and warmth, then, are the responses of my sensory nerves to external stimuli. Even the sense of touch does not reveal to me the objects of the outer world, but only conditions in myself. In the sense of modern physics, one must imagine that bodies consist of infinitely small particles, molecules, and that these molecules are not in direct contact, but are at certain distances from one another. Between them, therefore, is empty space. Across this space they act on one another by attraction and repulsion. If I put my hand on a body, the molecules of my hand by no means touch those of the body directly, but there remains a certain distance between body and hand, and what I sense as the body's resistance is nothing other than the effect of the force of repulsion which its molecules exert on my hand. I am completely external to the body and perceive only its effects upon my organism.

These considerations have been supplemented by the theory of the so-called specific nervous energy, which has been advanced by J. Miiller (1801-1958).<sup>32</sup> According to this theory, each sense has the peculiarity that it responds to all external stimuli in one definite way only. If the optic nerve is stimulated, perception of light results, irrespective of whether the nerve is stimulated by what we call light, or by a mechanical pressure, or an electric current. On the other hand, the same external stimulus applied to different senses gives rise to different perceptions. This appears to show that our sense-organs can transmit only what occurs in themselves, but nothing from the external world. They determine our perceptions, each according to its own nature.

Physiology also shows that there is no question of a direct knowledge of what the objects cause to take place in our sense-organs. When the physiologist traces the processes in our bodies, he discovers that already in the sense-organs, the effects of the external vibrations are modified in the most manifold ways. This can be seen most clearly in the case of the eye and ear. Both are very complicated organs which modify the external stimulus considerably before they conduct it to the corresponding nerve. From the peripheral end of the nerve the already modified stimulus is then led further to the brain. Here at last the central organs are stimulated in their turn. From this the conclusion is drawn that the external process must have undergone a series of transformations before it reaches

consciousness. What goes on in the brain is connected by so many intermediate processes with the external process, that any similarity to the latter is unthinkable. What the brain ultimately transmits to the soul is neither external processes nor processes in the sense-organs, but only such as occur in the brain. But even these are not directly perceived by the soul; what we finally have in consciousness are not brain processes at all, but sensations. My sensation of red has absolutely no similarity to the process which occurs in the brain when I sense the red. The red is caused by the processes in the brain and appears again only as an effect of this in the soul. This is why Hartmann says:<sup>33</sup> “What the subject perceives therefore is always only modifications of his own psychic states and nothing else.” When I have sensations, these are as yet far from being grouped into what I perceive as objects. For only single sensations can be transmitted to me by the brain. The sensations of hardness and softness are transmitted to me by the sense of touch, those of color and light by the sense of sight. Yet all these can be found united in one and the same object. The unification must, therefore, be caused by the soul itself; this means that the soul combines into bodies the separate sensations transmitted through the brain. My brain gives me separately and indeed along very different paths, the sensations of sight, touch and hearing, which the soul then combines into the representation “trumpet.” This last link (the representation of trumpet) is the very first process to enter my consciousness. In it can no longer be found anything of what is outside of me and originally made an impression on my senses. The external object has been entirely lost on the way to the brain and through the brain to the soul.

In the history of man’s intellectual endeavor it would be hard to find another edifice of thought which has been put together with greater ingenuity and yet which, on closer analysis, collapses into nothing. Let us look a little closer at the way it has been built up. The starting point is taken from what is given in naive consciousness, that is, from things as perceived. Then it is shown that nothing of what belongs to these things would be present for us had we no senses. No eye: no color. Therefore, the color is not yet present in what affects the eye. It arises first through the interaction of the eye and the object. The latter must, therefore, be colorless. But neither is the color present in the eye, for what is present there is a chemical or physical process which first has to be led by the optic nerve to the brain, and there releases another process. This is not yet the color. The latter is only called up in the soul through the process in the brain. As yet it does not enter my consciousness, but is first placed by the soul on a body outside. Here, finally, I believe that I perceive it. We have completed a circle. We are conscious of a colored object. This is the starting point; here the building up of thoughts begins. If I had no eye, for me the object would be colorless. I cannot, therefore, place the color on the body. I start on a search for it. I look for it in the eye: in vain; in the nerve: in vain; in the brain: in vain once more; in the soul: here I find it indeed, but not attached to the body. I recover the colored body only there at the point from which I started. The circle is closed. I am confident that I recognize as a product of my soul what the naive man imagines to be present out there in space.

As long as one remains here, everything seems to fit beautifully. But we must start again from the beginning. Until now I have been dealing with the outer perception, of which earlier, as naive man, I had a completely wrong opinion. I believed that just as I perceive

it, it had an objective existence. But now I have noticed that in the act of representing it, it disappears; that it is only a modification of my soul condition. Is there any justification for using it as a starting point in my consideration! Can I say of it that it affects my soul? From now on I have to treat the table, of which earlier I believed that it acted on me and brought about in me a representation of itself, as being itself a representation. From this it follows logically that my sense-organs and the processes in them are also mere subjective manifestations. I have no right to speak of a real eye, but only of my representation of eye. And the same holds good in regard to the nerves and the brain process, and no less in regard to what takes place in the soul itself, through which, out of the chaos of manifold sensations, objects are supposed to be built up. If I run through the steps of my act of cognition once more, presupposing the first line of thought to be correct, then the latter shows itself to be a web of representations which, as such, could not act upon one another. I cannot say: My representation of the object affects my representation of the eye, and from this interaction the representation of color comes about. Nor is there any need for saying this, for as soon as it is clear to me that my sense-organs and their activity, and my nerve and soul processes as well, can also be given only through perception, then the described line of thought shows itself in its full impossibility. It is true that I can have no perception without the corresponding sense-organ, but neither can I have the sense-organ without perception. From my perception of the table I can go over to the eye which sees it, and to the nerves in the skin which touch it, but what takes place in these I can, again, learn only from perception. And there I soon notice that in the process which takes place in the eye there is no trace of similarity to what I perceive as color. I cannot deny the existence of my color perception by pointing to the process which takes place in the eye during this perception. And just as little can I find the color in the nerve and brain processes; all I do is only add new perceptions, within the organism, to the first perception, which the naive man placed outside his organism. I simply pass from one perception to another.

Apart from this there is an error in the whole conclusion of the line of thought. I am able to follow what takes place in my organism up to the processes in my brain, even though my assumptions become more and more hypothetical the nearer I get to the central processes in the brain. But the path of observation from outside ceases with what takes place in my brain, ceases, in fact, with what I should observe if I could treat the brain with the assistance and methods of physics and chemistry. The path of observation from within begins with the sensation and continues up to the building up of objects out of the material of sensation. In the transition from brain-process to sensation, there is a gap in the path of observation.

This characteristic way of thinking, which describes itself as critical idealism, in contrast to the standpoint of naive consciousness which it calls naive realism, makes the mistake of characterizing one perception as representation while taking another in the very same sense as does the naive realism which it apparently refutes. Critical idealism wants to prove that perceptions have the character of representations; in this attempt it accepts - in naive fashion - the perceptions belonging to the organism as objective, valid facts, and, what is more, fails to see that it mixes up two spheres of observation, between which it can find no mediation.

Critical idealism is able to refute naive realism only by itself assuming, in naive-realistic fashion, that one's own organism has objective existence. As soon as the critical idealist becomes conscious of the complete similarity between the perceptions connected with one's own organism and those which naive realism assumes to have objective existence, he can no longer rely on the perceptions of the organism as being a safe foundation. He would have to regard his own subjective organization also as a mere complex of representations. But then the possibility ceases of regarding the content of the perceived world as a product of man's spiritual organization. One would have to assume that the representation "color" was only a modification of the representation "eye." So-called critical idealism cannot be proved without borrowing something from naive realism. Naive realism can only be refuted by accepting its assumptions - without testing them - in another sphere.

This much, then, is certain: Investigations within the sphere of perceptions cannot prove critical idealism, and consequently cannot strip perceptions of their objective character.

Still less can the principle, "The perceived world is my representation," be stated as if it were obvious and in need of no proof. Schopenhauer<sup>34</sup> begins his principal work, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, *The World as Will and Representation*, with the words:

"The world is my representation - this is a truth which holds good for every being that lives and cognizes, though man alone is able to bring it into reflective, abstract consciousness. If he really does this, then he has attained to philosophical self-consciousness. It then becomes clear and certain to him that he does not know a sun or an earth, but always only an eye that sees a sun, a hand that feels an earth; that the world which surrounds him is only there as representation, that means throughout only in relation to something else, to the one who represents, that is, to himself. If ever a truth can be asserted a priori, this one can, for it expresses the form most general of all possible and thinkable experiences, more general than time, or space, or causality, for all these presuppose it..."

The principle above: "The world is my representation," on which this is based, is, however, wrecked by the fact, already mentioned, that the eye and the hand are perceptions in just the same sense as the sun and the earth. And if one used Schopenhauer's expressions in his own sense, one could object to his principle: My eye that sees the sun and my hand that feels the earth are my representations, just like the sun and the earth themselves. But that, with this, the principle is cancelled out, is immediately obvious. For only my real eye and my real hand could have the representations "sun" and "earth" as their modifications; my representations "eye" and "hand" cannot have them. But critical idealism can speak of representations only.

It is impossible by means of critical idealism to gain insight into what relation perception has to representation. It is insensible to the distinction, mentioned on page 85, of what happens to the perception while perceiving takes place and what must be inherent in it before it is perceived. We must, therefore, attempt to gain this insight along another path.

## THE ACT OF KNOWING THE WORLD

From the foregoing considerations it follows that by investigating the content of our observation it is impossible to prove that our perceptions are representations. This proof is supposed to follow from the fact that if the process of perception takes place in the way it is imagined, according to the naive-realistic suppositions as to man's psychological and physiological constitution, then we are dealing, not with things-in-themselves, but merely with our representations of things. Now if naive realism, when consistently thought through, leads to results which directly contradict what it presupposes, then one must regard its presuppositions as unsuitable for the foundation of a world view and discard them. It is certainly inadmissible on the one hand to reject the presuppositions and yet, on the other, to regard their outcome as valid, as does the critical idealist when he bases his assertion, The world is my representation, on the so-called proof indicated above. (Eduard von Hartmann gives a full account of this line of argument in his work, *Das Grundproblem der Erkenntnistheorie*, *The Basic Problem of a Theory of Knowledge*.)

The correctness of critical idealism is one thing, the power of conviction of its proof another. How it stands with the former will be seen later in the course of our discussion. But the power of conviction of its proof is nil. If one builds a house and the first floor collapses while the second floor is being built, then the second floor collapses also. As first floor is related to second floor, so is naive realism related to critical idealism.

For the one holding the view that the whole world we perceive is only a world that we represent to ourselves and, indeed, only the effect on our soul of things unknown to us, the essential problem of knowledge is naturally concerned, not with the representations present only in the soul, but with the things which lie outside our consciousness and are independent of us. He asks: How much can we indirectly learn about them, since they are not directly accessible to our observation? From this point of view he is concerned, not with the inner connection of his conscious perceptions, but with their causes, which lie beyond his consciousness and exist independently of him while the perceptions disappear as soon as he turns his senses away from things. From this point of view, our consciousness acts like a mirror from which the pictures of things also disappear the moment its reflecting surface is not turned toward them. He who does not see things themselves, but only their reflections, must obtain information about their nature indirectly by drawing conclusions from the behavior of the reflections. This is the standpoint of modern natural science, which uses perceptions only as a means of obtaining information about the processes of matter which lie behind them, and alone really "are." If the philosopher, as critical idealist, acknowledges a real existence at all, then his sole aim is to gain knowledge of this real existence indirectly by means of his representations. His interest skips over the subjective world of representations and instead pursues what produces these representations.

But the critical idealist may go as far as to say: I am confined to the world of my representations and cannot get beyond it. If I think that there is something behind my representations, then again this thought is nothing but my representation. An idealist of this kind will then either deny the thing-in-itself entirely or, at any rate, say that it has no



significance for human beings, that it is as good as non-existent since we can know nothing of it.

To this kind of critical idealist the whole world seems a dream, in the face of which all striving for knowledge is simply meaningless. For him there can be only two kinds of men: those who are victims of the illusion that their own dream-pictures are real things, and the wise ones who see through the nothingness of this dream-world and therefore must gradually lose all desire to trouble themselves further about it. From this point of view, even one's own personality may become a mere dream phantom. Just as during sleep, among our dream-images an image of our self appears, so in waking consciousness the representation of the I is added to the representations of the outer world. We then have in consciousness not the real I, but only our representation of the I. Now, if the existence of things is denied or at least it is denied that we can know anything of them, then the existence or the knowledge of one's own personality must also be denied. The critical idealist then comes to maintain: "All reality transforms itself into a wonderful dream - without a life which is dreamed about, and without a spirit which dreams - into a dream which hangs together in a dream of itself."<sup>35</sup>

It does not matter whether the person who believes that he recognizes life to be a dream assumes nothing more behind this dream, or whether he refers his representations to real things: in either case, life must lose all scientific interest for him. But whereas all science must be meaningless for those who believe that the whole of the accessible universe is exhausted in dreams, for others who believe they can draw conclusions about the things from the representations, science will consist in the investigation of such "things-in-themselves." The first world view could be described as absolute illusionism, the second is called transcendental realism by its most consistent exponent, Eduard von Hartmann.<sup>36</sup>

Both these views have this in common with naive realism that they seek to establish themselves by means of an investigation of perceptions. However, nowhere within this sphere can they find a firm foundation. An essential question for an adherent of transcendental realism must be: How does the I bring about, out of itself, the world of representations? Insofar as it would be a means of investigating indirectly the world of the I-in-itself, an earnest striving for knowledge could still be kindled by a world of representations that was given us, even if this disappeared as soon as we shut our senses to the external world. If the things we experience were representations, then everyday life would be like a dream, and recognition of the true situation would be like an awakening. Our dream pictures also interest us as long as we are dreaming and, consequently, do not recognize them as dreams. The moment we awaken we no longer look for inner connections between our dream-pictures, but for the physical, physiological and psychological processes which caused them. In the same way a philosopher who considers the world to be his representation cannot be interested in the inner connection of the details within it. If he allows for the existence of an I at all, then he will not ask how his representations are connected with one another, but what takes place in the soul that exists independently of him while his consciousness contains a certain content of representations. If I dream that I am drinking wine which makes my throat burn, and I wake up coughing,<sup>37</sup> then the moment I awaken I cease to be interested in what the

dream was about; now my attention is concerned only with the physiological and psychological processes by means of which the irritation which caused me to cough comes to be symbolically expressed in the dream picture. Similarly the philosopher, as soon as he is convinced that the given world consists of nothing but representations, would at once turn from them to the real soul behind them. Things become worse when illusionism completely denies the existence of the I-in-itself behind representations, or at least holds it to be unknowable. One may easily arrive at such a view through the observation that in contrast to dreaming there exists the waking state, in which we have the opportunity to see through the dream and to refer it to the real connections of things, but that we have no condition which is related similarly to our waking conscious life. To adopt this view is to fail to see that in fact there is something which is related to mere perceiving as waking experience is related to dreams. This something is thinking. The naive man cannot be considered to lack the insight referred to here. He takes the world as it is and regards things as real in the sense in which he experiences them to be so. The first step, however, which is taken beyond this standpoint can only consist in asking: How is thinking related to perception? Whether or not the perception, in the form given me, continues to exist before and after my forming a representation of it, - if I want to say anything whatever about it, I can do so only with the help of thinking. If I say: The world is my representation, I have expressed the result of a thinking process, and if my thinking is not applicable to the world, then this result is erroneous. Between a perception and any kind of assertion about it, thinking slips in.

It has already been indicated why, in our consideration of things, we usually overlook thinking (See p. 61f.). This is due to the fact that we direct our attention only toward the object about which we think, but not toward our thinking at the same time. Naive consciousness treats thinking as something which has nothing to do with things, but stands altogether aloof from them and contemplates them. The picture which the thinker makes of the phenomena of the world is considered, not as something belonging to them, but as something existing only in men's heads. The world is complete, even without this picture. The world is finished and ready-made with all its substances and forces, and of this ready-made world man makes himself a picture. Whoever thinks along these lines should be asked: What gives you the right to declare the world to be complete without thinking? Does the world not produce thinking in the heads of men with the same necessity as it produces the blossom on a plant? Plant a seed in the earth. Root and stem will grow. It will unfold leaves and blossoms. Then place the plant before you. In your soul it connects itself with a definite concept. Why should this concept belong to the entire plant any less than leaf and blossom? You say: The leaves and blossoms are there without the presence of a perceiving subject; the concept, however, does not appear till a human being confronts the plant. Quite true. But leaves and blossoms appear on the plant only if there is soil in which the seed can be planted, and light and air in which the leaves and blossoms can unfold. In just this way does the concept of the plant arise when a thinking consciousness confronts it.

It is quite arbitrary to regard as a totality, as a thing in its entirety, the sum of what we experience through mere perception, and to regard as a mere addition, which has nothing to do with the thing itself, what reveals itself through thinking observation. If I receive a

rosebud today, the picture that offers itself to my perception is complete only for the moment. If I put the bud into water, tomorrow I shall get a quite different picture of my object. If I do not turn my gaze away from the rosebud, then I shall see today's state gradually change into tomorrow's through an infinite number of intermediate stages. The picture which presents itself to me at any one moment is only a chance section of an object which is in a continual process of becoming. If I do not put the bud into water, a whole series of states, which as possibilities lay within the bud, will not be evolved; or tomorrow I may be prevented from observing the blossom further and therefore will have an incomplete picture of it.

That opinion is quite subjective which, on the basis of a chance picture of a thing, declares: This is the thing.

It is equally inadmissible to declare the sum of perceptions to be the thing. It could well be possible for a being to receive the concept at the same time as, and undivided from, the perception. To such a being it would never occur that the concept did not belong to the thing. He would ascribe to the concept an existence indivisibly bound up with the thing.

Let me make myself clearer by an example. If I throw a stone horizontally through the air, I see it in different places, one after the other. I connect these places to form a line. In mathematics I learn to know various kinds of lines, one of which is the parabola. I know the parabola to be a line produced by a point moving according to certain laws. If I investigate the conditions under which the stone moves, I find that the path traversed is identical with the line I know as a parabola. That the stone moves just in a parabola is a result of the given conditions and necessarily follows from them. The form of the parabola belongs to the whole phenomenon as much as does any other feature of it. The being described above, who did not have to make the detour of thinking, would be given not only a sum of visual aspects at different points but, undivided from the whole occurrence, also the parabolic form of the path which we add to the phenomenon by means of thinking.

It is not due to the objects that they are given us at first without the corresponding concepts, but to our intellectual organization. Our being as a totality functions in such a way that from every reality the elements belonging to it flow to us from two directions: from the direction of perceiving and from that of thinking.

How I am organized for grasping them has nothing to do with the nature of things. The breach between perceiving and thinking is not present until the moment I, the one who contemplates them, confront the things. Which elements do, and which do not belong to the object, cannot at all depend on the manner in which I arrive at knowledge of these elements.

Man is a limited being. To begin with, he is a being among other beings. His existence is bound up with space and time. Because of this, it is always only a limited section of the total universe that can be given him. But this limited section links itself in all directions,

both in time and in space, to other sections. If our existence were so bound up with the surrounding world that every process would be a process in us as well, then the distinction between us and things would not exist. But then neither would there be any individual events for us. All events would pass over into one another continuously. The cosmos would be a unity, a totality enclosed within itself. Nowhere would there be a break in the stream of events. It is because of our limitations that things appear to us as if they were separate, when in reality they are not separate at all. Nowhere, for example, is the singular quality of red present by itself, in isolation. It is surrounded on all sides by other qualities, to which it belongs and without which it could not subsist. For us, however, to lift certain sections out from the rest of the world and to consider them by themselves, is a necessity. Our eye can take hold of only single colors, one after another, out of a totality of many colors, our understanding, of only single concepts out of a coherent system of concepts. This separating off is a subjective act, and it is due to the fact that man is not identical with the world process, but is a being among other beings. Now all depends on our defining how the being of man is related to other beings. This definition must be distinguished from merely becoming conscious of ourselves. This latter depends on the act of perceiving, just as does our becoming conscious of anything else. Self-perception shows me a number of qualities which I comprise in the unity of my personality in the same way as I comprise the qualities yellow, metallic, hard, etc., in the unity "gold." Self-perception does not take me beyond the sphere of what belongs to myself. This perceiving myself is to be distinguished from defining myself by means of thinking. Just as I insert a separate perception of the external world into the connection of things by means of thinking, so do I insert the perceptions derived from myself into the world process by means of thinking. When I perceive myself, then I see myself as enclosed within certain limits, but my thinking has nothing to do with these limits. In this sense I am a twofold being. I am enclosed within the sphere which I perceive as that of my personality, but I am also the bearer of an activity which, from a higher sphere, determines my limited existence. Our thinking is not individual like our sensing and feeling. It is universal. It receives an individual stamp in each separate human being only because it becomes related to his individual feelings and sensations. Through these particular colorings of the universal thinking, single persons differ from one another. A triangle has only one single concept. For the content of this concept it is quite immaterial whether the human bearer of consciousness who grasps it is A or B. But it will be grasped by each of the two bearers of consciousness in an individual way. This thought conflicts with a common prejudice which is very hard to overcome. Those who have this prejudice cannot reach the insight that the concept of triangle which my head grasps is the same concept as that which my neighbor's head grasps. The naive man considers himself to be the maker of his concepts. He therefore believes that each person has his own concepts. It is a fundamental requirement of philosophic thinking to overcome this prejudice. The one undivided concept, triangle, does not become a multiplicity because it is thought by many. For the thinking of the many is itself a unity.

In thinking, we are given that element which embraces our particular individuality and makes it one with the cosmos. In that we sense and feel (and also perceive), we are single entities; in that we think, we are the All-One Being that pervades everything. This is the deeper foundation of our twofold being: We see within us a simply absolute force come

into existence, a force which is universal, but we learn to know it, not as it issues from the center of the world, but at a point of the periphery. Were the former the case, as soon as we came to be conscious, we should know the whole world riddle. But since we stand at a point on the periphery and find that our own existence is confined within definite limits, we must learn to know the region which lies beyond our own being with the help of thinking, which penetrates into us out of the general world existence.

Through the fact that the thinking in us reaches out beyond our separate existence and relates itself to the general world existence, there arises in us the urge for knowledge. Beings without thinking do not have this urge. When other things confront them, this gives rise to no questioning within them. These other things remain external to such beings. But the concept rises up within thinking beings when they confront external things. It is that part of things which we receive not from outside, but from within. It is for knowledge to bring about the agreement, the union of the two elements, the inner and the outer.

The perception therefore is not something finished, not something self-contained, but one side of the total reality. The other side is the concept. The act of knowledge is the synthesis of perception and concept. Only perception and concept together constitute the whole thing.

The above explanations give proof that it is meaningless to seek for any common factor in the separate entities of the world, other than the ideal content to be found in thinking. All efforts must fail which seek to find any other world unity than this internally coherent ideal content which we gain by thinking consideration of our perceptions. Neither a humanly personal God, nor force, nor matter, nor idea-less will (Schopenhauer), is acceptable as the universal world unity. All these entities belong only to a limited sphere of our observation. Humanly limited personality we perceive only in man, force and matter in external things. As regards the will, it can be considered only as the expression of the activity of our finite personality. Schopenhauer<sup>38</sup> wants to avoid making "abstract" thinking the bearer of the world unity, and instead seeks something which seems to him to be immediate reality. This philosopher believes we can never approach the world so long as we regard it as an external world.

"In fact, the meaning sought for in the world that confronts me solely as my representation, or the transition from it, as mere representation of the cognizing subject, to whatever it may be besides this, could never be found if the investigator himself were nothing more than the pure cognizing subject (a winged cherub without a body). But he himself is rooted in that world, he finds himself in it as an individual; this means that his knowledge, which is the necessary bearer of the whole world as representation, is yet always given through the medium of a body, whose affections are, as we have shown, the starting point from which the intellect forms a view of that world. For the pure cognizing subject as such, this body is a representation like every other representation, an object among objects; in this respect its movements and actions are known to him in no other way than the changes in all other objects which he can contemplate, and would be just as strange and incomprehensible to him if their meaning were not revealed to him in an

entirely different way.... For the subject of cognition, who appears as an individual through his identity with the body, this body is given in two entirely different ways: It is given as a representation for intelligent consideration, as object among objects and subjected to their laws; but also, at the same time, in quite a different way, namely, as that which is directly known to everyone, and which is called will. Every true act of his will is also at once and unfailingly a movement of his body: he cannot will the act without perceiving at the same time that it appears as a movement of the body. The act of will and the action of the body are not two different conditions objectively recognized, connected by the bond of causality; they do not stand in the relation of cause and effect; they are one and the same, but are given in two entirely different ways: once quite directly, and once again for the intelligence that considers it.”<sup>39</sup>

By these arguments Schopenhauer believes himself entitled to see in the human body the “objectivity” of the will. In his opinion one feels in the actions of the body a direct reality, the thing-in-itself in the concrete. The objection to these arguments is that the actions of our body come to our consciousness only through self-perceptions, and that, as such, they are in no way superior to other perceptions. If we want to learn to know their nature, we can do so only by thinking investigation, that is, by fitting them into the ideal system of our concepts and ideas.

Rooted most deeply in the naive consciousness of mankind is the opinion: Thinking is abstract, empty of all concrete content. At most it can give an “ideal” mirror picture of the world, but nothing of the world itself. To judge like this is never to have become clear about what perception without the concept, is. Let us look at this realm of mere perceptions: it appears as a mere juxtaposition in space, a mere succession in time, an aggregate of disconnected entities. None of the things which come and go on the stage of perception have any direct, perceptible connection with any others. From this aspect, the world is a multiplicity of objects of equal value. None plays any greater part in the hustle and bustle of the world than any other. If it is to become clear to us that this or that fact has greater significance than another, we must consult our thinking. Without the functioning of thinking, the rudimentary organ of an animal which has no significance in its life appears to us as equal in value to the most important limb. The separate facts appear in their own significance, as well as in their significance for the rest of the world only when thinking spins its threads from one entity to another. This activity of thinking is one filled with content. For it is only through a quite definite, concrete content that I can know why the snail belongs to a lower level of organization than the lion. The mere sight, the perception, gives me no content which can inform me about the degree of perfection of an organization. Thinking brings this content to the perception from man’s world of concepts and ideas. In contrast to the content of perception given to us from outside, the content of thought shines forth in the inner being of man. The manner in which the content of thought first appears, we will call intuition. Intuition is for thinking what observation is for perception. Intuition and observation are the sources of our knowledge. An observed object or event is foreign to us as long as we do not have in our inner being the corresponding intuition which completes for us that part of reality which is missing in the perception. To someone who lacks the ability to find intuitions corresponding to things, the full reality remains inaccessible. Just as the color-blind sees

only differences of brightness without any color qualities, so the one who lacks intuition can observe only disconnected fragments of perceptions.

To explain a thing, to make it intelligible, means nothing other than to place it into the context from which it has been torn owing to the nature of our organization as described above. Something cut off from the world whole does not exist. Isolation in any form has only subjective validity for our organization. For us the world unity divides itself into above and below, before and after, cause and effect, object and representation, matter and force, object and subject, etc. What appears to our observation as single entities, combines, bit by bit, through the coherent, undivided world of our intuitions, and through thinking we again fit together into a unity everything we had divided through perceiving.

The enigmatic aspect of an object is due to its separate existence. But this separation is brought about by us and, within the world of concepts, can be cancelled again.

Except through thinking and perceiving, nothing is given to us directly. The question now arises: What significance has perception according to our line of thought? We have, it is true, recognized that the proof which critical idealism brings forward for the subjective nature of perceptions, collapses, but the insight that the proof is wrong does not necessarily mean that what is asserted is incorrect. Critical idealism does not base its proof on the absolute nature of thinking, but relies on the fact that naive realism, when followed to its logical conclusion, contradicts itself. How does the matter stand when the absoluteness of thinking is recognized?

Let us assume that a certain perception, for example, red, appears in my consciousness. Continued consideration will show the perception to be connected with other perceptions, for example, a definite form, certain perceptions of temperature, and of touch. This combination I call an object of the sense world. I can now ask: Over and above the perceptions just mentioned, what else is there in that section of space where they appear? I shall find mechanical, chemical and other processes in that section of space. I now go further and investigate the processes I find on the way from the object to my sense organs. I can find movements in an elastic medium, and their nature has not the slightest thing in common with the original perception. I get the same result when I go on and investigate the further transmission between sense organs and brain. In each of these spheres I gather new perceptions, but the connecting medium permeating all these perceptions standing side by side in both space and time, is thinking. The air vibrations which carry sound are given me as perception, just as is the sound itself. Thinking alone links all these perceptions to one another, showing them in their mutual relationships. Beyond what is directly perceived, we cannot speak of anything except what can be recognized through the ideal connections of perceptions (that is, what can be discovered through thinking). That relationship between the perceptual object and the perceiving subject, which goes beyond what can be perceived, is therefore a purely ideal one, that is, it can be expressed only by means of concepts. Only if I could perceive how the perceptual object affects the perceiving subject, or, the other way round, if I could observe the building up of the perceptual pictures by the subject, would it be possible to speak as does modern physiology and the critical idealism based on it. This view

confuses an ideal relation (that of the object to the subject) with a process which we could speak of only if it were possible to perceive it. The principle, "No color without a color-seeing eye," is therefore not to be taken to mean that the eye produces the color, but only that an ideal relationship, recognizable by thinking, exists between the perception, color and the perception, eye. Empirical science will have to establish how the nature of the eye and the nature of colors are related to one another, that is, by what means the organ of sight transmits the perception of colors, etc. I can trace how one perception succeeds another and how one is related to others in space, and I can formulate this in conceptual terms, but I cannot perceive how a perception originates out of the non-perceptible. All attempts to seek any relations between perceptions other than thought relations must of necessity fail.

What, then, is a perception? When asked in general, this question is absurd. A perception always appears as a quite definite, concrete content. This content is directly given and is completely contained within the given. The only question one can ask concerning this given is, What is it apart from being a perception; that is, What is it for thinking? The question concerning the "what" of a perception, therefore, can refer only to the conceptual intuition which corresponds to it. Seen in this light, the question of the subjectivity of perceptions, in the sense of critical idealism, cannot be raised at all. Only what is perceived as belonging to the subject can be termed "subjective." No real process, in a naive sense, can form a link between the subjective and the objective, that is, no process that can be perceived; this is possible only for thinking. For us, then, that is objective which, to perception, lies outside of the perceptual subject. My perceptual subject remains perceptible to me when the table which stands before me has disappeared from my field of observation. My observation of the table has caused in me a change which likewise remains. I retain the ability to reproduce a picture of the table later. This ability to produce a picture remains connected with me. Psychology describes this picture as a memory representation. However, it is the only thing which can correctly be called the representation of the table. For it corresponds to the perceptible change in me, caused through the presence of the table in my field of vision. And indeed, it is not a change in some "I-in-itself" standing behind the perceptual subject, but a change in the perceptible subject itself. A representation, then, is a subjective perception, in contrast to the objective perception which occurs when the object is present in the field of vision. The confusing of the former subjective with the latter objective perception leads to the misunderstanding of idealism: The world is my representation.

The next step must be to define the concept of representation more exactly. What we have so far described of it is not its concept; what we have described has only pointed the way to where in the perceptual field representations are to be found. The exact concept of representation will also then make it possible for us to gain a satisfactory explanation of the relationship between representation and object. This will also lead us over the borderline, where the relationship between the human subject and the object belonging to the world is brought down from the purely conceptual field of knowledge into concrete individual life. Once we know what to think of the world, it will also be easy to adapt ourselves to it. We can only be active with our full human forces when we know the objects belonging to the world to which we devote our activity.



Addition to the Revised Edition (1918): The view I have characterized here can be regarded as one to which man is led at first, as if by a natural instinct, the moment he begins to reflect upon his relation to the world. He then finds himself caught in a thought formation which dissolves for him while he frames it. This thought formation is such that a purely theoretical refutation of it does not suffice. One has to live through it and experience it in order to recognize how far it leads one astray, and then to find the way out. It must be a feature of any discussion concerning man's relation to the world, not for the sake of refuting others whose view about this relation one believes to be wrong, but because one must oneself experience to what confusion every first reflection about such a relation can lead. One must gain that insight which will enable one to refute oneself with respect to such a first reflection. The above discussion is meant in this sense.

When one tries to work out a view about man's relation to the world, one becomes conscious of the fact that man himself creates this relation, at least in part, by forming representations about the things and events in the world. This draws his attention away from what is present outside in the world and directs it to his inner world, to his life of forming representations. He begins to say to himself: It is impossible for me to have a relationship to any thing or event unless a representation of it appears in me. From noticing this fact, it is but a step to the opinion: All that I experience is, after all, only my representation; I know about a world outside me only insofar as it is representation in me. With this opinion, man abandons the standpoint of naive reality which he has before he begins to reflect about his relation to the world. From the naive standpoint, he believes that he is dealing with real things. But reflection about his own being drives him away from this standpoint. This reflection does not allow him to turn his gaze toward a real world such as naive consciousness believes it confronts. This reflection turns his gaze only toward his representations; his representations slip in between his own being and that real world the naive standpoint believes in. Man no longer can look through the intervening world of representations to any such reality. He has to assume that he is blind to this reality. So the thought arises of a "thing-in-itself" which is inaccessible to knowledge. - As long as one considers only the relationship to the world into which man appears to enter through his life of forming representations, one cannot escape from this line of thought. But one cannot remain at the naive standpoint of reality except by artificially curbing the thirst for knowledge. The fact that in man the need is present for knowledge about his relation to the world indicates that the naive standpoint must be abandoned. If the naive standpoint gave us anything that could be acknowledged as truth, then we should not feel this need. - But one does not arrive at anything else that could be considered as truth if one merely abandons the naive standpoint, but retains - without noticing it - the kind of thought which it imposes upon us. This is the mistake that is made when it is said: I experience only my representations, and while I believe that I am dealing with reality, I am actually conscious only of my representations of reality; I must, therefore, assume that genuine reality, the "thing in-itself," exists only outside the boundary of my consciousness and that I know nothing of it directly, but that it somehow approaches me and influences me in such a way that my representations come about. To think in this way is only to add in thought, to the world before us, another world; but one must begin the whole thinking process over again with regard to this second world. For the unknown "thing-in-itself," in its relation to man's being, is thought of in exactly the

same way as is the known thing of the naive standpoint of reality. - One only escapes the confusion that arises in one's critical reflection concerning this standpoint when one notices that inside everything we can experience by means of perceiving, be it within ourselves or outside in the world, there is something which cannot succumb to the fate that a representation inserts itself between event and contemplating human being. And this something is thinking. With regard to thinking, man can remain at the naive standpoint of reality. If he does not do so, it is only because he has noticed that he has to abandon this standpoint in regard to other things, but overlooks the fact that this insight, which is true for other things, does not apply to thinking. When he notices this, he opens the portal to yet another insight, that in thinking and through thinking that must be acknowledged to which man appears to blind himself because he has to place between himself and the world the life of representations. - A critic highly esteemed by the author of this book has objected that this discussion of thinking remains at naive realism in regard to thinking, as it must if the real world and the world of representations are held to be one and the same. However, the author believes he has shown in just this discussion this fact: that an unprejudiced observation of thinking inevitably shows that "naive realism" is valid for thinking, and that naive realism, insofar as it is not valid for other things, is overcome through the recognition of the true nature of thinking.

## **THE HUMAN INDIVIDUALITY**

In attempting to explain representations philosophers have found that the main difficulty lies in the fact that we ourselves are not the external things, and yet our representations must somehow correspond to things. But, on closer inspection, it turns out that this difficulty does not exist at all. We are certainly not the external things, but together with them we belong to one and the same world. That section of the world which I perceive as my subject is permeated by the stream of the universal world process. To my perceiving I appear, in the first instance, enclosed within the boundary of my skin. But all that is contained within the skin belongs to the cosmos as a whole. Hence for a relation to exist between my organism and an external object, it is by no means necessary that something of the object should slip into me or make an impression on my spirit, like a signet ring on wax. A question such as: How do I gain knowledge of the tree ten feet away from me? is wrongly formulated. It springs from the view that the boundaries of my body are absolute barriers, through which information about things filters into me. The forces active within the limit of my body are the same as those which exist outside. Therefore, in reality I am the things; not, however, insofar as I am a perceiving subject, but insofar as I am part of the universal world process. The perception of the tree and my I is within the same whole. There this universal world process calls forth the perception of the tree to the same extent that here it calls forth the perception of my I. Were I world creator instead of world knower, object and subject (perception and I) would originate in one act. For they depend on each other. As world knower I can discover the element they have in common, as entities belonging together, only through thinking which, by means of concepts, relates them to one another.

Most difficult of all to overcome are the so-called physiological proofs of the subjectivity of our perceptions. If I press the skin of my body, I perceive this as a sensation of pressure. Such pressure will be perceived by the eye as light, by the ear as sound. For example, by the eye I perceive an electric shock as light, by the ear as sound, by the nerves of the skin as shock, and by the nose as a phosphoric smell. What follows from these facts? Only this: that when I perceive an electric shock (or a pressure, as the case may be) followed by a light quality or a sound, respectively, or a certain smell, etc., then, if no eye were present, no perception of a light quality would accompany the perception of mechanical vibrations in my environment; without the presence of the ear, no perception of sound, etc. But what right has one to say that in the absence of sense-organs, the whole process would not exist at all? From the fact that an electrical process calls forth light in the eye, those who conclude that outside our organism, what we sense as light is only a mechanical process of motion, forget that they are only passing from one perception to another, and nowhere to something over and above perceptions. Just as we can say that the eye perceives a mechanical process of motion in its surroundings as light, we can also say that a regulated change in an object is perceived by us as a process of motion. If I draw twelve pictures of a horse on the circumference of a rotating disc, reproducing exactly the positions which the horse's body successively assumes in movement, then by rotating the disc I can produce the illusion of movement. I need only look through an opening in such a way that in the proper intervals I see the successive positions of the horse. I see, not twelve separate pictures of a horse, but the picture of a single galloping horse.

The above-mentioned physiological fact cannot, therefore, throw any light on the relation of perception to representation. Therefore, we must find some other way.

The moment a perception appears in my field of observation, thinking also becomes active through me. A member of my thought-system, a definite intuition, a concept, unites itself with the perception. Then when the perception disappears from my field of vision, what do I retain? My intuition, with the reference to the particular perception which formed itself in the moment of perceiving. The degree of vividness with which I can recall this reference later depends on the manner in which my intellectual and bodily organism is working. A representation is nothing but an intuition related to a particular perception; it is a concept that once was connected with a perception and retains the reference to this perception. My concept of a lion is not formed out of my perceptions of lions. But my representation of a lion is indeed formed according to my perception. I can convey to someone who has never seen a lion, the concept of a lion. But I can never bring about in him a vivid representation of a lion, without his perceiving one.

A representation therefore is an individualized concept. And now we have the explanation as to why our representations can represent reality to us. The complete reality of something is submitted to us in the moment of observation through the flowing together of concept and perception. The concept acquires, through a perception, an individual form, a relation to this particular perception. In this individual form which has as a characteristic feature the reference to the perception, the concept lives on in us as the representation of the thing in question. If we come across a second thing with which the

same concept connects itself, we recognize the second as belonging to the same kind as the first; if we come across the same thing twice, we find in our conceptual system not only a corresponding concept, but the individualized concept with its characteristic relation to the same object, and thus we recognize the object again.

The representation, therefore, stands between perception and concept. It is the definite concept which points to the perception.

The sum of those things about which I can form representations may be called my practical experience.<sup>40</sup> The man who has the greater number of individualized concepts will be the man of richer practical experience. A man who lacks all power of intuition is not capable of acquiring practical experience. He again loses the objects from his field of vision because he lacks the concepts which should bring him into relation with them. A man whose power of thinking is well developed, but whose ability to perceive functions poorly due to clumsy sense-organs, will be no better able to gather practical experience. It is true that he can acquire concepts by one means and another, but his intuitions lack vivid reference to definite things. The unthinking traveller and the scholar living in abstract conceptual systems are both incapable of acquiring rich practical experience.

Reality appears to us as perception and concept, and the subjective representative of this reality is - representation. If our personality expressed itself only in cognition, the totality of all that is objective would be given in perception, concept and representation.

However, we are not satisfied merely to refer the perception, by means of thinking, to the concept, but we relate it also to our own subjectivity, to our individual I. The expression of this individual relationship is feeling, which we experience as pleasure or displeasure.

Thinking and feeling correspond to the twofold nature of our being, which we have already considered. Thinking is the element through which we take part in the universal process of the cosmos; feeling, that through which we can withdraw into the narrow confines of our own soul life.

Our thinking unites us with the world; our feeling leads us back into ourselves, and this makes us individuals. If we were merely thinking and perceiving beings, our whole life would flow along in monotonous indifference. If we could only cognize ourself as a self, we would be totally indifferent to ourself. Only because with self-knowledge we experience self-feeling, and with the perception of objects pleasure and pain, do we live as individual beings whose existence is not exhausted by the conceptual relations in which we stand to the rest of the world, but who have a special value for themselves as well.

One might be tempted to see in the life of feeling an element more richly saturated with reality than is our thinking contemplation of the world. But the answer to this is that the life of feeling, after all, has this richer meaning only for my individual self. For the world my life of feeling can attain value only if, as perception of my self, the feeling enters into connection with a concept and, in this roundabout way, links itself to the cosmos.

Our life is a continual oscillation between our living with the universal world process and our own individual existence. The further we ascend into the universal nature of thinking where what is individual ultimately interests us only as example, as instance of the concept, the more the character of the quite definite individual personality is lost within us. The further we descend into the depths of our own soul life and let our feelings resound with the experiences of the outer world, the more we cut ourselves off from universal life. A true individuality will be one who reaches up with his feelings farthest into the region of the ideal. There are people in whom even the most general ideas that enter their heads bear, nevertheless, that particular coloring which shows unmistakably their connection with the individual who thinks them. There are others whose concepts come before us without the least trace of individual coloring, as if they had not been produced by a being of flesh and blood at all.

The act of representing already gives our conceptual life an individual stamp. For each one of us has his special place from which he looks out upon the world. His concepts link themselves to his perceptions. He will think the general concepts in his own particular way. This particular determination comes about through the place we occupy in the world and from the perceptions belonging to our sphere of life.

Distinct from this determination is another, which depends on our particular organization. Our organization is, indeed, a special, definite, individual unity. Each of us combines particular feelings, and these in the most varying degrees of intensity, with his perceptions. This is the individual aspect of our personality. It is what remains over when we have allowed fully for all the determining factors in our milieu.

A life of feeling devoid of all life of thought would gradually lose all connection with the world. But because it is inherent in man to develop his whole nature, his knowledge of things will go hand-in-hand with the education and development of his feeling-life.

Feeling is the means whereby, to begin with, concepts attain concrete life.

## **ARE THERE LIMITS TO KNOWLEDGE?**

We have established that the elements for explaining reality are to be taken from the two spheres: perceiving and thinking. As we have seen, it is our organization that determines the fact that the full, complete reality of things, our own subject included, appears at first as a duality. Cognition overcomes this duality by combining the two elements of reality: the perception and the concept gained by thinking, into the complete thing. If we call the world as it confronts us before it has attained its true aspect by means of cognition, "the world of appearance," in contrast to the unified whole composed of perception and concept, then we can say: The world is given us as a duality (dualistic), and cognition transforms it into a unity (monistic). A philosophy which starts from this basic principle may be called a monistic philosophy, or monism, in contrast to the theory of two worlds, or dualism. The latter does not assume that there are two sides of a single reality, which

are kept apart merely by our organization, but, rather, that there are two worlds, completely different from each other. Then in the one world it tries to find the principles that can explain the other.

Dualism rests on a misunderstanding of what we call knowledge. It divides the whole of existence into two spheres, each of which has its own laws, and it lets these spheres stand opposite to and outside of each other.

It is from a dualism such as this that there arises the distinction between the perceived object and the thing-in-itself which Kant<sup>41</sup> introduced into science and which so far has not been expelled. From our discussion can be seen that it is due to the nature of our intellectual organization that a particular thing can be given us only as perception. Thinking then overcomes this separateness by referring each perception to its rightful place in the world whole. As long as the separated parts of the world whole are defined as perceptions, in this elimination we are simply following a law of our subjectivity. If, however, we consider the sum-total of all perceptions as constituting one part, and confront it with the “thing-in-itself” as a second part, then our philosophising loses all foundation. It then becomes a mere playing with concepts. An artificial opposition is constructed, but it is not possible to attain a content for the second part of this opposition, since such content for a particular thing can be drawn only from perception.

Every kind of existence which is assumed outside the realm of perception and concept belongs to the sphere of unjustified hypotheses. The “thing-in-itself” belongs in this category. It is quite natural that a dualistic thinker should be unable to find the connection between a universal principle which he hypothetically assumes, and the given, known by experience. One can obtain a content for the hypothetical universal principle only by borrowing a content from the sphere of experience and then shutting one’s eyes to the fact of the borrowing. Otherwise it remains an empty concept, a non-concept, which is nothing but a shell of a concept. Then the dualistic thinker usually maintains that the content of this concept is not accessible to our knowledge. We can know only that such a content must be present, but not what it is. In both cases it is impossible to overcome dualism. Even if one brings a few abstract elements from the sphere of experience into the concept of the thing-in-itself, it still remains impossible to derive the rich concrete life of experience from those few qualities which, after all, are themselves taken from perception only. Du-Bois Reymond<sup>42</sup> thinks that the imperceptible atoms of matter produce sensation and feeling by means of their position and motion, and then comes to the conclusion: We can never find a satisfactory explanation of how matter and motion produce sensation and feeling, for “It is absolutely and forever unintelligible that it should be other than indifferent to a number of atoms of carbon, hydrogen, and nitrogen, etc., how they lie and move, how they lay and moved, or how they will lie and will move. It is impossible to see how consciousness could come into existence through their interaction.” This conclusion is characteristic of this whole trend of thought. Position and motion are abstractions derived from the rich sphere of perceptions. They are then transferred to the imagined world of atoms. Then astonishment arises that real life cannot be evolved out of this principle which is self-made and borrowed from the sphere of perceptions.

That the dualist who works with a completely empty concept of the “in-itself” of things can reach no explanation of the world, already follows from the definition of his principle indicated above.

A dualist is always compelled to set impassable barriers to our faculty of knowledge. The follower of a monistic world view knows that everything he needs for the explanation of any given phenomenon in the world must lie within this world itself. What hinders him from reaching the explanation can be only contingent limitations in space and time, or shortcomings of his organization. And, indeed, not of the human organization in general, but only of his own particular one.

It follows from the concept of cognition, as defined by us, that one cannot speak of limits to knowledge. Cognition is not a concern of the universe in general, but one which men must settle for themselves. Things claim no explanation. They exist and act on one another according to laws which thinking can discover. They exist in indivisible unity with these laws. Our egohood confronts them, grasping at first only what we have called perceptions. In the inner core of our egohood, however, we find the power to discover the other part of reality also. Only when the egohood has again combined for itself the two elements of reality which are indivisibly united in the world, is the thirst for knowledge satisfied: the I has again come to reality.

Therefore, the conditions required for cognition to arise, come about through and for the I. The I sets itself the problems of cognition. And it takes them from the element of thinking, in itself absolutely clear and transparent. If we ask questions we cannot answer, then the content of the question cannot be clear and distinct in all its details. The world does not set us the questions; it is we ourselves who set them.

I can imagine that it would be quite impossible for me to answer a question which I happened to find written down somewhere, without knowing the sphere from which the content of the question was taken.

In knowledge we are concerned with questions which arise for us through the fact that a sphere of perceptions, conditioned by time, space, and our subjective organization, is confronted by a sphere of concepts pointing to a world which is a unity. My task is to reconcile these two spheres, well known to me. One cannot speak here of a limit of knowledge. It may be that at a particular moment, this or that remains unexplained because, through our place in life, we are prevented from perceiving all that is involved. What is not found to-day, however, may be found tomorrow. The limits due to these causes are only transitory, and can be overcome by the progress of perceiving and thinking.

Dualism makes the mistake of transferring the antithesis of object and subject, which has significance only within the sphere of perceptions, to purely invented entities outside this sphere. But as the separate things within the field of perception remain separated only as long as the perceiver refrains from thinking, which cancels all separation and shows it to be due to merely subjective factors, so the dualist, in fact, transfers to entities behind the

sphere of perceptions definitions which, even for perceptions, have no absolute but only relative validity. In doing this he splits up the two factors concerned in the process of cognition, perception and concept, into four: 1) the object-in-itself, 2) the perception which the subject has of the object, 3) the subject, 4) the concept which relates the perception to the object-in-itself. The relation between object and subject is considered to be real, that is, the subject is considered to be really (dynamically) influenced by the object. This real process is said not to appear in consciousness. But it is supposed to evoke in the subject a response to the stimulation from the object. The result of this response is said to be the perception. This at last enters our consciousness. The object is said to have an objective reality (independent of the subject), the perception a subjective reality. This subjective reality is said to be referred by the subject to the object. This latter reference is said to be an ideal one. The dualist, in other words, splits up the process of cognition into two parts. One part, i.e., the production of the perceptual object out of the thing-in-itself, takes place, according to him, outside of consciousness, the other part, the union of perception with concept and the reference of this to the object, within consciousness. These presuppositions make it clear that the dualist believes he receives in his concepts only something subjective, which represents what confronts his consciousness. The objectively real process in the subject, by means of which the perception comes about, and still more the objective relationships between things-in-themselves, remain inaccessible to direct cognition for such a dualist. In his opinion, man can obtain only concepts that represent the objectively real. The bond of unity which connects things with one another and also objectively with our individual spirit (as thing-in-itself), lies beyond consciousness in a being-in-itself of whom we likewise can have in our consciousness only a concept that represents it. The dualist believes that the whole world would be nothing but a mere abstract scheme of concepts if he did not insist on "real" connections between the objects beside the conceptual ones. In other words, the ideal principles which can be discovered by thinking seem too airy for the dualist, and he seeks, in addition, "real principles" with which to support them.

Let us examine these "real principles" a little more closely. The naive man (naive realist) regards the objects of external experience as realities. The fact that his hands can grasp and his eyes can see these objects is for him the proof of their reality. "Nothing exists that cannot be perceived" is, in fact, the basic axiom of the naive man, and it is held to be equally valid in its converse: "Everything which can be perceived, exists." The best proof for this assertion is the naive man's belief in immortality and in ghosts. He thinks of the soul as a fine kind of physical matter which, in special circumstances, may actually become visible to the ordinary man (naive belief in ghosts). In contrast to this real world of his, the naive realist regards everything else, especially the world of ideas, as unreal, as "merely ideal." What we add to objects by, thinking is mere thoughts about the objects. Thought adds nothing real to perception.

But it is not only with reference to the existence of things that the naive man regards sense perception as the sole proof of reality, but also with reference to happenings. According to him, one thing can act upon another only when a force actually present to sense perception issues from the one and seizes upon the other. The older physicists thought that very fine substances emanate from the objects and penetrate through the



sense-organs into the soul. They thought the actual seeing of these substances to be impossible only because of the coarseness of our sense organs in comparison with the fineness of these substances. In principle, the reason for attributing reality to these substances was the same as that for attributing it to the objects of the physical world, namely, the form of their existence, which was thought to be analogous to that of physical reality. The self-dependent nature of what can be experienced, not physically but ideally, is not regarded by naive consciousness as being real in the same sense. Something grasped “merely as idea” is regarded as a chimera until sense perception can provide conviction of its reality. In short, in addition to the ideal evidence of his thinking, the naive man demands the real evidence of his senses. This need of naive man is the reason why primitive forms of belief in revelation arise. For naive consciousness, the God who is given through thinking always remains a God merely “thought.” Naive consciousness demands that the manifestation should be through means accessible to physical perception. God must appear in bodily form; little value is attached to the evidence of thinking, but only to the Divine Nature being proved by the changing of water into wine in a way which can be testified by the senses. The act of cognition, too, is regarded by naive man as a process analogous to sense-perception. Things must make an impression on the soul or send out images which penetrate the senses, etc.

What the naive man can perceive with his senses he regards as real, and that of which he has no such perception (God, soul, cognition, etc.) he regards as analogous to what is perceived.

A science based on naive realism will consist in an exact description of the content of perception. Concepts are only means to this end. They exist to provide ideal counterparts of perceptions. For things themselves, they have no significance. For the naive realist, only the individual tulips which are seen or could be seen, are real. The one idea of the tulip, is to him an abstraction, is to him an unreal thought-picture, which the soul has put together for itself out of the characteristics common to all tulips. Naive realism, with its fundamental principle of the reality of all perceived things, is contradicted by experience, which shows us that the content of perceptions is of a transitory nature. The tulip I see, is real to-day; in a year it will have vanished into nothingness. What persists is the species tulip. This species, however, for the naive realist is “merely” an idea, not a reality. Thus, this worldview finds itself in the position of seeing its realities arise and perish, while what it regards as unreal, in contrast to the real, persists. Hence the naive realist has to allow for the existence of something ideal besides the perceptions. He has to accept entities which he cannot perceive by means of the senses. He justifies this by imagining their existence to be analogous to that of physical objects. Such hypothetically assumed realities are the invisible forces by means of which objects perceptible to the senses act on one another. Heredity is thought of in this way; it goes beyond the individual and is the reason why a new being develops from the individual which is similar to it, and by means of it the species is maintained. The life principle permeating the organic body is also thought of in this way, and so is the soul, for which one always finds in naive consciousness a concept based on an analogy to sense reality, and finally so, too, the naive man thinks of the Divine Being. This Divine Being is thought of as active in a

manner exactly corresponding to what can be perceived as actions of men, that is, the Divine Being is thought of anthropomorphically .

Modern physics traces sense-impressions back to processes in the smallest particles of bodies and to the infinitely fine substance, the ether, or to something similar. For example, what we sense as warmth, is, within the space occupied by the warmth-giving body, movement of its parts. Here again, something imperceptible is thought of on the analogy of what is perceptible. The physical analogue to the concept "body" is, in this sense, something like the interior of a totally enclosed space in which elastic balls are moving in all directions, impinging on one another, bouncing on and off the walls, etc.

Without such assumptions, for naive realism, the world would collapse into a disconnected chaos of perceptions with no mutual relationships to unite them. It is clear, however, that naive realism can arrive at these assumptions only by inconsistency. If it remained true to its fundamental principle that only what is perceived is real, then it would not assume a reality where it perceives nothing. The imperceptible forces which proceed from perceptible things are essentially unjustified hypotheses from the standpoint of naive realism itself. And as the naive realist acknowledges no other realities, he invests his hypothetical forces with perceptual content. In doing this he applies a form of existence (perceptual existence) to a sphere where he lacks the only means that can give any evidence of such existence: perceiving by means of physical senses. This self-contradictory world view leads to metaphysical realism. Beside the perceptible reality, the metaphysical realist constructs an imperceptible one which he thinks of on the analogy of the former. Metaphysical realism therefore, is of necessity dualistic.

Where the metaphysical realist observes a relation between perceptible things (mutual approach through movement, becoming conscious of an object, etc.), there he regards a reality as existing. But the relation that he notices he can, however, express only by means of thinking; he cannot perceive it. The relation, which is purely ideal, is arbitrarily made into something similar to what is perceptible. Thus, according to this line of thought, the real world is composed of perceptual objects which are in ceaseless flux, arising and disappearing, and of imperceptible forces which are permanent and produce the perceptual objects.

Metaphysical realism is a contradictory mixture of naive realism and idealism. Its hypothetical forces are imperceptible entities endowed with the qualities of perceptions. In addition to the sphere, for the form of existence of which he has a means of cognition in its perceptibility, the metaphysical realist has decided to acknowledge another sphere to which this means is not applicable, a sphere which can be ascertained only by means of thinking. But he cannot at the same time decide also to acknowledge the form of existence which thinking mediates, namely the concept (the idea), as being of equal importance with perceptions. If one is to avoid the contradiction of imperceptible perceptions, then it must be admitted that the relation thinking mediates between perceptions can have no other form of existence for us than that of the concept. When the untenable part of metaphysical realism is rejected, we then have the world before us as the sum of perceptions and their conceptual (ideal) relations. Then metaphysical realism

merges into a world view which requires the principle of perceptibility for perceptions and that of “thinkability” for the relations between the perceptions. Side by side with the realm of perceptions and that of concepts, this world view cannot acknowledge a third realm for which both principles, the so-called real principle and the ideal principle, have equal validity.

When the metaphysical realist maintains that beside the ideal relation between the perceptual object and the perceiving subject, there must also exist a real relation between the “thing-in-itself” of the perception and the “thing-in-itself” of the perceptible subject (of the so-called individual spirit), then this assertion is due to the mistaken assumption of the existence of a process, analogous to a process in the sense-world, but imperceptible. Further, when the metaphysical realist says: I have a conscious ideal relationship with my world of perceptions, but with the real world I can have only a dynamic (force) relationship, he then makes the above mistake to an even greater degree. One can only speak of a force-relationship within the world of perceptions (in the sphere of the sense of touch), not outside that sphere.

Let us call the world view characterized above, into which metaphysical realism merges if it discards its contradictory elements, monism, because it unites one-sided realism with idealism in a higher unity.

For the naive realist, the real world is an aggregate of objects of perception; for the metaphysical realist also the imperceptible forces are realities. Instead of forces, the monist has ideal connections which he attains by means of his thinking. The laws of nature are such connections. For a law of nature is nothing other than the conceptual expression for the connection of certain perceptions. The monist never has any need to ask for factors other than perceptions and concepts, with which to explain reality. He knows that in the whole sphere of reality there is no need to ask for this. In the sphere of perceptions, directly accessible to his perceiving, he sees half of a reality; in the union of this sphere with the sphere of concepts, he finds the full reality. The metaphysical realist may make the objection to the adherent of monism: It could be that for your organization your knowledge is complete in itself, that no part is lacking; but what you do not know is how the world is mirrored in an intelligence organized differently from your own. To this the monist would reply: If there are intelligences other than human, if their perceptions have a different form than ours, then all that would be of significance for me would be what reaches me from them by means of perceptions and concepts. By means of my perceiving and, in fact, by means of this specifically human manner of perceiving, as subject I am placed over against the object. The connection of things is thereby broken. The subject restores this connection by means of thinking. In doing so, things are re-inserted into the world whole. Since it is only through our subject that this whole appears rent in two at the place between our perception and our concept, so likewise the union of these two factors gives us a true knowledge. For beings with a different world of perceptions (if, for example, they had twice as many sense-organs), the connection would appear broken in another place, and the restoration would, accordingly, have a form specific for such beings. The question concerning limits of knowledge exists only for the naive and metaphysical realists, both of whom see in the content of the soul only an ideal

representation of the world. For them, what exists outside the subject is something absolute, something self-dependent, and the content of the subject is a picture of this absolute and is completely external to it. How complete is knowledge of this absolute would depend on the greater or lesser degree of resemblance between the picture and the absolute object. A being with fewer senses than man would perceive less of the world, one with more senses would perceive more. The former's knowledge would therefore be less complete than that of the latter.

For the monist, things are different. It is the organization of the perceiving being that determines how the world unity appears to be torn apart into subject and object. The object is not something absolute, but is only something relative in relation to this particular subject. The bridging of the contrasting entities can, therefore, take place again only in the quite specific way that is characteristic of the human subject. As soon as the I, which, in perceiving, is separated from the world, reinserts itself into the connection of things through thinking investigation, all further questioning ceases, since all questions arose only as a result of the separation.

A differently constituted being would have a differently constituted knowledge. Our knowledge suffices to answer the questions asked by our nature.

The metaphysical realist should ask: How does what is given as perception come to be the given; what is it that affects the subject?

For the monist, the perception is determined by the subject. But in thinking, the subject has, at the same time, the means for cancelling this determination, caused through the subject itself.

The metaphysical realist is faced by a further difficulty when he seeks to explain the similarity of the world pictures of different human individuals. He cannot but ask himself: How is it that the world picture which I build up out of my subjectively determined perceptions and out of my concepts, turns out to be like that which another individual builds up out of the same two subjective factors? How, from my subjective world picture, can I infer anything about that of another human being? The metaphysical realist believes he can infer, from the fact that people come to terms with one another in practical life, that their subjective world pictures must be similar. From the similarity of these world pictures he then further infers that the "individual spirits" behind the single perceiving human subjects, or the "I-in-itself" behind the subjects, must also be similar.

Therefore this inference is drawn from a sum of effects to the nature of their underlying causes. It is believed that from a sufficiently large number of instances, the situation can be so recognized that one can know how the inferred causes will behave in other instances. Such an inference is called an inductive inference. It will be necessary to modify the results if, from further observation, some unexpected element is discovered, because the result, after all, is determined only by the particular form of the earlier observation. The metaphysical realist maintains that this stipulated knowledge of causes is quite sufficient for practical life.

Inductive inference is the methodical foundation of modern metaphysical realism. At one time it was believed that out of concepts could be evolved something that is no longer a concept. It was believed that from concepts could be derived the metaphysical realities which of necessity, metaphysical realism must have. This kind of philosophizing is now superseded. Instead, it is believed that from a sufficiently large number of perceptual facts one can infer the character of the thing-in-itself which underlies these facts. Just as in the past one tried to derive the metaphysical from concepts, so to-day one tries to derive it from perceptions. As concepts are transparent in their clarity, it was believed that one could also deduce the metaphysical from them with absolute certainty. Perceptions are not of such transparency. Each later perception is always a little different from those of the same kind that preceded it. Therefore, anything inferred from the earlier perception is, in reality, somewhat modified by each following one. The aspect of the metaphysical arrived at in this way, therefore, can be said to be only relatively correct, for it is subject to correction by future instances. Eduard von Hartmann's metaphysics is of a kind that is determined by this methodical principle. This is expressed in the motto he gave on the title-page of his first major work: "Speculative results according to the inductive method of natural science."

The form which the metaphysical realist gives to his things-in-themselves today is obtained by inductive inferences. His consideration of the process of knowledge has convinced him that a connection of things, which is objectively real, exists side by side with the "subjective" connection that can be known through perception and concept. The nature of this objective reality he believes he can determine by inductive inferences from his perceptions.

Addition to the Revised Edition, (1918): Certain representations which arise from investigations of natural phenomena tend, again and again, to disturb unprejudiced observation - as the effort has been made to describe it above - of how we experience concepts and perceptions. Such investigations show that in the light-spectrum the eye perceives colors from red to violet. However, within the spectrum's sphere of radiation, but beyond the violet there are forces to which corresponds no color perception of the eye, but a chemical effect and, similarly, beyond the limit of the red there exist radiations which have only effects of warmth. Investigation of these and similar phenomena has led to the opinion that the range of man's sphere of perceptions is determined by the range of his senses, and that he would have before him a very different world if he had more or altogether different senses. Those who are inclined to flights of imagination, for which the glittering discoveries of recent scientific research in particular offer such tempting opportunities, may come to the conclusion: Nothing can enter man's field of observation except what is able to affect the senses of his bodily organization, and he has no right to regard what he perceives, by means of his limited organization, as being in any way a standard for ascertaining reality. Every new sense would give him a different picture of reality. - Within its proper limits, this opinion is entirely correct. But one who allows this opinion to prevent him from observing without prejudice the relationship between concept and perception, as explained here, will put obstacles in the way to any realistic knowledge of man and world. To experience thinking in its own nature, that is, to experience the active working-out of the sphere of concepts, is something entirely

different from the experience of something perceptible through the senses. Whatever senses man might possibly have, not one would give him reality if through the activity of thinking, he did not permeate with concepts the perceptions they conveyed to him; and indeed, every sense, of whatever kind, if thus permeated, gives man the possibility to live within reality. Speculations about quite different perceptual pictures conveyed by other senses, has nothing to do with the question concerning man's relation to reality. It is essential to recognize that every perceptual picture derives its form from the organization of the perceiving being, but the perceptual picture when permeated by thinking which is livingly experienced leads man into reality. A fanciful description of how different the world would appear to other than human senses cannot act as an incentive to man to seek for knowledge concerning his relationship to the world; rather will this happen through the insight that every perception gives us only a part of the reality it conceals, that, therefore, it leads away from its reality. This then brings us to the further insight that it is thinking which leads into that part of reality which the perception conceals within itself. An unprejudiced observation of the relation between perceptions, and concepts worked out by thinking, as here described, may also be disturbed by the fact that in the sphere of applied physics it becomes necessary to speak not at all of directly perceptible elements, but of non-perceptible magnitudes, such as lines of electric or magnetic force, etc. It may appear as if the elements of reality, spoken of in physics, had nothing to do either with what is perceptible or with concepts actively worked out by thinking. But such a view is based on self-deception. What matters is that all that is worked out in physics - as long as it is not based on unjustifiable hypotheses which must be excluded - is obtained by means of perceptions and concepts. By a correctly working instinct for knowledge in the physicist, what is apparently a non-perceptible content will always be placed into the field of perceptions, and will be thought of in concepts belonging to this field. The magnitudes in electric and magnetic fields, etc., are attained, owing to their nature, by no other process of cognition than the one which takes place between perception and concept. - An increase or a transformation of the human senses would give a different perceptual picture; it would be an enrichment or a transformation of human experience. But a real knowledge of this experience also could be attained only through the interplay of concept and perception. A deepening of knowledge depends upon the active power of intuition contained in thinking (see p. 113). In the living experience within thinking, this intuition can dive down into lesser or greater depths of reality. Through extension of the perceptual picture this diving down of intuition can receive stimulation and thus be indirectly strengthened. But never should this diving into the depths to attain reality be confused with being confronted with a wider or narrower perceptual picture, in which there would always be contained only a half-reality determined by the organization of the cognizing being. If one avoids getting lost in abstractions, it will be recognized how significant, also for knowledge of the being of man, is the fact that in physics one has to include the existence, in the field of perceptions, of elements for which no sense organ is directly tuned as for color or sound. The essential being of man is determined not only by what confronts him through his organization as direct perception, but also by the fact that he excludes something else from this direct perception. Just as life needs, in addition to the conscious waking state, an unconscious sleeping state, so, for man's self-experience is needed besides the sphere of his sense perceptions, another sphere also - indeed, a much larger one - of elements not perceptible to the senses, but existing within the same

field where sense-perceptions originate. All this was already indirectly indicated in the first edition of this book. The author here adds these amplifications to the content because he has found by experience that many readers have not read accurately enough. - Another thing to be considered is that the idea of perception, as presented in this book, is not to be confused with the idea of external sense-perception, which is but a special instance of perception. The reader will gather from what has already been said, but even more from what will follow, that here perception includes everything that man meets, physically or spiritually, before he has grasped it in actively worked out concepts. We do not need what we usually mean by senses in order to have perceptions of a soul or spiritual kind. It may be said that such extension of the ordinary use of a word is inadmissible. Yet such extension is absolutely necessary if one is not to be barred by the current use of a word from enlarging the knowledge of certain fields. If the word perception is applied to physical perception only, then one cannot arrive at a concept that can be of use for attaining knowledge even of this (physical) perception. Often it is necessary to enlarge a concept in order that it may preserve in a narrower field the meaning appropriate to it. Or it is sometimes necessary to add something different to the previous content of a concept in order that its first content may be justified or even readjusted. For example, it is said in this book (p. 124): "A representation, therefore, is an individualized concept." It has been objected that this is an unusual use of the word. But this use of the word is necessary if we are to find out what a representation really is. What would become of the progress of knowledge if, when compelled to readjust concepts, one is always to be met with the objection: "This is an unusual use of the word"?

## **THE FACTORS OF LIFE**

Let us recapitulate the results arrived at in the previous chapters. The world confronts man as a multiplicity, as a sum of separate entities. Man himself is one of these separate entities, a being among other beings. This aspect of the world we characterized simply as that which is given, and inasmuch as we do not evolve it by conscious activity, but find it present, we called it perception. Within the world of perceptions we perceive ourself. This self perception would remain merely one among the many other perceptions, did not something arise from the midst of this self-perception which proves capable of connecting perceptions in general and therefore also the sum of all other perceptions with that of ourself. This something which emerges is no longer mere perception, neither is it, like perceptions, simply given. It is brought about by our activity. To begin with, it appears united with what we perceive as ourself. But in accordance with its inner significance it reaches out beyond the self. It bestows on the separate perceptions ideal definitions, and these relate themselves to one another and stem from a unity. What is attained by self-perception, it defines ideally in the same way as it defines all other perceptions, placing this as subject, or "I," over against the objects. This something is thinking, and the ideal definitions are the concepts and ideas. Thinking, therefore, first manifests itself in the perception of the self, but it is not merely subjective, for the self characterizes itself as subject only with the help of thinking. This relationship to oneself by means of thoughts is a life-definition of our personality. Through it we lead a purely

ideal existence. Through it we feel ourselves to be thinking beings. This life-definition would remain a purely conceptual (logical) one if no other definitions of our self were added to it. We should then be beings whose life would be exhausted in establishing purely ideal relations between perceptions themselves, and between them and ourself. If we call the establishing of such a thought connection, an act of cognition, and the resulting condition of our self knowledge, then according to the abovementioned presupposition, we should have to consider ourselves as beings who merely cognize or know.

However, the presupposition does not correspond to the facts. We relate perceptions to ourselves not merely ideally, through concepts, but also, as we have seen, through feeling. Therefore we are not beings with a merely conceptual life-content. The naive realist even sees in the life of feeling a more genuine life of the personality than in the purely ideal element of knowledge. And from his standpoint he is right in interpreting the matter in this way. For feeling on the subjective side to begin with, is exactly the same as perception on the objective side. From the basic principle of naive realism, that everything that can be perceived is real, it follows that feeling is the guarantee of the reality of one's own personality. Monism, however, as understood here, must confer upon feeling the same supplement that it considers necessary for all perceptions if these are to be present as a complete reality. For monism, feeling is an incomplete reality which, in the form it is first given to us, does not as yet contain its second factor, the concept or idea. This is why in actual life, feelings, like perceptions, appear before cognition has occurred. At first we have merely a feeling of existence, and it is only in the course of gradual development that we reach the point where the concept of our self dawns within the dim feeling of our existence. But what for us appears only later is fundamentally and indivisibly bound up with feeling. This fact leads the naive man to the belief that in feeling, existence is present directly, in knowledge only indirectly. Therefore the development of the feeling-life appears to him more important than anything else. He will believe that he has grasped the connection of things only when he has felt it. He attempts to make feelings rather than knowing the means of cognition. But as feeling is something quite individual, something equivalent to perception, a philosopher of feeling makes into the universal principle, a principle which has significance only within his personality. He tries to permeate the whole world with his own self. What the monist, in the sense we have described, strives to grasp by means of concepts, the philosopher of feeling tries to attain by means of feeling, and considers this relationship with objects to be the one that is most direct.

The view just characterized, the philosophy of feeling, is often called mysticism. The error in mysticism based on feeling alone is that the mystic wants to experience<sup>43</sup> in feeling what should be attained as knowledge; he wants to develop something which is individual, into something universal.

Feeling is purely individual, it is the relation of the external world to our subject, insofar as this relation comes to expression in merely subjective experience. There is yet another expression of the human personality. The I, through its thinking, lives within the universal life of the world; through thinking the "I" relates purely ideally (conceptually)



the perception to itself, and itself to the perception. In feeling, it experiences a relation of the object to its own subject. In the will, the opposite is the case. In will, we are again confronted with a perception, namely that of the individual relation of our own self to the object. Everything in the will which is not a purely ideal factor is just as much a merely perceived object as any object in the external world.

Nevertheless, here again the naive realist believes that he has before him something far more real than can be reached by thinking. He sees in the will an element in which he is directly aware of a process, a causation, in contrast to thinking, which must first grasp the process in concepts. What the I brings about by its will represents to such a view, a process which is experienced directly. An adherent of this philosophy believes that in the will he has really got hold of a corner of the universal process. Whereas all other events he can follow only by perceiving them from outside, he believes that in his will he is experiencing a real process quite directly. The form of existence in which the will appears to him within the self becomes for him a direct principle of reality. His own will appears to him as a special case of the universal process, and he therefore considers the latter to be universal will. The will becomes the universal principle just as in mysticism of feeling, feeling becomes the principle of knowledge. This view is a Philosophy of the Will (Theism).<sup>44</sup> Here something which can be experienced only individually is made into the constituent factor of the world.

The philosophy of will can be called a science as little as can mysticism of feeling. For both maintain that to permeate things with concepts is insufficient. Both demand, side by side with an ideal-principle of existence, a real principle also. And this with a certain justification. But since for this so-called real principle, perceiving is our only means of comprehension, it follows that mysticism of feeling and philosophy of will are both of the opinion that we have two sources of knowledge: thinking and perceiving, perceiving being mediated through feeling and will as individual experience. According to mysticism of feeling and philosophy of will, what flows from the source of experience<sup>44a</sup> cannot be taken up directly into what flows from the source of thinking; therefore the two forms of knowledge, perceiving and thinking, remain standing side by side without a higher mediation. Besides the ideal principle attainable through knowledge, there is also supposed to exist a real principle which, although it can be experienced cannot be grasped by thinking. In other words: mysticism of feeling and philosophy of will are both forms of naive realism; they both adhere to the principle: What is directly perceived is real. Compared with naive realism in its original form, they are guilty of the further inconsistency of making one definite kind of perceiving (feeling or will) into the one and only means of knowing existence; and this they should not do when they adhere in general to the principle: What is perceived is real. According to this, for cognition, external perceptions should have equal value with inner perceptions of feeling

Philosophy of will becomes metaphysical realism when it considers will also to be present in those spheres of existence where a direct experience of it, as in one's own subject, is not possible. It hypothetically assumes a principle outside the subject, for which subjective experience is the sole criterion of reality. The philosophy of will as a

form of metaphysical realism is open to the criticism indicated in the preceding chapter; it has to overcome the contradictory element inherent in every form of metaphysical realism, and acknowledge that the will is a universal world process only insofar as it relates itself ideally to the rest of the world.

Addition to the Revised Version, 1918. The reason it is so difficult to observe and grasp the nature of thinking lies in the fact that its nature all too easily eludes the contemplating soul, as soon as one tries to focus attention on it. What then is left is something lifeless, abstract, the corpse of living thinking. If this abstract alone is considered, then it is easy, by contrast, to be drawn into the “living” element in mysticism of feeling, or into the metaphysics of the will, and to find it strange that anyone should expect to grasp the nature of reality in “mere thought.” But one who really penetrates to the life within thinking will reach the insight that to experience existence merely in feeling or in will cannot in any way be compared with the inner richness, the inwardly at rest yet at the same time alive experience, of the life within thinking, and no longer will he say that the other could be ranked above this. It is just because of this richness, because of this inner fullness of living experience, that its reflection in the ordinary life of soul appears lifeless and abstract. No other human soul-activity is so easily underestimated as thinking. Will and feeling warm the human soul even when experienced only in recollection. Thinking all too easily leaves the soul cold in recollection; the soul-life then appears to have dried out. But this is only the strong shadow cast by its warm luminous reality, which dives down into the phenomena of the world. This diving down is done by a power that flows within the thinking activity itself, the power of spiritual love. The objection should not be made that to see love in active thinking is to transfer into thinking a feeling, namely love. This objection is in truth a confirmation of what is said here. For he who turns toward the living essence of thinking will find in it both feeling and will, and both of these in their deepest reality; whereas for someone who turns away from thinking and instead turns toward “mere” feeling or will, for him these will lose their true reality. One who is willing to experience intuitively in thinking, will also be able to do justice to what is experienced in the realm of feeling and in the element of will, whereas mysticism of feeling and metaphysics of will are incapable of doing justice to the activity of permeating existence with intuitive thinking. They all too easily come to the conclusion that they have found reality, whereas the intuitive thinker produces in abstract thoughts without feeling, and far removed from reality, a shadowy, chilling picture of the world.

## **THE IDEA OF FREEDOM**

For cognition the concept of a tree is conditioned by the perception of the tree. When confronted with a particular perception I can lift out only one definite concept from the general system of concepts. The connection between concept and perception is determined indirectly and objectively through thinking according to the perception. The connection of the perception with its concept is recognized after the act of perception; but that they belong to one another is already inherent in the object itself.

The process is different when the relation of man to the world is considered, as it arises within knowledge. In the preceding explanation the attempt has been made to show that it is possible to throw light on this relation if one observes it without prejudice. A real understanding of such an observation leads to the insight that thinking can be directly experienced as a self-contained reality. In order to explain thinking as such, those who find it necessary to add something to it, such as physical brain-processes or unconscious spiritual processes lying behind the conscious thinking which is being observed, underestimate what can be seen when thinking is observed without prejudice. During his observation of thinking, the observer lives directly within a spiritual, self-sustaining activity of a living reality. Indeed one can say that he who wants to grasp the reality of spirit in the form in which it first presents itself to man, can do this in his own self-sustaining thinking.

When thinking is observed, two things coincide which elsewhere must always appear apart: concept and perception. If this is not recognized, then in the concepts which have been worked out according to perceptions, one is unable to see anything but shadowy copies of the perceptions, and will take the perceptions to be the full reality. Further, one will build up a metaphysical sphere on the pattern of the perceived world, and each person, according to his views, will call this world a world of atoms, a world of will, a world of unconscious spirit, and so on. And he will not notice that with all this he merely hypothetically builds up a metaphysical world on the pattern of his world of perceptions. But if he realizes what he has before him in thinking, then he will also recognize that in the perception only a part of reality is present, and that the other part that belongs to it and first allows it to appear as full reality, is experienced in the act of permeating the perception with thinking. Then in what arises in consciousness as thinking, he will also see not a shadowy copy of some reality, but spiritual reality itself. And of this he can say that it becomes present in his consciousness through intuition. Intuition is a conscious experience of a purely spiritual content, taking place in the sphere of pure spirit. Only through an intuition can the reality of thinking be grasped.

Only when, by observing thinking without prejudice, one has wrestled one's way through to recognizing the truth that the nature of thinking is intuitive, is it possible to gain a real understanding of the body-soul organization of man. Then one recognizes that this organization cannot affect the nature of thinking. Quite obvious facts seem to contradict this at first. For ordinary experience, human thinking only takes place connected with, and by means of, the organization. This comes so strongly to the fore that the true facts can only be seen when it has been recognized that nothing from the organization plays into thinking as such. And then it is impossible not to notice how extraordinary is the relation of the human organization to thinking. For this organization has no effect at all on thinking; rather it withdraws when the activity of thinking takes place; it suspends its own activity, it makes room, and in the space that has become free, thinking appears. The spiritual substance that acts in thinking has a twofold task: first it presses back the human organization in its activity, and next, it steps into the place of it. The first, the pressing back of the bodily organization, is also a consequence of the thinking activity, and indeed of that part of this activity which prepares the manifestation of thinking. This explains the sense in which thinking finds its counterpart in the bodily organization. And when this is

recognized, one will no longer mistake this counterpart for thinking itself. If someone walks over soft ground, his feet leave impressions in the soil. But one is not tempted to say that the forces of the ground have formed these imprints from below. One will not ascribe to these forces any participation in the creating of the footprints. So too, one who, without prejudice, observes the nature of thinking will not ascribe to the imprints in the bodily organization any participation in the nature of thinking, for the imprints in the organization come about through the fact that thinking prepares its manifestation through the body.”

[footnote: The significance of the above view in relation to psychology, physiology, etc., in various directions has been set forth by the author in works published after this book. Here the aim is only to characterize what can be recognized by an unprejudiced observation of thinking.]

Now a significant question arises. If the human organism does not partake in the spiritual substance of thinking, what significance has this organism within man’s being as a whole? Now what happens in this organism through thinking has nothing to do with the nature of thinking, but indeed it has to do with the arising of the I-consciousness within thinking. The real “I” exists within the being of thinking, but not so the I-consciousness. This will be recognized if only thinking is observed without prejudice. The “I” is to be found within thinking; the “I-consciousness” arises through the fact that the imprints of the activity of thinking are engraved upon the general consciousness in the sense explained above. (The I-consciousness therefore arises through the bodily organism. But by this is not meant that the I-consciousness, once it has arisen, remains dependent on the bodily organism. Once arisen, it is taken up into thinking and henceforth shares its spiritual nature.)

The human organism is the foundation of the “I-consciousness.” It is also the source of will-activity. It follows from the preceding explanation that an insight into the connection between thinking, conscious I, and will activity can only be obtained if we first observe how will-activity issues from the human organism.<sup>44b</sup>

The factors to be considered in a particular act of will are the motive and the driving force. The motive is either a concept or a representation; the driving force is the will element and is directly conditioned by the human organism. The conceptual factor, or motive, is the momentary source from which the will is determined; the driving force is the permanent source of determination in the individual. A motive of will may be a pure concept or a concept with a definite reference to what is perceived, i.e. a representation. General and individual concepts (representations) become motives of will by influencing the human individual and determine him to act in a particular direction. But one and the same concept, or one and the same representation, influences different individuals differently. It impels different people to different actions. Will, therefore, does not come about merely as a result of the concept, or representation, but also through the individual disposition of human beings. This individual disposition we will call - in this respect one can follow Eduard von Hartmann<sup>45</sup> - the characterological disposition. The way in which

concepts and representations influence the characterological disposition of a person gives his life a definite moral or ethical stamp.

The characterological disposition is formed through the more or less constant life-content of our subject, that is, through the content of our representations and feelings. Whether a present representation stimulates me to will or not, depends on how the representation is related to the content of the rest of my representations, and also to my particular feelings. The content of my representations is determined in turn by all those concepts which in the course of my individual life have come into contact with perceptions, that is, have become representations. This again depends on my greater or lesser capacity for intuition, and on the range of my observations, that is, on the subjective and the objective factors of experience,<sup>46</sup> on my inner determination and my place in life. The characterological disposition is more particularly determined by the life of feeling. Whether I make a definite representation or concept the motive of my action will depend on whether it gives me pleasure or pain. - These are the elements which come into consideration in an act of will. The immediately present representation or concept which becomes motive, determines the aim, the purpose of my will; my characterological disposition determines me to direct my activity toward this aim. The representation, to go for a walk in the next half-hour, determines the aim of my action. But this representation is elevated to a motive of will only if it meets with a suitable characterological disposition, that is, if during my life until now I have formed representations concerning the purpose of walking, its value for health, and further, if the representation of walking combines in me with a feeling of pleasure.

We therefore must distinguish: 1) the possible subjective dispositions which are suitable for turning definite representations and concepts into motives; and 2) the possible representations and concepts which are capable of so influencing my characterological disposition that willing is the result. The first represents the driving force, the second, the aims of morality.

We can find the driving force of morality by investigating the elements which comprise individual life.

The first level of individual life is perceiving, more particularly, perceiving by means of the senses. Here we are concerned with that region of our individual life where perceiving, without a feeling or a concept coming between, is directly transformed into willing. The driving force in man, which comes into consideration here, we shall simply call instinct. The satisfaction of our lower, purely animal needs (hunger, sexual intercourse, etc.) takes place in this way. What is most characteristic of instinctive life is the immediacy with which a particular perception releases the will. This kind of determination of the will, which is characteristic only of lower sense-life to begin with, can also be extended to the perceptions of the higher senses. We let a deed follow upon the perception of some event or other in the outer world without further reflection and without linking any particular feeling to the perception, as in fact happens in conventional social life. The driving force of such conduct is what is called tact or moral etiquette. The more often such a direct release of activity by a perception takes place, the more the

person concerned is able to act purely under the guidance of tact, that is: tact becomes his characterological disposition.

The second level of human life is feeling. Definite feelings link themselves to the perceptions of the outer world. These feelings can become the driving forces of deeds. When I see a starving person, pity for him can become the driving force of my action. Such feelings, for example, are shame, pride, honor, humility, remorse, pity, revenge, gratitude, piety, loyalty, love and duty.<sup>46a</sup>

The third level of life is thinking and forming representations. A representation or a concept can become motive for an action through mere reflection. Representations become motives because in the course of life we continuously link certain aims of will with perceptions which keep returning in more or less modified form. This is why, when people not entirely without experience have certain perceptions, there always also enter into their consciousness representations of deeds which they themselves have carried out in a similar instance, or have seen carried out. These representations hover before them as determining models for all later decisions; they become united with their characterological disposition. We could call this driving force of the will, practical experience. Practical experience gradually merges into purely tactful conduct. This happens when definite typical pictures of actions have become so firmly connected in our consciousness with representations of certain situations in life that in any given case we skip over all deliberation based on experience and pass over directly from perception into willing.

The highest level of individual life is that of conceptual thinking without reference to a definite perceptual content. We determine the content of a concept through pure intuition from the ideal sphere. Such a concept contains no reference to definite perceptions at first. If we pass over into willing under the influence of a concept pointing to a perception, that is, a representation, then it is this perception which determines us indirectly via the conceptual thinking. When we act under the influence of intuitions, then the driving force of our deed is pure thinking. Since in philosophy it is customary to call the faculty of pure thinking, reason, it would be justifiable to call the moral driving force characteristic of this level, practical reason. The clearest account of this driving force of the will has been given by Kreyenbühl.<sup>47</sup> (*Philosophische Monatshefte*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3). I count his article on this subject among the most important contributions to present-day philosophy, particularly to ethics. Kreyenbühl characterizes this driving force as practical a priori, that is, an impulse to action springing directly from my intuition.

It is clear that in the strictest sense of the word, such an impulse can no longer be considered as belonging to the characterological disposition. For here what acts as driving force is no longer something merely individual in me, but is the ideal and therefore the universal content of my intuition. As soon as I see the justification for making this content the foundation and starting-point of an action, I pass over into willing, irrespective of whether I had the concept already, or whether it enters my consciousness only immediately before acting, that is, irrespective of whether or not it was already present in me as disposition.

An action is a real act of will only when a momentary impulse of action, in the form of a concept or representation, influences the characterological disposition. Such an impulse then becomes the motive of will.

Motives of morality are representations and concepts. There are philosophers of ethics who also see in feeling a motive for morality; they maintain, for example, that the aim of moral conduct is the furtherance of the greatest possible quantity of pleasure in the individual who acts. But in itself a pleasure cannot be a motive; only a represented pleasure can. The representation of a future feeling, but not the feeling itself, can influence my characterological disposition. For in the moment of acting the feeling itself is not yet there; moreover it is to be produced by the action.

The representation of one's own or someone else's welfare, however, is rightly regarded as a motive of will. The principle: through one's deed to bring about the greatest amount of pleasure for oneself, that is, to attain personal advantage, is egoism. It is striven for either by ruthlessly considering only one's own welfare, even at the cost of the happiness of others (pure egoism), or by furthering the welfare of others because indirectly one expects a favorable influence upon one's own self through the happiness of others, or because one fears to endanger one's own interest by injuring others (morality of prudence). The particular content of egoistical principles of morality will depend upon what representations a person has of his own or of another's happiness. A person will determine the content of his egoistical striving according to what he considers to be the good things in life (luxury, hope of happiness, deliverance from various misfortunes, etc.).

Another motive is the purely conceptual content of actions. This content does not refer to a particular action only, as in the case of the representation of one's own pleasures, but to the reason for an action derived from a system of moral principles. In the form of abstract concepts these moral principles may govern moral life without the single individual troubling himself about the origin of the concepts. In that case, we simply feel the subjection to the moral concept which, like a command, overshadows our deeds as a moral necessity. The reason for this necessity we leave to those who demand our moral subjection, that is, to the moral authority we acknowledge (the head of the family, the state, social custom, the authority of the church, divine revelation). A particular instance of these moral principles is when the command announces itself to us, not through an external authority, but through our own inner being (moral autonomy). In this case, within ourselves we sense the voice to which we have to submit. This voice finds expression in conscience.

It means moral progress when man does not simply take the command of an outer or inner authority as motive for his action, but strives to recognize the reason why a particular principle of conduct should act as motive in him. This is the advance from morality based on authority, to conduct based on moral insight. At this level of morality the person will consider the needs of moral life and will let this knowledge determine his actions. Such needs are: 1) the greatest possible welfare of humanity, purely for its own sake; 2) the progress of culture, or the moral development of mankind to ever greater

perfection; 3) the realization of individual aims of morality, which are grasped purely intuitively.

The greatest possible welfare of humanity will naturally be understood differently by different people. The above principle does not refer to a definite representation of this welfare, but to the fact that each person who acknowledges this principle strives to do what in his opinion best furthers the welfare of humanity.

The progress of culture is seen as a special instance of the above-mentioned moral principle by those who connect feelings of pleasure with the advantages of culture, but they will have to accept into the bargain the decline and destruction of much that also contributes to the welfare of mankind. However, it is also possible that in the progress of culture someone sees a moral necessity, quite apart from the feeling of pleasure connected with it. Then for him, the progress of culture is a particular moral principle, distinct from the one mentioned previously.

The principle of the general welfare, as well as that of the progress of culture, is based upon a representation, that is, upon how one relates the content of moral ideas to certain experiences (perceptions). But the highest thinkable principle of morality is one which contains no such relation from the start, but springs from the source of pure intuition and only afterward seeks the relation to perceptions (to life). Here the decision as to what is to be willed proceeds from a different sphere than that of the previous examples. In all his conduct, one in favor of the principle of the general welfare will first ask what his ideals will contribute to this general welfare. He who acknowledges the moral principle of the progress of culture, will do the same. But at this level he could do something even higher: if in a particular case he were not to proceed from one single definite aim of morality, but were to recognize a certain value in all principles of morality and were always to ask whether the one or the other would be more important here. It may happen that in certain circumstances one considers the progress of culture, in others, the general welfare, and in yet others, the furtherance of his own welfare, to be the right aim and motive of his actions. But when all such reasons take second place, then first and foremost the conceptual intuition itself comes into consideration. When this happens, then all other motives retreat from the leading position and the idea-content of the action alone is effective as its motive.

Among the levels of characterological disposition, we have shown the one which acts as pure thinking, as practical reason, to be the highest. From the motives, we have now shown conceptual intuition to be the highest. On closer consideration, it will soon be seen that at this level of morality driving force and motive coincide, that is, neither a predetermined characterological disposition nor an external moral principle accepted on authority, influences our conduct. The deed therefore is neither a conventional one, carried out according to some rule or other, nor one automatically performed in response to an external impulse; rather it is one which is determined solely through its ideal content.



Such conduct presupposes the capacity for moral intuition. Whoever lacks the ability to experience the moral principle that applies in a particular instance, will never achieve truly individual willing.

The exact opposite to this moral principle is the Kantian: Act so that the principles of your actions can be valid for all men. This principle is death to all individual impulses of action. How all men would act cannot be a standard for me, but rather what is right for me to do in the particular instance.

To this, a superficial judgment could perhaps object: How can an action be individually adapted to the particular instance and the particular situation, and yet at the same time be determined purely ideally by intuition? This objection is due to a confusion of the moral motive and the perceptible content of the action. The perceptible content could be a motive, and is one, for example, when an act is done for the progress of culture or out of pure egoism, etc., but it is not the motive when the reason for action is a pure moral intuition. My I naturally takes notice of this perceptual content, but is not determined by it. This content is used only to form a cognitive concept, but the moral concept that belongs to it, the I does not take from the object. The cognitive concept of a given situation confronting me is also a moral concept only if I base my view on a particular moral principle. If my viewpoint is limited to the general moral principle of the progress of culture, then I go through life along a fixed route. From every event I perceive which can occupy me, a moral duty also springs, namely, to do my best toward placing the particular event in the service of the progress of culture. In addition to the concept which reveals to me the natural law inherent in an event or object, there is also a moral label attached to it which contains for me, as a moral being, an ethical direction as to how I am to behave. This moral label is justified at a certain level, but at a higher level it coincides with the idea that arises in me when I face the concrete instance.

Men differ greatly in their capacity for intuition. In one person ideas bubble up easily, while another person has to acquire them with much labor. The situation in which men live, which is the scene of their actions, is no less different. How a man acts will therefore depend on the way his capacity for intuition functions in the face of a given situation. The sum of ideas active within us, the actual content of our intuitions, is what, for all the universality of the idea-world, is individually constituted in each human being. Insofar as this intuitive content is directed toward action, it is the moral content of the individual. To let this content come to expression is the highest moral driving force and also the highest motive for the one who has recognized that ultimately all other moral principles unite in this content. This standpoint can be called ethical individualism.

The discovery of the quite individual intuition which corresponds to the situation, is the deciding factor in an intuitively determined action. At this level of morality one can speak only of general concepts of morality (norms, laws) insofar as these result from the generalization of individual impulses. General norms always presuppose concrete facts from which they can be derived. But facts must first be produced by human deeds.

When we look for the laws (concepts) underlying the conduct of individuals, peoples and epochs, we obtain a system of ethics, not as a science of moral rules, but as a natural philosophy of morality. It is true that laws obtained in this way are related to human conduct, as the laws of nature are related to a particular phenomenon. But they are not at all identical with the impulses upon which we base our conduct. If one wants to grasp the means by which man's action springs from his moral will, then one must first consider the relation of this will to the action. One must first select actions where this relation is the determining factor. If I, or someone else, reflect on such an action later, then can be discovered upon what principle of morality the action is based. While I am acting I am moved to act by the moral principle insofar as it lives in me intuitively; the moral principle is united with my love for what I want to accomplish by my deed. I ask no man and no code, Shall I do this? - rather I do it the moment I have grasped the idea of it. This alone makes it my action. The deeds of a person who acts solely because he acknowledges a definite moral standard, come about as a result of a principle which is part of his moral code. He is merely the agent. He is a higher kind of automaton. If some impulse to action enters his consciousness, then at once the clockwork of his moral principle will be set in motion and run to rule, in order to bring about a deed which is Christian, or humane, or is deemed unselfish, or to further the progress of culture. Only when I follow my love for the object is it I myself who acts. At this level of morality I do not act because I acknowledge a ruler over me, an external authority, or a so-called inner voice. I do not acknowledge any external principle for my conduct, because I have found the source of my conduct within myself, namely, my love for the deed. I do not prove intellectually whether my deed is good or bad; I do it out of my love for it. My action will be "good" if my intuition, immersed in love, exists in the right way within the relationship between things; this can be experienced intuitively; the action will be "bad" if this is not the case. Nor do I ask myself: How would another person act in my place? - rather I act, as I, as this particular individuality, find my will motivated to act. I am not guided directly by what happens to be the usual thing, the general habit, some general human code or moral standard, but solely by my love for this deed. I feel no compulsion - neither the compulsion of nature which rules me through my instincts, nor the compulsion of moral commands. Rather, I simply carry out what lies within me.

Those who defend general moral standards will perhaps object: If each person strives to express and do only what he pleases, then there is no difference between a good deed and a crime; every depraved impulse in me has the same right to express itself as has the intention to do my best. The fact that I have a deed in mind, according to an idea, cannot set my standard as a moral human being, but only the test as to whether it is a good or evil deed. Only if it is good should I carry it out.

My reply to this obvious objection, which nonetheless is based on a misunderstanding of what is meant here, is this: One who wants to understand the nature of human will must differentiate between the path which brings this will to a certain degree of development, and the unique character which the will assumes as it approaches its goal. On the way toward this goal standards do play their justified part. The goal consists in the realization of aims of morality, grasped purely intuitively. Man attains such aims to the degree that he is at all able to raise himself to the intuitive idea-content of the world. In particular

instances such aims are usually mixed with other elements, either as driving force or as motive. Nevertheless, in the human will intuition can be the determining factor, wholly or in part. A person does what he ought to do, he provides the stage upon which "ought" becomes deed; it is absolutely his own deed which he brings to expression. The impulse here can only be completely individual. And, in fact, only an act of will which springs from intuition can be individual. To call the acts of criminals and what is evil an expression of the individuality, in the same sense as the embodiment of pure intuition, is only possible if blind urges are reckoned as part of the human individuality. But the blind urge which drives a person to crime does not spring from intuition and does not belong to what is individual in man, but rather to what is most general in him, to what is equally valid in all men, and out of which man works his way by means of what is individual in him. What is individual in me is not my organism with its urges and feelings, but rather the universal world of ideas which lights up within this organism. My urges, instincts, passions confirm nothing more than that I belong to the general species, man; the fact that something ideal comes to expression in a particular way within these urges, passions and feelings, confirms my individuality. Through my instincts and urges I am a person of whom there are twelve to the dozen; through the particular form of the idea, by means of which I name myself "I" within the dozen, I am an individual. Only a being other than myself could distinguish me from others by the difference in my animal nature; through my thinking, that is, through the active grasp of what expresses itself as an ideal within my organism, do I distinguish myself from others. Therefore one definitely cannot say that the action of a criminal springs from the idea in him. Indeed, this is just what is characteristic of a criminal deed: it stems from elements in man which are external to the ideal-element in him.

An action is felt to be free insofar as the reason for it springs from the ideal part of my individual being; any other part of an action, irrespective of whether it is carried out under the compulsion of nature or under the obligation of a moral code, is felt to be unfree.

Man is free insofar as he is able, in every moment of his life, to follow himself. A moral deed is my deed only if it can be called free in this sense. What here have to be considered are the presuppositions necessary for a willed action to be felt as free; how this purely ethically grasped idea of freedom realizes itself in human nature, will be seen in what follows.

A deed done out of freedom does not at all exclude, but includes moral laws, but it will be a deed done from a higher sphere compared with those dictated solely by such laws. Why should my deed serve the general welfare any less when it is done out of love, than when I do it solely for the reason that I feel that to serve the general welfare is a duty? The concept of mere duty excludes freedom because it does not include what is individual, but demands subjection of the individual to a general standard. Freedom of action is thinkable only from the standpoint of ethical individualism.

But how is it possible for people to live in a community if each person strives to assert only his own individuality? This objection is characteristic of misunderstood moralism. A

person holding this viewpoint believes that a community of people is possible only if all men are united by general fixed moral rules. He simply does not understand the oneness and harmony of the idea-world. He does not realize that the idea-world which is active in me is none other than the one active in my fellow-man. This unity of ideas is indeed nothing but a result of men's experience of life.<sup>47</sup> Only this can it be. For if the unity of the idea-world could be recognized by any means other than by individual observation, then general rules and not personal experience would be valid in its sphere. Individuality is possible only when each individual is acquainted with others through individual observation alone. The difference between me and my fellow men is not at all because we live in two quite different spiritual worlds, but because from the world of ideas which we share, he receives different intuitions from mine. He wants to live out his intuitions, I mine. If we both really draw from the idea, and are not obeying any external impulses (physical or spiritual), then we cannot but meet in the same striving, in having the same intentions. A moral misunderstanding, a clash between men who are morally free, is out of the question. Only the morally unfree who follow natural instincts or some accepted command of duty, turn away from a fellow-man if he does not follow the same instinct and the same command as themselves. To live in love of the action and to let live, having understanding for the other person's will, is the fundamental principle of free human beings. They know no other "ought" than that with which their will is intuitively in accord; how they shall will in a particular instance, their power of ideation will tell them.

If human nature were not fundamentally social, no external laws could make it so! Only because individual human beings are one in the spiritual part of their being, can they live out their lives side by side. The free man is confident that others who are free belong to the same spiritual world as he does, and that they will meet him in their intentions. The free man does not demand agreement from his fellow men, but he expects it, because it lies in human nature. This does not refer to the existing necessity for this or that external arrangement, but rather to the disposition, the attitude of soul through which man, in his experience of himself among fellow men for whom he cares, comes nearest to doing justice to human dignity.

There are many who will say that the concept of a free human being outlined here is a chimera, is nowhere to be found as a reality, and that we have to deal with real people from whom one can hope for morality only when they obey some moral law, when they regard their moral mission as a duty, and do not freely follow their inclinations and preferences. - I certainly do not doubt this. Only a blind man could do so. But then, away with all hypocrisy of morality if this is to be the ultimate conclusion. Then simply say: Human nature must be compelled as long as it is not free. Whether the unfreedom is dealt with by physical means or through moral laws, whether man is unfree because he follows his immeasurable sexual instinct, or because he is hemmed in by the fetters of conventional morality, is quite immaterial from a certain point of view. But one should not maintain that such a man can rightly call his actions his own, for he is driven to them by external powers. But there are human beings who raise themselves above all these compelling rules, free spirits who find their own self in the jumble of habits, regulations, religious observance, etc. They are free insofar as they follow only themselves; unfree

insofar as they submit themselves. Which of us can say that he is really free in all that he does. But in each of us exists a higher being in whom the free man comes to expression.

Our life is composed of free and unfree deeds. But we cannot complete the concept of man without including the free spirit as the purest characteristic of human nature. After all, we are truly human only insofar as we are free.

That is an ideal, many will say. Without doubt - but it is an ideal which works itself to the surface from within our nature as a reality. It is no "thought out" or imagined ideal, but one in which there is life, one which clearly announces its presence even in its least perfect form of existence. If man were merely a product of nature, the search for ideals, that is, for ideas which for the moment are inactive but whose realization we demand, would not be possible. In the case of external objects the idea is determined by the perception. We have done our share when we have recognized the connection between idea and perception. But with man this is not so. His content is not determined without him; his true concept as a moral being (free spirit) is not objectively united with the perceptual picture "man" from the start merely in order to be confirmed by knowledge later. By his own activity man must unite his concept with the perception, man. Concept and perception only coincide here if man himself brings it about. But he cannot do this till he has found the concept of the free spirit, that is, his own concept. In the objective world a line of division is drawn by our organization between perception and concept; cognition overcomes this division. In our subjective nature this division is no less present; man overcomes it in the course of his development by bringing his concept to expression in his outward existence. Both man's intellectual as well as his moral life point to his twofold nature: perceiving (direct experience) and thinking. In the intellectual life the two-foldness is overcome through knowledge; in the moral life through actually bringing the free spirit to realization. Every being has its inborn concept (the law of its existence and activity), but in external objects the concept is indivisibly connected with the perception and separated from it only within our spiritual organism. In man concept and perception are to begin with, actually apart, to be united by him just as actually. One could object: To our perception of a man a definite concept corresponds at every moment of his life, just as is the case with everything else. I can form a concept of a typical man, and I may also find such a man given to me as a perception. If to this I also bring the concept of the free spirit, then I have two concepts for the same object.

This line of thought is one-sided. As perceptual object I am subjected to perpetual change. As a child I was one thing, another as a youth, yet another as a man. In fact, at every moment the perceptual picture of myself is different from what it was a moment ago. These changes may take place in such a way that either it is always the same (the typical) man who expresses himself in them, or they become the expression of the free spirit. The perceptual object of my action is subjected to these changes.

In the perceptual object "man" the possibility of transformation is given, just as in the plant-seed there lies the possibility of becoming a fully developed plant. The plant transforms itself because of the objective laws which are inherent in it; man remains in his imperfect state unless he takes hold of the substance to be transformed within him and

transforms it through his own power. Nature makes man merely into a product of nature; society makes him into a being who acts rationally, but he alone can make himself into a free being. At a definite stage in his development nature releases man from its fetters; society carries his development a stage further; the final polish he can only apply himself.

Therefore, from the standpoint of free morality it is not asserted that as free spirit is the only form in which a man can exist. Free spirituality is the ultimate stage of man's development. And it is not denied that conduct according to rules has its justification as a stage of development. However, this cannot be acknowledged as the highest level of morality. But the free spirit in man overcomes rules in the sense that he does not accept only commands as motives, but also regulates his conduct in accordance with his impulses (intuitions).

When Kant says of duty:<sup>48</sup> "Duty! You sublime, you great name, you encompass nothing beloved or endearing, but you demand submission," you "lay down a law ... before which all inclinations become silent, even if in secret they also go against it," then man, conscious of the free spirit, answers: "Freedom! You friendly, humane name, you encompass all that is morally beloved, all that is most worthy of my humanity, you make me no one's servant, you do not merely lay down a law, but wait for what my moral love will of itself recognize as law, because it feels unfree when faced with any law simply forced upon it."

This is the contrast between mere law-abiding morality and morality born of freedom.

The philistine who sees morality embodied in some external rule, may perhaps even regard the free spirit as a dangerous person. But this is simply because his view is limited to a certain period of time. If he were able to see beyond this, he would soon find that the free spirit need go beyond the laws of his state as seldom as the philistine himself, and is never in any real opposition to them. For all the laws of the state have sprung from the intuitions of free spirits, just as have all other objective laws of morality. No law is exercised through a family authority which was not at some time intuitively grasped and laid down by an ancestor. Similarly the conventional laws of morality were first laid down by definite people and so too the laws of the state first arise in the head of a statesman. These individualities have established laws over other people, and only he is unfree who forgets this origin and either looks upon these laws as extra-human commands, that is, as objective moral concepts of duty independent of man, or turns them into the commanding voice thought of - in a falsely mystical way - as compelling him in his own inner being. However, he who does not forget the origin of such laws, but looks for it in man, will reckon with them as belonging to the same idea-world as that from which he too draws his moral intuitions. If he believes his own intuitions to be better, then he will try to replace those in existence with his own; but if he finds the existing ones justified, he will act in accordance with them as if they were his own.

The formula must not be coined: Man is meant to realize a moral world order which exists independent of him. Insofar as knowledge of man is concerned, one maintaining this stands at the point where natural science stood when it believed that the goat has

horns in order to be able to butt. Fortunately natural scientists have rejected such a concept of purpose as a dead theory. It is more difficult to get rid of such theories in ethics. However, just as horns do not exist because of butting, but butting exists through horns, so man does not exist because of morality, but morality exists through man. The free human being acts morally because he has a moral idea, but he does not act in order that morality may come about. Human individuals, with the moral ideas belonging to their nature, are the presupposition for a moral world-order.

The human individual is the source of all morality and the center of earthly life. State and society have come about only because they are the necessary results of life shared by individual human beings. That state and society should react in turn upon the life of the individual is understandable, just as it is understandable that butting, which exists through the horns, reacts in turn upon the further development of the goat's horns, which would waste away by prolonged disuse. Similarly, the individual would waste away if he led a separate existence outside a human community. This is just why the social order arises, so that it can react favorably upon the individual.

### **PHILOSOPHY OF FREEDOM (SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY) AND MONISM**

The naive man who regards as real only what he can see with his eyes and grasp with his hands, also needs to have motives for his moral life that are perceptible to the senses. He needs someone who will impart these motives to him in a way that he can understand by means of his senses. He will let them be dictated to him as commands by a person whom he considers wiser and more powerful than himself, or whom he acknowledges, for some other reason, to be a power standing above him. In this way the moral principles already mentioned come about through being prescribed by authority of family, state, society, church, or the Divinity. An undeveloped person still trusts in the authority of a single individual; a somewhat more advanced person lets his moral conduct be dictated by a majority (state, society). But it is always perceptible powers upon which he relies. When at last the conviction dawns upon him that fundamentally all these are weak human beings just like himself, then he will seek guidance from a higher power, from a divine Being, whom, however, he endows with sense-perceptible qualities. He lets the conceptual content of his moral life be dictated to him by this Being, again in a perceptible way, for example when God appears in the burning bush, or moves among men in bodily human form and in a manner perceptible to their ears tells them what to do and what not to do.

The highest level of development of naive realism in the moral sphere is reached when the moral command (moral idea) has been separated from every foreign entity, and is hypothetically thought of as an absolute force in one's own inner being. What at first is sensed as the external voice of God, is now sensed as an independent power within man, and is spoken of in a way that shows the inner power to be identified with the voice of conscience.

When this happens, the level of naive consciousness has been abandoned and we enter the region where moral laws become independent rules. They no longer have a bearer, but have become metaphysical entities, existing by themselves. They are similar to the invisible-visible forces of the metaphysical realist who does not look for the reality of things in the human soul's participation in this reality through thinking, but who hypothetically imagines reality as an addition to actual experience. Extra-human moral rules, therefore, always accompany metaphysical realism. Metaphysical realism cannot do otherwise than seek the origin of morality too in a sphere beyond human reach. And here there are several possibilities. If the presupposed Being is thought of as in itself unthinking, acting according to purely mechanical laws, as materialism thinks of it, then out of itself it must also produce, by purely mechanical necessity, the human individual and all that belongs to him. The consciousness of freedom can then be only an illusion. For while I believe myself to be the creator of my deeds, it is the material substances of which I am composed, together with their processes, that are at work within me. I believe myself to be free, whereas in reality all my actions are but results of the material processes which are the foundation of my bodily and spiritual organism. According to this point of view, it is simply because we do not know the motives compelling us, that we have the feeling of freedom. "We must emphasize that the feeling of freedom is due to the absence of external compelling motives." "Our actions as well as our thinking are subject to necessity."<sup>49</sup>

Another possibility is that the extra-human absolute is seen as a spiritual Being behind the world of phenomena. Then the impulse to action will also be sought in such a spiritual power. The moral principles to be found in man's reason will be regarded as issuing from this Being-in-itself, which has its own particular intentions with regard to man. Moral laws appear to such a dualist as dictated by the Absolute, and through his reason, man simply has to discover and carry out these decisions of the Absolute Being. The moral world-order appears to the dualist as the perceptible reflection of a higher order that stands behind it. Earthly morality is the manifestation of the extra-human world order. It is not man that matters in this moral order, but the Being-in-itself, the extra-human Being. Man ought to do what this Being wills. Eduard von Hartmann, who sees the Being-in-itself as the Godhead whose very existence is suffering, believes that this divine Being has created the world in order that through the world he will be redeemed from his infinitely great pain. This philosopher therefore regards the moral development of mankind as a process which exists for the purpose of redeeming the Godhead.

"Only through the building up of a moral world-order by sensible, responsible individuals can the aim of the world-process be carried through...." "Existence in its reality is the incarnation of the Godhead - the world process is the Passion of the God becoming flesh, and at the same time the path of redemption of Him who was crucified in the flesh; and morality is the co-operation in the shortening of this path of suffering and redemption."<sup>50</sup>

Here man does not act because he wills, but he ought to act because it is God's will to be redeemed. Just as the materialistic dualist makes man into an automaton whose conduct is merely the result of purely mechanical laws, so the spiritualistic dualist (that is, he who sees the Absolute, the Being-in-itself, as a spiritual entity in which man has no conscious



share) makes him into a slave of the will of the Absolute. Freedom is out of the question in materialism as well as in one-sided spiritualism, in fact in any kind of metaphysical realism which does not experience, but infers something extra-human as the true reality.

Naive as well as metaphysical realism, in order to be consistent, must deny freedom for one and the same reason, since they regard man as being simply the agent or executor of principles which are forced upon him by necessity. Naive realism kills freedom through subjection to the authority either of a perceptible being or of an entity thought of as similar to a perceptible being, or else through submission to the authority of the abstract inner voice which is interpreted as "conscience;" the metaphysical realist, who merely infers something extra-human, cannot acknowledge freedom because he lets man be determined, mechanically or morally, by a "Being-in-itself."

Monism must acknowledge the partial justification of naive realism because it acknowledges the justification of the world of perceptions. Someone who is incapable of bringing forth moral ideas through intuition, will have to receive them from others. Insofar as a man receives his moral principles from outside, he is positively unfree. But monism ascribes equal significance to the idea compared with perception. And the idea can come to manifestation in the human individual. Insofar as man follows the impulses coming from this side, he feels free. But monism denies all justification to a metaphysics which merely draws inferences, and consequently also to impulses of action stemming from a so-called "Being-in-itself," According to the monistic view, man's action is unfree when he obeys some perceptible external compulsion; it is free when he obeys himself. Monism cannot acknowledge any kind of unconscious compulsion hidden behind perception and concept. When someone maintains that a fellow man was not free when he performed an action, it must be possible to prove the existence within the perceptible world of the thing, the person, or the institution that made the man act; but if an appeal is made to causes for the action lying outside the sphere of physical and spiritual reality, then monism cannot enter the discussion.

According to monism, in his activity man is partly unfree, partly free. He is unfree in the world of perceptions, but brings the free spirit to realization in himself.

The moral commands which the metaphysical realist merely infers and cannot but consider as issuing from a higher power, for the monist are thoughts of men; for the monist the moral world order is neither a copy of a purely mechanical natural order, nor of an extra-human world order, but entirely a free undertaking of man. Man does not have to carry out the will of some Being existing beyond his reach; he carries out his own will; he does not bring to realization the decisions and intentions of another Being, but brings his own to realization. Monism does not see the purpose of a foreign rulership behind man, determining him from outside, but rather that insofar as they bring intuitive ideas to realization, human beings pursue solely their own human purposes. And indeed, each individual pursues his own particular purpose. For the world of ideas expresses itself not in a community of men, but only in the individual man. The common goal of a group of men is nothing but the result of the separate will-activities of the individual persons, and usually of a few outstanding ones whom the rest follow as their authorities. Each one

of us is destined to become a free spirit, just as every rose seed is destined to become a rose.

The monistic view, in the sphere of truly moral conduct, is a philosophy of freedom. And as it is also a philosophy of reality, it rejects metaphysical and unreal restrictions of man's free spirit just as it acknowledges physical and historical (naively real) restrictions of the naive man. Since monism does not regard man as a finished product, as a being who at every moment of his life unfolds his full nature, it seems futile to discuss whether man, as such, is free or not. Man is seen as a being in the process of self-development, and one may ask whether, in the course of this development the stage of the free spirit can be attained.

Monism knows that nature does not release man from its care complete and finished as a free spirit, but it leads him up to a certain level from which, still unfree, he continues to develop until he reaches the point where he finds his own self.

To monism it is obvious that a being acting under physical or moral compulsion cannot be moral in a real sense. It regards the level of transition through automatic conduct (according to natural urges and instincts) and through obedient conduct (according to moral rules) as necessary preliminary stages of morality, but it also recognizes the possibility for man to overcome both transitory levels through his free spirit. A truly moral world view is released by monism, both from the fetters of naive moral principles in man's inner world, and from the moral principles of the speculating metaphysicist in the external world. The naive principles of morality can be eliminated from the world as little as can perceptions. The metaphysical view is rejected because monism seeks all the factors for explaining world-phenomena within the world, and none outside it. Just as monism finds it unnecessary to entertain thoughts of principles of knowledge other than those inherent in man, (p. 140) so it also definitely finds it unnecessary to entertain thoughts of principles of morality other than those inherent in man. Human morality, like human knowledge, is determined through human nature. And just as knowledge would mean something quite different to beings other than man, so other beings would also have a different morality. Morality for the monist is a specifically human quality, and freedom is the form in which human morality finds expression.

First Addition to the Revised Edition, 1918. Difficulty in judging what is presented in the two preceding chapters may arise because one believes oneself to be confronted by a contradiction. On the one hand, the experience of thinking is spoken of as having a general significance of equal value for every human consciousness; on the other hand, it is shown that though the ideas realized in moral life are of the same kind as those worked out by thinking, they come to expression in each human consciousness in an individual way. If one cannot overcome seeing a "contradiction," in this, and cannot recognize that it is just in a living experience of this actually present contrast that a glimpse into man's true being is revealed, then it is also impossible to see either the idea of knowledge or the idea of freedom in their true light. For those who think of concepts as merely drawn (abstracted) from the sense-world, and who do not give full recognition to intuitions, the thought presented here as the reality must seem a "mere contradiction." For an insight

that recognizes how ideas are intuitively experienced as a self-sustaining reality, it is clear that in the sphere of the world of ideas man penetrates in cognition into something which is universal for all men, but when he derives from that same idea world the intuitions for his acts of will, then he individualizes a member of this idea world by means of the same activity which, as a general human one, he unfolds in the spiritual ideal process of cognition. For this reason what appears as a logical contradiction, namely the universal character of cognitive ideas and the individual character of moral ideas, when experienced in its true reality, becomes a living concept. A characteristic feature of human nature consists in the fact that what can be intuitively grasped oscillates in man like a living pendulum between knowledge which is universally valid, and the individual experience of this universal element. For the man who cannot recognize one swing of the pendulum in its reality, thinking will remain merely a subjective human activity; for the one who cannot recognize the other swing, all individual life appears to cease in man's activity of thinking. To the first person, cognition is unintelligible, to the second, moral life is unintelligible. Both will call in all sorts of representations in order to explain the one or the other, all of which miss the point, because both persons, fundamentally, either do not recognize that thinking can be experienced, or take it to be an activity which merely abstracts.

Second Addition to the Revised Edition, 1918. On page 189, materialism was referred to. I am well aware that there are thinkers like the above-mentioned Th. Ziehen, who do not in the least consider themselves materialists, but who must nevertheless be described as such from the point of view expressed in this book. It is not a matter that someone says that for him the world is not restricted to merely material existence and therefore he is not a materialist. It is a matter of whether or not he develops concepts which are applicable only to a material existence. One who says: "Our conduct, like our thinking, is necessitated," expresses a concept applicable only to material processes, but applicable neither to actions nor to existence; and if he thinks his concepts through, he will have to think materialistically. That he does not do this is only the outcome of that inconsistency which is so often the result of a thinking not carried through. - One often hears it said nowadays that the materialism of the nineteenth century no longer plays a part in science. But in reality this is not so at all. It is only that at present it is often not noticed that no other ideas are available than those which can be applied only to something material. This veils present day materialism, whereas in the second half of the nineteenth century it was plain for all to see. And present day veiled materialism is no less intolerant of a view that grasps the world spiritually than was the openly-admitted materialism of the last century. However, it deceives many who believe they must reject a comprehension of the world which includes spirit, because after all, the natural scientific comprehension of the world "has long ago abandoned materialism."

## **WORLD PURPOSE AND LIFE PURPOSE (THE DESTINATION OF MAN)**

Among the many currents of thought pursued in the cultural life of mankind, it is possible to trace one which can be described as the overcoming of the concept of purpose in those

spheres to which it does not belong. Purpose belongs to a special sequence of phenomena. In reality one can only speak of purpose when, in contrast to the relation between cause and effect where an earlier event determines a later one, the reverse is the case and the later event influences the earlier. This applies only to human action. Man carries out a deed which he represents to himself first of all, and he lets the representation determine his action. The later, the deed, with the help of the representation influences the earlier, the person who acts. This detour through the act of representing is always necessary for a connection to have purpose.

In a process which can be divided into cause and effect, perception must be distinguished from concept. The perception of the cause precedes the perception of the effect; cause and effect would simply remain side by side in our consciousness if we were not able to connect them with one another through their corresponding concepts. The perception of an effect can follow only upon the perception of the cause. The effect can have a real influence upon the cause only through the conceptual factor. For the perceptual factor of the effect is simply not present prior to the perceptual factor of the cause. If someone says that the blossom is the purpose of the root, that is, that the blossom influences the root, then he can say this only concerning that factor in the blossom which he confirms in it through his thinking. The perceptual factor of the blossom had as yet no existence at the time the root came into being. For a connection of things to have purpose it is necessary to have not merely an ideal connection (the law in it) of the later with the earlier, but also the concept (the law) of the effect must really, i.e. by means of a perceptible process, influence the cause. However, a perceptible influence of a concept upon something else is to be observed only in human actions. This is therefore the only sphere in which the concept of purpose is applicable. Naive consciousness, which regards as real only what is perceptible, attempts - as we said before - to place something perceptible where only ideal factors are to be recognized. In perceptible events it also looks for perceptible connections, or, if it does not find them, imagines them to be there. The concept of purpose, valid for subjective actions, is an element that easily lends itself to such imaginary connections. The naive man knows how he brings about an event, and from this he concludes that nature must do likewise. In the purely ideal connections of nature he sees not only imperceptible forces but also imperceptible real purposes. Man makes his tools to fit a purpose; on the same pattern, the naive realist lets the Creator build up all organisms. Only very gradually does this mistaken concept of purpose disappear from the sciences. In philosophy, even today, it still does a great deal of mischief. The purpose of the world is thought to exist outside the world, and man's destination (therefore also his purpose) outside man, and so on.

Monism rejects the concept of purpose in every sphere, with the sole exception of human action. It looks for laws of nature, but not for purposes of nature. Purposes of nature are arbitrary assumptions, just like the imperceptible forces (p. 138). And from the standpoint of monism, life purposes that man does not set himself are unjustifiable assumptions. Only that is purposeful which man has first made so, for only through the realization of an idea does a purpose arise. And ideas are effective in a realistic sense in man alone. Therefore human life has only the purpose and the destination that the human being gives it. To the question: What is man's task in life? monism can only answer: The task he sets

himself. My mission in the world is not predetermined, but at every moment is the one I choose. I do not begin life along a fixed route.

Only by human beings are ideas realized according to purpose. It is therefore inadmissible to speak of the embodiment of ideas through history. All such phrases as: "History is the development of mankind toward freedom," or the realization of the moral world order, and so on, are untenable from the monistic point of view.

The adherents of the concept of purpose believe that by abandoning it they would also have to abandon all order and uniformity in the world. Listen, for example, to Robert Hamerling:50a

"As long as there are instincts in nature, it is foolish to deny purposes in it.

Just as the structure of a limb of the human body is not determined and conditioned by an idea of this limb, floating in the air, but by the connection with the greater totality, the body, to which the limb belongs, so the structure of every being in nature, be it plant, animal, or man, is not determined and conditioned by an idea of it floating in the air, but by the formative principle of the great totality of nature which expresses and organizes itself according to a purpose."

And on page 191 of the same volume:

"The theory of purpose maintains only that in spite of the thousand discomforts and miseries of the life of creatures, lofty purpose and plan are unmistakably present in the formations and in the development of nature. - A purpose and a plan, however, that come to realization only within the bounds of natural laws, and cannot aim at a Utopia in which life is not confronted by death, growth by decay, with all the more or less unpleasant, but quite unavoidable intermediary stages between them.

When the opponents of the concept of purpose bring a laboriously-collected rubbish-heap of partial or complete, imaginary or real examples showing lack of purpose, against a world full of wonders of purpose such as nature shows in all its realms, then I find it just as droll." -

What is it that here is called purpose? A concordance of perceptions that form a totality. But since all perceptions are based on laws (ideas) which we discover by means of our thinking, it follows that the planned concord between single parts of a perceptual totality is just the ideal concord between the single parts of the idea totality contained in the perceptual totality. When it is said that an animal or a man is not determined by an idea floating in the air, then this is a misleading way of putting it, and the condemned view ceases to be absurd when rightly formulated. Certainly an animal is not determined by an idea floating in the air, but indeed is determined by an idea inborn in it and constituting the law of its nature. It is just because the idea is not outside of the object, but is effective in it as its nature, that one cannot speak of purpose. Just those who deny that the beings of nature are determined from outside (whether by an idea floating in the air or existing

outside the creature in the mind of a world Creator, is immaterial in this context) should admit that these beings are not determined by purpose and plan from outside, but by cause and law from within. I construct a machine according to a purpose when I bring its parts in connection with one another in a way that they did not acquire from nature. The purpose contained in the arrangement consists in the fact that I have placed the idea of the working of the machine into its foundation. The machine thereby becomes a perceptual object with a corresponding idea. The beings of nature are also entities of this kind. One who says that something contains purpose because it is built according to laws can use the same description for the beings of nature, if he likes. However, the laws at work in nature must not be confused with the purposes in subjective human action. For a purpose to be present, it is always necessary that the effective cause is a concept, and indeed it must be the concept of the effect. But nowhere in nature are concepts in evidence as causes; concepts always appear only as the ideal connection between cause and effect. Causes are present in nature only in the form of perceptions.

Dualism speaks of world purpose and nature purpose. Where, for perception, a link can be seen between cause and effect according to law, there the dualist assumes that one sees only the copy of a connection in which the absolute Being has realized its purposes. For monism, along with the absolute Being that cannot be experienced and is only inferred, the reason for assuming any world purpose also falls away.

Addition to the Revised Version, 1918. No one who thinks through without prejudice what is presented here, could come to the conclusion that the author rejects the concept of purpose for all facts not produced by man, because his view is similar to that of those thinkers who, by rejecting this concept, create the possibility of presenting, first, everything except human action - and then human action too - as being only a natural process. The fact that thinking is presented here as a purely spiritual process should be a protection against such misunderstanding. The reason for here rejecting the concept of purpose for the spiritual world also, insofar as it lies outside human action, is because in that world something higher is revealed than purpose realized in human life. And when the purpose of mankind's destination, thought of on the pattern of human purpose, is referred to here as a mistaken concept, it is meant that the individual human beings set themselves purposes, and the result of these is the total activity of mankind. This result is then something higher than its parts, the single human purposes.

## **MORAL IMAGINATION (DARWINISM AND MORALITY)**

A free spirit acts according to his impulses; these are intuitions chosen by means of thinking from the totality of his world of ideas. The reason an unfree spirit singles out a particular intuition from his idea world in order to use it as a basis for a deed, lies in the world of perception given to him, i.e., in his past experience. Before making a decision he recalls what someone else has done or recommended as suitable in a similar instance, or what God has commanded to be done in such a case and so on, and he acts accordingly. For a free spirit these preconditions are not the only impulses to action. He makes an

absolutely original decision. In doing so he worries neither about what others have done in such an instance, nor what commands they have laid down. He has purely ideal reasons which move him to single out from the sum of his concepts a particular one and to transform it into action. But his action will belong to perceptible reality. What he brings about will therefore be identical with a quite definite perceptual content. The concept will be realized in a particular concrete event. As concept, it will not contain this particular event. It would be related to the event only in the same way as a concept in general is related to a perception, for example, as the concept, lion is related to a particular lion. The link between concept and perception is the representation (cp. p. 124, f.). For the unfree spirit this intermediate link is given from the outset. At the outset the motives are present in his consciousness as representations. When he wants to do something he does it as he has seen it done or as he is told to do it in the particular instance. Here authority is most effective by way of examples, that is, by conveying quite definite particular actions to the consciousness of the unfree spirit. The Christian, as unfree spirit, acts less on the teaching than on the example of the Redeemer. Rules have less value when they refer to positive deeds than when they refer to what should not be done. Laws appear in the form of general concepts only when they forbid something, not when they bid things to be done. Laws concerning what he should do must be given to the unfree spirit in a quite concrete form: Clean the walk in front of your door! Pay your taxes in such and such an amount to the Treasury Department, etc. Laws which are meant to prevent deeds take on conceptual form: Thou shalt not steal! Thou shalt not commit adultery! But these laws also influence the unfree spirit only through reference to a concrete representation such as that of the corresponding earthly punishment, the pangs of conscience, eternal damnation, and so on.

As soon as the impulse to action is present in general conceptual form (for example: Thou shalt do good to thy fellow men! Thou shalt live in a way that best furthers thy welfare!), then in each case must be found first of all the concrete representation of the deed (the relation of the concept to a perceptual content). For the free spirit, who is driven neither by any example nor by fear of punishment, etc., it is always necessary to transform the concept into a representation.

By means of imagination representations are produced by man out of his world of ideas. Therefore what the free spirit needs in order to carry out his ideas, in order to bring them to fruition, is moral imagination. Moral imagination is the source from which the free spirit acts. Hence, only people with moral imagination are also morally productive in the real sense of the word. Those who merely preach morality, that is, people who devise moral rules without being able to condense them into concrete representations, are morally unproductive. They are like those critics who know how to explain rationally what a work of art should be like, but are incapable of any artistic creation themselves.

In order to produce a representation, man's moral imagination must set to work in a definite sphere of perception. Men's deeds do not create perceptions, but transform already existing perceptions, that is, impart a new form to them. In order to be able to transform a definite perceptual object, or a sum of such objects, in accordance with a moral representation, one must have grasped the laws at work in the perceptual picture

(the way it has worked hitherto, to which one now wants to give a new form or a new direction). Further, one must find a way by which these laws can be transformed into new ones. This part of moral activity depends on a knowledge of the sphere of phenomena with which one has to do. It must therefore be sought in a branch of general scientific knowledge. Hence moral deeds presuppose not only the faculty of moral ideation as well as moral imagination, but also the ability to transform the sphere of perceptions without breaking the laws of their natural connection. [footnote: Only superficiality could find in the use of the word “faculty” in this and other passages, a reversion to the teachings of older psychology concerning soul faculties. The exact meaning of this word, as used here, will be seen when compared with what is said on pp. 113-114.] This ability is moral technique. It can be learned in the sense in which science in general can be learned. Because people usually are better able to find the concepts for the already created world than productively out of imagination to decide future deeds, not yet in existence, it very well may be possible that persons without moral imagination receive moral representations from others, and skillfully imprint these into actual reality. The opposite may also occur: that persons with moral imagination are without the technical skill, and therefore must make use of others for carrying out their representations.

Insofar as knowledge of the objects in the sphere of our activity is necessary, our action will depend upon this knowledge. What must be considered here are laws of nature. Here we have to do with natural science, not with ethics.

Moral imagination and the faculty of moral ideation can become objects of knowledge only after they have been produced by the individual. By then they no longer regulate life, but have already regulated it. They must be explained in the same way as all other effective causes (they are purposes only for the subject). We therefore deal with them as with a natural philosophy of moral representations.

In addition to the above, one cannot have ethics in the form of a science of standards.

The standardized character of moral laws has been retained at least insofar as to enable one to explain ethics in the same sense as dietetics, which deduce general rules from the life-condition of the organism in order that on this basis they can influence the body in a particular way.<sup>51</sup> This comparison is mistaken, because our moral life is not comparable with the life of the organism. The function of the organism takes place without our doing anything about it; we find its laws present, ready-made, and therefore can investigate them and then apply what we discover. But moral laws are first created by us. We cannot apply them until they have been created. The mistake arises through the fact that moral laws, insofar as their content is concerned, are not newly created at every moment, but are handed over. Those that we take over from our ancestors appear as given, like the natural laws of the organism. But they can never be applied by a later generation with the same rights as can dietetic rules. For they apply to individuals and not, like natural laws, to examples of a species. As an organism I am such an example of a species, and I shall live in accordance with nature if I apply the natural laws of the species to my particular case. As a moral being I am an individual and have laws which are wholly my own.<sup>51a</sup>



This view seems to contradict the fundamental teaching of modern natural science described as the theory of evolution. But it only seems to do so. By evolution is meant the real development of the later out of the earlier in accordance with natural law. By evolution in the organic world is meant that the later (more perfect) organic forms are real descendents of the earlier (imperfect) forms, and have developed from them in accordance with natural laws. According to his view, the adherent of the theory of organic evolution would have to represent to himself that there was once a time on earth when it would have been possible to watch the gradual development of reptiles out of proto-amniotes,<sup>52</sup> if one could have been present there as observer and had been endowed with a sufficiently long span of life. He also would have to represent to himself that it would have been possible to observe the development of the solar system out of the Kant-Laplace primordial nebula<sup>53</sup> if, during that infinitely long time, one could have occupied a suitable spot out in the world-ether. The fact that in such a representation, both the nature of protoamniotes and that of the Kant-Laplace primordial nebula would have to be thought of in a way other than that of the materialistic thinker, will not be considered here. But it should not occur to any evolutionist to maintain that he can extract from his concept of the proto-amniote the concept of the reptile with all its characteristics, if he had never seen a reptile. And just as little could one extract the solar system from the Kant-Laplace primordial nebula, if this concept is thought of as being determined only from the direct perception of the primordial nebula. In other words, this means: if the evolutionist thinks consistently, then he is able to maintain only that out of earlier phases of evolution later ones come about as real facts, that if we are given the concept of the imperfect and the concept of the perfect, we can recognize the connection; but never should he say that the concept derived from what was earlier suffices to develop from it what came later. In the sphere of ethics this means that one can recognize the connection of later moral concepts with earlier ones, but not that as much as a single new moral idea could be extracted from earlier ones. As a moral being, the individual produces his own content. This content which he produces is for ethics something given, just as reptiles are something given for natural science. Reptiles have evolved out of proto-amniotes, but from the concept of the protoamniote the natural scientist cannot extract the concept of the reptile. Later moral ideas develop out of earlier ones, but from the moral concepts of an earlier cultural epoch ethics cannot extract those for a later one. The confusion arises because when we investigate nature the facts are there before we gain knowledge of them, whereas in the case of moral action we ourselves first produce the facts which we afterwards cognize. In the evolutionary process of the moral world order we do what nature does at a lower level: we alter something perceptible. As we have seen, an ethical rule cannot be cognized straight away like a law of nature; it must first be created. Only when it is present can it become the object of cognition.

But can we not make the old the standard for the new? Is it not necessary for man to measure by the standard of earlier moral rules what he produces through his moral imagination? For something that is to reveal itself as morally productive, this would be as impossible as it would be to measure a new species in nature by an old one and say, Because reptiles do not harmonize with the protoamniotes, their form is unjustified (diseased).

Ethical individualism then, is not in opposition to an evolutionary theory if rightly understood, but is a direct continuation of it. It must be possible to continue Haeckel's genealogical tree,<sup>54</sup> from protozoa to man as organic being, without interruption of the natural sequence, and without a breach in the uniform development, right up to the individual as a moral being in a definite sense. But never will it be possible to deduce the nature of a later species from the nature of an ancestral species. True as it is that the moral ideas of the individual have perceptibly evolved out of those of his ancestors, it is also true that an individual is morally barren if he himself has no moral ideas.

The same ethical individualism that I have built up on the foundation of the preceding consideration, could also be derived from an evolutionary theory. The final result would be the same, only the path by which it was reached would be different.

The appearance of completely new moral ideas through moral imagination is, in relation to an evolutionary theory, no more of a marvel than is the appearance of a new kind of animal from previous ones. Only such a theory must, as monistic world view, reject in moral life and also in science, every influence from a Beyond (metaphysical) which is merely inferred and cannot be experienced by means of ideas. This approach would then be following the same principle which urges man on when he seeks to discover the causes for new organic forms and in doing so does not call upon any interference by some Being from outside the world, who is to call forth every new kind according to a thought of a new creation, by means of supernatural influence. Just as monism has no need of supernatural thoughts of creation for explaining living organisms, neither does it derive the morality of the world from causes which do not lie within the world we can experience. The monist does not find that the nature of a will impulse, as a moral one, is exhausted by being traced back to a continuous supernatural influence upon moral life (divine world rulership from outside), to a particular revelation at a particular moment in time (giving of the Ten Commandments), or to the appearance of God on the earth (Christ). Everything that happens to and in man through all this becomes a moral element only if within human experience it becomes an individual's own. For monism, moral processes are products of the world like everything else in existence, and their causes must be sought in the world, i.e., in man, since man is the bearer of morality.

Ethical individualism, therefore, is the crowning of that edifice to which Darwin<sup>55</sup> and Haeckel aspired for natural science. It is spiritualized science of evolution carried over into moral life.

Whoever from the outset restricts the concept natural within an arbitrary boundary, in a narrow-minded manner, may easily fail to find any room in it for the free individual deed. The consistent evolutionist is in no danger of remaining at such a narrow-minded view. He cannot let natural development come to an end with the ape, while granting to man a "supernatural" origin; in his search for man's ancestors he must seek spirit already in nature; also, he cannot remain at the organic functions of man and consider only these to be natural; he cannot but consider the free, moral life of man to be the spiritual continuation of organic life.

In accordance with his fundamental principles the evolutionist can maintain only that a new moral deed comes about through a kind of process other than a new species in nature; the characteristic feature of the deed, that is, its definition as a free deed, he must leave to direct observation of the deed. So, too, he only maintains that men have developed out of not yet human ancestors. How men are constituted must be determined by observation of men themselves. The results of this observation cannot possibly contradict a true history of evolution. Only if it were asserted that the results exclude a natural development would it contradict recent tendencies in natural science. [footnote: We are entitled to speak of thoughts (ethical ideas) as objects of observation. For, although the products of thinking do not enter the field of observation, so long as thinking goes on, they may well become objects of observation subsequently, and in this way we can come to know the characteristic feature of the deed.]

Ethical individualism, then, cannot be opposed by natural science when the latter is properly understood; observation shows freedom to be characteristic of the perfect form of human conduct. This freedom must be attributed to the human will, insofar as this will brings purely ideal intuitions to realization. For these do not come about through external necessity, but exist through themselves. When we recognize an action to be an image of such an ideal intuition, we feel it to be free. In this characteristic feature of a deed lies its freedom.

From this point of view, how do matters stand with regard to the distinction, mentioned earlier (p. 41 f.) between the two statements: "To be free means to be able to do what one wants," and the other: "To be able, to desire or not to desire, as one pleases, is the real meaning of the dogma of free will"? Hamerling bases his view of free will on just this distinction and declares the first statement to be correct, the second to be an absurd tautology. He says: "I can do what I want. But to say, I can will what I want, is an empty tautology." Now whether I can do, that is, transform into reality what I want, what I have set before me as the idea of my doing, depends on external circumstances and on my technical skill (cp. p. 208). To be free means to be able to determine for oneself by moral imagination the representations (impulses) on which the action is based. Freedom is impossible if something external to me (mechanical processes or a merely inferred God whose existence cannot be experienced) determines my moral representations. In other words, I am free only if I produce these representations myself, not when I am only able to carry out the impulse which someone else has induced in me. A free being is someone who is able to will what he considers right. One who does something other than what he wills, must be driven to it by motives which do not lie within himself. Such a man is unfree in his action. Therefore, to be able to will what one considers right or not right, as one pleases, means to be free or unfree, as one pleases. This, of course, is just as absurd as it is to see freedom in the ability to be able to do what one is forced to will. But the latter is what Hamerling maintains when he says:

"It is perfectly true that the will is always determined by motives, but it is absurd to say that it is therefore unfree; for a greater freedom one can neither wish for nor imagine than the freedom to let one's will realize itself in accordance with its strength and determination."

Indeed, a greater freedom can be wished for, and only this greater is true freedom. Namely: to decide for oneself the motive (foundation) of one's will.

There can be circumstances under which a man may be induced to refrain from doing what he wants to do. But to let others prescribe to him what he ought to do, that is, to do what another, and not what he himself considers right, this he will accept only insofar as he does not feel free.

External powers may prevent my doing what I want; they then simply force me to be inactive or to be unfree. It is only when they enslave my spirit, drive my motives out of my head and want to put theirs in the place of mine, that they intentionally aim at making me unfree. This is why the Church is not only against the mere doing, but more particularly against impure thoughts, that is, against the impulses of my action. The Church makes me unfree if it considers impure all impulses it has not itself indicated. A Church or other community causes unfreedom when its priests or teachers take on the role of keepers of conscience, that is, when the believers must receive from them (at the Confessional) the impulses for their actions.

Addition to Revised Edition, 1918. In this interpretation of the human will is presented what man can experience in his actions and, through this, come to the conscious experience: My will is free. It is of particular significance that the right to characterize the will as free is attained through the experience: In my will an ideal intuition comes to realization. This experience can only come about as a result of observation, but it is observation in the sense that the human will is observed within a stream of evolution, the aim of which is to attain for the will the possibility of being carried by pure ideal intuition. This can be attained because in ideal intuition nothing is active but its own self-sustaining essence. If such an intuition is present in human consciousness, then it is not developed out of the processes of the organism (cp. p. 161 ff.), but the organic activity has withdrawn to make room for the ideal activity. If I observe will when it is an image of intuition, then from this will the necessary organic activity has withdrawn. The will is free. This freedom of will no one can observe who is unable to observe how free will consists in the fact that, first, through the intuitive element the necessary activity of the human organism is lamed, pressed back, and in its place is set the spiritual activity of idea-filled will. Only one who is unable to make this observation of the two-fold aspect of will that is free, will believe that every will-impulse is unfree. One who can make the observations will attain the insight that man is unfree insofar as he is unable to carry through completely the process of repressing the organic activity, but that this unfreedom strives to attain freedom, and that this freedom is by no means an abstract ideal, but is a directive force inherent in human nature. Man is free to the degree that he is able to realize in his will the same mood of soul he also experiences when he is conscious of elaborating pure ideal (spiritual) intuitions.

## **THE VALUE OF LIFE (PESSIMISM AND OPTIMISM)**

The question concerning life's value is a counterpart to the question concerning its purpose or destination (cp. pp. 198 ff.). In this connection we meet with two contrasting views, and between them all imaginable attempts at compromise. One view says: The world is the best possible, and to live and be active in it is a blessing of untold value. Everything exists harmoniously and is full of purpose; it is worthy of admiration. Even what is apparently bad and evil may be seen to be good from a higher point of view, for it represents a beneficial contrast to the good; we are more able to appreciate the good when it is contrasted with evil. Moreover, evil is not genuinely real: it is only that we see as evil a lesser degree of good. Evil is the absence of good; it has no significance in itself.

The other view maintains: Life is full of misery and want, everywhere displeasure outweighs pleasure, pain outweighs joy. Existence is a burden, and under all circumstances non-existence would be preferable to existence.

The main representatives of the former view, i.e., optimism, are Shaftesbury and Leibnitz;<sup>56</sup> those of the latter, i.e., pessimism, are Schopenhauer and Eduard von Hartmann.<sup>57</sup>

Leibnitz says the world is the best of all possible worlds. A better one is impossible. For God is good and wise. A good God would want to create the best possible world; a wise God would know which is the best possible; He is able to distinguish it from all other possible inferior ones. Only a bad or unwise God could create a world inferior to the best possible.

Starting from this viewpoint, one will easily be able to indicate the direction human conduct should take in order to contribute its share to the best of all worlds. All that man has to do is to find out God's decisions and to act in accordance with them. When he knows what God's intentions are with regard to the world and mankind, then he will also do what is right. And he will feel happy to add his share to the rest of the good in the world. Therefore, from the optimistic standpoint life is worth living. This view cannot but stimulate us to cooperative participation.

Schopenhauer presents matters differently. He thinks of the world's foundation not as an all-wise and all-kind Being, but as blind urge or will. Eternal striving, ceaseless craving for satisfaction which yet can never be attained, in his view is the fundamental essence of all will. For if an aim one has striven for is attained, then immediately another need arises, and so on. Satisfaction can always be only for an infinitely short time. All the rest of the content of our life is unsatisfied urge, that is, dissatisfaction and suffering. If at last the blind urge is dulled, then all content is gone from our lives; an infinite boredom pervades our existence. Therefore, the relative best one can do is to stifle all wishes and needs within one, and exterminate one's will. Schopenhauer's pessimism leads to complete inactivity; his moral aim is universal laziness.

By a very different argument Hartmann attempts to establish pessimism and use it as a foundation for ethics. In keeping with a favorite trend of our time, he tries to base his world view on experience. By observation of life he wishes to find out whether pleasure

or displeasure is the more plentiful in the world. He passes in review before the tribunal of reason whatever appears to men to be worth while in life, in order to show that on closer inspection all so-called satisfaction turns out to be nothing but illusion. It is illusion when we believe that in health, youth, freedom, sufficient income, love (sexual enjoyment), pity, friendship and family life, honor, reputation, glory, power, religious edification, pursuit of science and of art, hope of a life hereafter, participation in the furtherance of culture, - we have sources of happiness and satisfaction. Soberly considered, every enjoyment brings much more evil and misery than pleasure into the world. The displeasure of a hangover is always greater than the pleasure of intoxication. Displeasure far outweighs pleasure in the world. No person, even the relatively happiest, if asked, would want to live through the misery of life a second time. Since Hartmann does not deny the presence of an ideal factor (wisdom) in the world, but even grants it equal significance with blind urge (will), he can attribute the creation of the world to his primordial Being only if he lets the pain in the world serve a wise world purpose. He sees the pain in the world as nothing but God's pain, for the life of the world as a whole is identical with the life of God. The aim of an all-wise Being, however, could only be release from suffering, and since all existence is suffering, release from existence. The purpose of the world's creation is to transform existence into nonexistence, which is so much better. The world process is nothing but a continual battle against God's pain, which at last will end with the annihilation of all existence. The moral life of men must therefore be participation in the annihilation of existence. God has created the world in order to rid Himself of His infinite pain through it. The world "in a certain sense is to be regarded as an itching eruption on the absolute," through which the unconscious healing power of the absolute rids itself of an inward disease, "or even as a painful drawing-plaster which the alone Being applies to Himself in order first to divert an inner pain outward, and then to remove it altogether." Human beings are parts of the world. In them God suffers. He has created them in order to split up His infinite pain. The pain each one of us suffers is but a drop in the infinite ocean of God's pain.<sup>58</sup>

Man must recognize to the full that to pursue individual satisfaction (egoism) is folly, that he ought to follow solely his task and through selfless devotion dedicate himself to the world-process of redeeming God. In contrast to Schopenhauer's pessimism, that of von Hartmann leads us to devoted activity for a lofty task.

But is the above really based on experience?

To strive after satisfaction means that the life activities go beyond the life content of the being in question. A being is hungry, that is, it strives for satiety when for their continuation, its organic functions demand to be supplied with new life content in the form of nourishment. The striving for honor consists in the person not regarding what he does as worth while unless he receives appreciation from others. Striving for knowledge arises when a person finds that something is missing in the world that he sees, hears, etc., as long as he has not understood it. The fulfilment of striving produces pleasure in the striving individual; non-fulfilment produces displeasure. Here it is important to observe that pleasure or displeasure depend only upon the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of striving. The striving itself can by no means be regarded as displeasure. Therefore, if it so happens

that in the moment a striving is fulfilled, immediately a new one arises, I should not say that the pleasure has produced displeasure in me, because in all circumstances an enjoyment produces desire for its repetition, or for a new pleasure. Here I can speak of displeasure only when this desire runs up against the impossibility of its fulfilment. Even when an experienced enjoyment produces in me the demand for the experience of a greater or more refined pleasure, I can speak of a displeasure being produced by the previous pleasure only at the moment when the means of experiencing the greater or more refined pleasure fail me. Only when displeasure follows enjoyment as a natural law, for example when woman's sexual enjoyment is followed by the suffering of childbirth and the nursing of children, is it possible to regard the enjoyment as the source of pain. If striving as such called forth displeasure, then the removal of striving would be accompanied by pleasure. But the opposite is the case. When the content of our life lacks striving, boredom is the result, and this is connected with displeasure. And as the striving naturally may last a long time before it attains fulfilment, and as it is satisfied with the hope of fulfilment meanwhile, it must be acknowledged that displeasure has nothing to do with striving as such, but depends solely on its non-fulfilment. Schopenhauer, then, is wrong in any case in regarding desire or striving (the will) as such, to be a source of pain.

In reality, even the opposite is correct. Striving (desire), as such, gives pleasure. Who does not know the enjoyment caused by the hope of a remote but intensely desired aim? This joy is the companion of all labor, the fruits of which will be ours only in the future. This pleasure is quite independent of the attainment of the aim. Then when the aim is attained, to the pleasure of striving is added that of the fulfilment as something new. Should someone now say: To the displeasure of a non-fulfilled aim is added that of disappointed hope, and in the end this makes the displeasure of non-fulfilment greater than the awaited pleasure of fulfilment, then the answer would be: Even the opposite could be the case; the recollection of past enjoyment, at the time when the desire was still not satisfied, will just as often act as consolation for the displeasure of non-fulfilment. In the moment of shattered hopes, one who exclaims, I have done what I could! proves this assertion. The blessed feeling of having tried one's best is overlooked by those who say of every unsatisfied desire that not only has the pleasure of fulfilment not arisen, but also the enjoyment of desiring has been destroyed.

The fulfilment of a desire calls forth pleasure and its non-fulfilment, displeasure. From this must not be concluded that pleasure means satisfaction of a desire, displeasure means its non-satisfaction. Both pleasure and displeasure may also appear in a being where they are not the result of desire. Illness is displeasure for which there has been no desire. One who maintains that illness is an unsatisfied desire for health, makes the mistake of regarding the obvious but unconscious wish, not to be ill, as a positive desire. When someone receives a legacy from a rich relative of whose existence he had no notion, this event gives him pleasure without any preceding desire.

Therefore, one who sets out to investigate whether the balance is on the side of pleasure or of displeasure, must bring into the account the pleasure of desiring, the pleasure of the fulfilment of desire, and those pleasures which come to us without any striving on our part. On the debit side of our account-sheet would have to be entered the displeasure of

boredom, the displeasure of unfulfilled striving, and, lastly, displeasures that come without being preceded by any desire. To the last kind belongs also the displeasure caused by work which is not self-chosen but is forced upon us.

Now the question arises: What is the right means of estimating the balance between debit and credit? Eduard von Hartmann is of the opinion that reason is able to establish this. However he also says: "Pain and pleasure exist only insofar as they are felt."<sup>59</sup> From this statement it would follow that there is no other yardstick for pleasure than the subjective one of feeling. I must feel whether the sum of my feelings of displeasure, compared with my feelings of pleasure, leaves me with a balance of joy or of pain. But disregarding this, Hartmann maintains that:

"Even if the life-value of every being can be estimated only according to its own subjective measure, this is not to say that every being is able to calculate, from all that influences its life, the correct algebraic sum or, in other words, that its final judgment of its own life, in regard to its subjective experiences, is correct."

This, however, only means that rational judgment is still made to estimate the value of feeling. [footnote: One who wants to calculate whether the sum total of pleasure or of displeasure is the greater, overlooks that he is calculating something which is never experienced. Feeling does not calculate, and what matters for a real estimation of life is true experience, not the result of an imagined calculation.]

One whose view more or less inclines in the direction of thinkers like Eduard von Hartmann may believe that in order to arrive at a correct valuation of life he must clear out of the way those factors which falsify our judgment about the balance of pleasure or displeasure. There are two ways in which he can do this. One way is by showing that our desires (urges, will) act disturbingly in our sober judgment of our feeling-values. While, for example, we should tell ourselves that sexual enjoyment is a source of evil, the fact that the sexual instinct is very strong in us misleads us into anticipating a pleasure far greater than in fact occurs. We want to enjoy, and therefore will not admit to ourselves that we suffer through the enjoyment. Another way is to subject feelings to criticism, and attempt to prove that the objects to which feelings attach themselves are revealed as illusions by the insight of reason, then are destroyed the moment our continually growing intelligence recognizes the illusion.

He can reason out the situation in the following way. If an ambitious person wants to make clear to himself whether, up to the moment of making this calculation, pleasure or displeasure has occupied the greater part of his life, he must free himself from two sources of error before passing judgment. As he is ambitious, this fundamental feature of his character will make him see the pleasures of recognition of his achievements as larger, and the hurts suffered through being slighted as smaller than they are. At the time he suffered from being slighted he felt it just because he was ambitious, but in recollection this appears in a milder light, whereas the pleasures of recognition to which he is so very susceptible leave a deeper impression. Now it is of real benefit for an ambitious person that this is so. The deception diminishes his feeling of displeasure in the



moment of self-observation. Nevertheless, his judgment will be misled. The sufferings, over which a veil is drawn, he really did experience in all their intensity, and therefore he really gives them a wrong valuation on his balance-sheet of life. In order to come to a correct judgment, an ambitious person would have to get rid of his ambition during the time he is making his calculation. He would have to consider his life up to that point without placing distorting glasses before his mind's eye. Otherwise he is like a merchant who, in making up his books, also enters his own business zeal on the income side.

He could go even further. He could say: The ambitious man must also make clear to himself that the recognition he pursues is something valueless. Through his own effort, or with the help of others, he must come to see that for a sensible person recognition by others counts little, since one can always be sure that

“In all matters which are not vital questions of evolution or are already finally settled by science, the majority is wrong and the minority right.” “Whoever makes ambition his lodestar, puts the happiness of his life at the mercy of an unreliable judgment.”<sup>60</sup>

If the ambitious person admits all this to himself, he will have to recognize as illusion, not only everything his ambition caused him to regard as reality, but also the feelings attached to the illusions. For this reason it could then be said: From the balance sheet of life-values must also be erased those feelings of pleasure that have been produced by illusions; what then remains represents, free of all illusions, the totality of pleasure in life, and this, in contrast to the totality of displeasure, is so small that life is no joy and non-existence is preferable to existence.

While it is quite obvious that the deception caused by the interference of ambition leads to a false result when making up the account of pleasure, what is said about the recognition of the illusory character of the objects of not only everything pleasure must nonetheless be challenged. To eliminate from the balance-sheet all pleasurable feelings connected with actual or supposed illusions would positively falsify it. For the ambitious person did genuinely enjoy being appreciated by the multitude, quite irrespective of whether later he or someone else recognizes this appreciation as illusion. The pleasure already enjoyed is not diminished in the least by such recognition. The elimination of all such “illusory” feelings from life's balance-sheet, far from making our judgment about feelings more correct, actually eliminates from life feelings which were genuinely present.

And why should these feelings be eliminated? One possessing them derives pleasure from them; one who has overcome them, gains through the experiences of self-conquest (not through the vain emotion, What a noble fellow I am! but through the objective sources of pleasure which lie in the self-conquest) a pleasure which is indeed spiritualized, but no less significant for that. If feelings are erased from the balance-sheet because they attached themselves to objects which later are revealed as illusions, then life's value is made dependent not on the quantity, but on the quality of pleasure, and this, in turn, on the value of the objects which cause the pleasure. If I set out to determine the value of life by the quantity of pleasure or displeasure it brings, then I have no right to

presuppose something else by which to determine first the qualitative value of pleasure. If I say I will compare the amount of pleasure with the amount of displeasure and see which is greater, then I must also bring into the account all pleasure and displeasure in their actual quantities, regardless whether they are based on illusions or not. To ascribe to a pleasure which rests on illusion a lesser value for life than to one which can be justified by reason, is to make the value of life dependent on factors other than pleasure.

Someone estimating pleasure as less valuable when it is attached to a worthless object, is like a merchant who enters in his accounts the considerable profit of a toy-factory at a quarter of the actual amount because the factory produces playthings for children.

When it is only a matter of weighing pleasure against displeasure, the illusory character of the objects of some pleasures must be left out of the picture altogether.

The rational consideration of the quantities of pleasure and displeasure produced by life, which Hartmann recommends, has led us as far as knowing how to set up the account, that is, to knowing what we have to put down on each side of our balance sheet. But how are we to make the actual calculations? Is reason also capable of determining the balance?

The merchant has made a mistake in his account if the calculated balance does not agree with the profit which has demonstrably been enjoyed from the business or which can still be expected. The philosopher, too, will undoubtedly have made a mistake in his judgment if the calculated surplus of pleasure or, as the case may be, of displeasure, cannot be proved by actual sentiments.

For the moment I shall not go into the account of those pessimists who base their world view on rational estimation; but a person who is to decide whether or not to carry on the business of life will first demand proof that the calculated surplus of displeasure exists.

Here we touch the point where reason is not in a position to determine on its own the surplus of pleasure or of displeasure, but where it must point to this surplus in life in the form of perception. For reality is attainable for man not through concept alone, but through the inter-penetration, mediated by thinking, of concept and perception (and a feeling is a perception) (cp. pp. 153 ff.). A merchant, too, will give up his business only when the loss of income, calculated by his accountant, is confirmed by the facts. If this is not the case, he will let the accountant go through the books once more. And in regard to life, man will do exactly the same. If the philosopher wants to show him that displeasure is far greater than pleasure, and if he has not felt it to be so, he will reply: You have gone astray in your brooding; think things through once more. But if there comes a time in a business when such losses are really present that no credit any longer suffices to meet the claims, then the result will be bankruptcy, even though the merchant may have avoided keeping himself informed about his affairs by means of accounts. Similarly, if there comes a time when the quantity of displeasure a man suffers is so great that no hope (credit) of future pleasure could carry him through the pain, then this would lead to bankruptcy of life's business.

However, the number of suicides is relatively small in proportion to the number of those who bravely live on. Very few people give up the business of life because of the displeasure involved. What follows from this? Either that it is not correct to say that the amount of displeasure is greater than the amount of pleasure, or that we do not make our continuation of life at all dependent upon the amount of pleasure or displeasure we feel.

The pessimist, Eduard von Hartmann, in a quite extraordinary manner reaches the conclusion that life is valueless because it contains more pain than pleasure, and yet he maintains the necessity of carrying it through. This necessity lies in the fact that the world purpose mentioned above (p. 222) can be achieved only through the ceaseless, devoted labor of human beings. So long as men still pursue their egoistic desires they are useless for such selfless labor. Not until they have convinced themselves through experience and reason that the enjoyments of life pursued out of egoism are unattainable, do they devote themselves to their real task. In this way the pessimistic conviction is supposed to be a source of selflessness. An education based on pessimism is meant to exterminate egoism by convincing men of its hopelessness.

This means that this view considers striving for pleasure to be fundamentally inherent in human nature. Only through insight into the impossibility of its fulfilment does this striving abdicate in favor of higher tasks of humanity.

Of such a moral world view, which, from recognition of pessimism, hopes to achieve devotion to non-egoistical aims in life, it cannot be said that it really overcomes egoism in the true sense of the word. Moral ideas are supposed to be strong enough to take hold of the will only when man has recognized that selfish striving after pleasure cannot lead to any satisfaction. Man, whose selfishness desires the grapes of pleasure, finds them sour because he cannot reach them; he turns his back on them and devotes himself to an unselfish life. According to the opinion of pessimists, moral ideals are not strong enough to overcome egoism, but they establish their rulership on the ground which recognition of the hopelessness of egoism has first cleared for them.

If in accordance with their natural disposition human beings strove after pleasure which they could not possibly attain, then annihilation of existence and redemption through non-existence would be the only rational goal. And if one accepts the view that the real bearer of the pain of the world is God, it follows that the task of men consists in helping to bring about the salvation of God. To commit suicide does not advance, but hinders, the accomplishment of this aim. God must have created men wisely for the sole purpose of bringing about His salvation through their action. Otherwise creation would be purposeless. And such a view of the world envisages extra-human purposes. Every one of us has to perform his own definite task in the general work of salvation. If he withdraws from the task by suicide, another has to do the work which was intended for him. Someone else must bear the agony of existence in his place. And since in every being it is, fundamentally, God who is the ultimate bearer of all pain, it follows that the suicide does not in the least diminish the quantity of God's pain, but rather imposes upon God the additional difficulty of creating a substitute to take over the task.

All this presupposes that pleasure is the standard of life's value. Now life manifests itself through a number of craving (needs). If the value of life depended on whether it brought more pleasure than displeasure, a craving which brought a surplus of displeasure to its owner, would have to be called valueless. Let us examine craving and pleasure, in order to see whether or not craving can be measured by pleasure. And lest we give rise to the suspicion that life does not begin for us below the level of the "aristocratic intellect," we shall begin our examination with a "purely animal" need: hunger.

Hunger arises when our organs are unable to continue their proper function without a fresh supply of substance. What a hungry man aims at, in the first place, is to have his hunger stilled. As soon as the supply of nourishment has reached the point where hunger ceases, everything that the food-instinct craves has been attained. The enjoyment connected with satiety consists, to begin with, in the removal of the pain which is caused by hunger. Also to the mere food-instinct a further need is added. Man does not merely desire to overcome the disturbance in the functioning of his organs by the consumption of food, or to get rid of the pain of hunger: he seeks to accompany this with pleasurable sensations of taste. When he feels hungry and is within half an hour of an enjoyable meal, he may even avoid spoiling his enjoyment of the better food by refusing inferior food which might satisfy his hunger sooner. He needs hunger in order to obtain the full enjoyment from his meal. In this way hunger becomes a cause of pleasure for him at the same time. If all the hunger in the world could be satisfied, then the total amount of enjoyment due to the need for nourishment would come about. To this would have to be added the special pleasure which gourmets attain by cultivating the sensitiveness of their taste-nerves beyond the usual measure.

This amount of enjoyment would have the greatest value possible if no aspect of this kind of enjoyment remained unsatisfied, and if with the enjoyment a certain amount of displeasure did not have to be accepted into the bargain.

The view of modern natural science is that nature produces more life than it can sustain, that is, nature produces more hunger than it is able to satisfy. The surplus of life produced must perish in pain in the struggle for existence. It is granted that at every moment of the world process, the needs of life are greater than the corresponding available means of satisfaction, and the enjoyment of life is thereby impaired. But the individual enjoyments actually present are not in the least reduced thereby. Wherever a desire is satisfied, there the corresponding amount of pleasure is also present, even though in the creature itself which desires, or in its fellow-creatures, a large number of unsatisfied cravings exist. What is thereby diminished is not the quantity, but the value of the enjoyment of life. If only a part of the needs of a living creature find satisfaction, the creature experiences enjoyment accordingly. This has a lesser value the smaller it is in proportion to the total demands of life in the sphere of the desire in question. We might represent this value as a fraction, of which the numerator is the enjoyment actually experienced and the denominator is the sum total of needs. This fraction has the value 1 when the numerator and the denominator are equal, i.e., when all needs are fully satisfied. The fraction becomes greater than 1 when a creature experiences more pleasure than its desires demand. It becomes smaller than 1 when the amount of enjoyment falls short of the sum

total of desires. But the fraction can never be nought so long as the numerator has any value at all, however small. If a man were to make up a final account before his death, and thought of the amount of enjoyment connected with a particular craving (e.g. hunger) as being distributed over the whole of his life with all the demands made by this craving, then the value of the pleasure experienced might perhaps be very small, but it could never be nil. If the quantity of enjoyment remains constant, then with every increase in the needs of the living being the value of the pleasure diminishes. The same is true for the totality of life in nature. The greater the number of living beings in proportion to those able to fully satisfy their cravings, the smaller is the average pleasure-value of life. The shares in life enjoyment, made out to us in the form of instincts, become less valuable in proportion as we cannot expect to cash them at their full face value. If I get enough to eat for three days and then have to go hungry for three days, the enjoyment during the three days when I do eat is not thereby diminished. But I have to think of it as distributed over six days, and this reduces its value for my food instinct by half. The same applies to the quantity of pleasure in relation to the degree of my need. If I am hungry enough for two sandwiches and can have only one, the enjoyment gained from it has only half the value it would have had if after I had eaten it my hunger had been stilled. This is how the value of a pleasure is determined in life. It is measured by the needs of life. Our desire is the yardstick; pleasure is what is measured. The enjoyment of eating has a value only because hunger is present, and it attains a value of a specific degree through the proportion it bears to the degree of the hunger present.

Unfulfilled demands of our life throw their shadow even upon desires which have been satisfied, and impair the value of enjoyable hours. But one can also speak of the present value of a feeling of pleasure. This value is the more insignificant, the less the pleasure is in proportion to the duration and intensity of our desire.

An amount of pleasure reaches its full value for us when its duration and degree exactly coincide with our desire. An amount of pleasure which is smaller than our desire diminishes the value of pleasure; a greater amount produces a surplus which has not been demanded and which is felt as pleasure only so long as we are able to increase our desire during the enjoyment. If we are not able to increase our demand in order to keep pace with the increasing pleasure, then the pleasure turns into displeasure. The thing that otherwise would satisfy us now assails us without our wanting it, and we suffer under it. This is proof that pleasure has value for us only so long as we can measure it by our desires. An excess of pleasurable feeling turns into pain. This may be observed especially in people whose desire for a particular kind of pleasure is very small. In people whose desire for food is dulled, eating readily produces nausea. This too shows that the desire is the yardstick for measuring the value of pleasure.

Here pessimism could say: The unsatisfied craving for food brings not only the displeasure of lost enjoyment, but also positive pain, torment and misery into the world. In this he can point to the untold misery of people who starve, and to the amount of displeasure such people suffer indirectly through lack of food. And if he wants to extend the assertion to the rest of nature, he can point to the torment of animals that starve to

death at certain times of the year. The pessimist maintains that these evils far outweigh the amount of enjoyment which the food-instinct brings into the world.

There is no doubt that one can compare pleasure and displeasure, and can determine the surplus of the one or the other, as is done in the case of profit and loss. But when the pessimist believes that there is a surplus on the side of displeasure and that from this one can conclude that life is valueless, he already makes a mistake, insofar as he makes a calculation that is not made in actual life.

Our desire, in each instance, is directed to a definite object. The value of the pleasure of satisfaction will, as we have seen, be the greater, the greater the amount of pleasure, in relation to the degree of our desire.[footnote: We disregard here the instance where excessive increase in pleasure turns it into displeasure.] But upon the degree of our desire also depends how great is the amount of displeasure we are willing to accept in order to achieve the pleasure. We compare the quantity of displeasure not with the quantity of pleasure, but with the intensity of our desire. If someone finds great pleasure in eating, by reason of his enjoyment in better times he will find it easier to bear a period of hunger than will someone for whom eating is no enjoyment. A woman who desires a child compares the joy of possessing the child, not with the amount of displeasure due to pregnancy, childbirth, cares of nursing, etc., but with her desire to have the child.

We never want a certain quantity of pleasure in the abstract, but a concrete satisfaction in a quite definite way. When we want a pleasure which must be satisfied by a particular object or a particular sensation, it will not satisfy us if we are offered some other object or some other sensation, even though they give the same amount of pleasure. One desirous of food cannot substitute the pleasure this would give him by a pleasure equally great but produced by a walk. Only if our desire were, quite generally, for a certain quantity of pleasure, would it have to die away at once if this pleasure were unattainable except at the price of an even greater quantity of displeasure. But because we aim toward a particular kind of satisfaction, we experience the pleasure of realization even when we have to bear a much greater displeasure along with it. The instincts of living creatures tend in definite directions and aim at definite goals, and for this reason we cannot set down as an equivalent factor in our calculations the amount of displeasure that must be endured on the way to the goal. Provided the desire is sufficiently intense to still be present in some degree after having overcome the displeasure - however great that may be - then the pleasure of satisfaction can still be tasted to the full. The desire, therefore, does not measure the pain directly against the pleasure achieved, but indirectly by relating its own intensity to that of the displeasure. The question is not whether the pleasure to be gained is greater than the displeasure, but whether the desire for the goal is greater than the opposition of the displeasure involved. If the opposition is greater than the desire, then the desire yields to the inevitable, weakens, and strives no further. Since our demand is always for some quite specific kind of satisfaction, the pleasure connected with it acquires significance for us in such a way that once we have achieved satisfaction, we need take the quantity of displeasure into account only insofar as it has reduced the intensity of our desire. If I am passionately fond of beautiful views, I never calculate the amount of pleasure the view from the mountain-top gives me as compared directly with

the displeasure of the toilsome ascent and descent, but I reflect whether, after having overcome all difficulties, my desire for the view will still be sufficiently intense. Consideration of pleasure and pain can lead to a result only indirectly in relation to the intensity of the desire. Therefore the question is not at all whether there is a surplus of pleasure or of displeasure, but whether the desire for the pleasure is strong enough to overcome the displeasure.

A proof of the correctness of this view is the fact that we put a higher value on pleasure when it must be purchased at the price of great displeasure, than when it simply falls into our lap like a gift from heaven. When sufferings and misery have toned down our desire and yet our aim is attained, then the pleasure, in proportion to the remaining quantity of desire, is all the greater. And as I have shown (p. 235), this proportion represents the value of the pleasure. A further proof is given in the fact that all living beings (including man) seek satisfaction for their cravings as long as they are able to bear the opposing pain and agony. The struggle for existence is but a consequence of this fact. All existing life strives for fulfilment, and only that part gives up the fight in which the desire has been suffocated by the power of the assailing difficulties. Each living being seeks food until lack of food destroys its life. Man, too, lays hands on himself only when he believes (rightly or wrongly) that he is not able to attain the aims in life which to him are worth while. As long as he still believes in the possibility of attaining what in his view is worth striving for, he will fight against all suffering and pain. Philosophy would first have to convince man that the element of will has sense only when the pleasure is greater than the displeasure, for it is man's nature to strive to attain the objects of his desire if he is able to bear the necessary displeasure involved, be it ever so great. The above mentioned philosophy would be mistaken, because it would make the human will dependent on a factor (surplus of pleasure over displeasure) which is fundamentally foreign to man's nature. The actual yardstick for measuring will is desire, and the latter persists as long as it can. One can compare the calculation that is made in actual life, - not the one an abstract philosophy makes concerning the question of pleasure and pain connected with the satisfaction of a desire - with the following. If when buying a certain quantity of apples, I am forced to take twice as many bad ones as good ones because the seller wants to clear his stock, then I shall not hesitate for one moment to accept the bad apples as well if the few good ones are worth so much to me that, in addition to their purchase price, I am also prepared to bear the expense of disposing of the bad ones. This example illustrates the relation between the amounts of pleasure and displeasure that arise through an instinct. I determine the value of the good apples not by subtracting the sum of the good ones from that of the bad ones, but by whether the good ones retain any value for me despite the presence of the bad ones.

Just as I leave the bad apples out of account in my enjoyment of the good ones, so I give myself up to the satisfaction of a desire after having shaken off the unavoidable pain.

Even if pessimism were correct in its assertion that there is more displeasure than pleasure in the world, this would have no influence on the will, since living beings would still strive after what pleasure remains. The empirical proof that pain outweighs joy, if such proof could be given, would certainly be effective for showing the futility of the

school of philosophy that sees the value of life in a surplus of pleasure (Eudaemonism).<sup>61</sup> It would not, however, be suitable for showing that will in general is irrational, for will does not seek a surplus of pleasure, but seeks the amount of pleasure that remains after removing the displeasure. And this always appears as a goal worth striving for.

Attempts have been made to refute pessimism by asserting that it is impossible by calculation to determine the surplus of pleasure or of displeasure in the world. The possibility of any calculation depends on the comparability of the things to be calculated in respect to their quantity. Every displeasure and every pleasure has a definite quantity (intensity and duration). Further, we can compare pleasurable feelings of different kinds with one another, at least approximately, with regard to their quantity. We know whether we derive more pleasure from a good cigar or from a good joke. No objection can be raised against the comparability of different kinds of pleasures and displeasures in respect to their quantity. The investigator who sets himself the task of determining the surplus of pleasure or displeasure in the world, starts from presuppositions which are undeniably legitimate. One may declare the conclusions of pessimism to be mistaken, but one cannot doubt that quantities of pleasure and displeasure can be scientifically estimated, and the balance of pleasure determined thereby. But it is incorrect to maintain that the result of this calculation has any consequence for the human will. The cases in which we really make the value of our activity dependent on whether pleasure or displeasure shows a surplus, are those in which the objects toward which our activity is directed are indifferent to us. When it is only a question of whether after my work I am to amuse myself by a game or by light conversation, and if I am completely indifferent what I do for this purpose, I then ask myself: What gives me the greatest surplus of pleasure? And I definitely refrain from an activity if the scales incline toward the side of displeasure. When buying a toy for a child we would consider what will give him the greatest pleasure. In all other cases we are not determined exclusively by considerations of the balance of pleasure.

Therefore, when pessimistic philosophers of ethics believe that by showing displeasure to be present in greater quantity than pleasure, they are preparing the way for selfless devotion toward cultural work, they do not realize that by its very nature the human will is not influenced by this knowledge. Human striving directs itself to the measure of possible satisfaction after all difficulties have been overcome. Hope of this satisfaction is the very foundation of human activity. The work of each individual and of the totality of cultural work springs from this hope. Pessimistic ethics believes that it must present the pursuit of happiness as an impossibility for man, in order that he may devote himself to his proper moral tasks. But these moral tasks are nothing but the concrete natural and spiritual cravings, and their satisfaction is striven for, despite the displeasure involved. The pursuit of happiness, which the pessimist wants to exterminate, does not exist at all. Rather, the tasks which man has to fulfil he fulfils because from the depth of his being he wills to fulfil them when he has truly recognized their nature. Pessimistic ethics maintains that man can devote himself to what he recognizes as his life's task, only when he has given up the pursuit of pleasure. But there are no ethics that can invent life-tasks other than the realization of the satisfactions demanded by man's desires, and the fulfilment of



his moral ideals. No ethics can take from him the pleasure he has in the fulfilment of what he desires. When the pessimist says: Do not strive after pleasure, for you can never attain it, strive for what you recognize to be your task, then the answer is: It is inherent in human nature to do just this, and it is the invention of a philosophy gone astray when it is maintained that man strives only for happiness. He strives for the satisfaction of what his being demands, and its fulfilment is his pleasure; he has in mind the concrete objects of this striving, not some abstract "happiness." When pessimistic ethics demands: Strive not after pleasure, but after the attainment of what you recognize to be your life's task, it lays its finger on the very thing that, through his own nature, man wants. He does not need to be turned inside out by philosophy, he does not need to discard his human nature before he can be moral. Morality lies in striving for an aim that has been recognized as justified; it lies in human nature to pursue it so long as the displeasure connected with it does not extinguish the desire for it altogether. And this is the nature of all real will. Ethics does not depend on the extermination of all striving after pleasure in order that bloodless abstract ideas can set up their control where they are not opposed by a strong longing for enjoyment of life; ethics depends rather on that strength will has when it is carried by ideal intuitions; it achieves its aim even though the path be full of thorns.

Moral ideals spring from the moral imagination of man. Their attainment depends upon whether his desire for them is strong enough to overcome pain and suffering. They are his intuitions, the driving forces spanned by his spirit; he wills them, because their attainment is his highest pleasure. He needs no ethics first to forbid him to strive for pleasure and then to prescribe to him what he ought to strive for. Of himself, he will strive for moral ideals when his moral imagination is active enough to impart to him intuitions that give strength to his will and enable him to carry them through, despite the obstacles present in his own organization, to which necessary displeasure also belongs.

If a man strives for sublimely great ideals, it is because they are the content of his own nature and their realization will bring him a joy compared with which the pleasure, derived from the satisfaction of their ordinary cravings by those who lack ideals, is of little significance. Idealists revel spiritually in translating their ideals into reality.

Anyone who wants to exterminate the pleasure in the fulfilment of human desires will first have to make man a slave who acts, not because he wants to, but only because he ought to. For the attainment of what has been willed gives pleasure. What we call goodness is not what a man ought but what he wills to do when he unfolds the fulness of his true human nature. Anyone who does not acknowledge this must first drive out of man all that man himself wills, and then prescribe to him from outside what content he is to give his will.

Man values the fulfilment of a desire because the desire springs from his own nature. Achievement has its value because it has been willed. If one denies value to the aims of man's own will, then worth while aims must be taken from something that man does not will.

Ethics based on pessimism arises from a disregard for moral imagination. Only someone who considers the individual human ego incapable of giving a content to its striving would see the totality of will as a longing for pleasure. A man without imagination creates no moral ideas. They must be given to him. Physical nature sees to it that he strives to satisfy his lower desires. But to the development of the whole man belong also desires that arise from the spirit. Only if one takes the view that man has no such spiritual desires can one maintain that he should receive them from outside. And then it would also be justifiable to say that it is man's duty to do what he does not will. All ethics which demand of man that he should suppress his will in order to fulfil tasks that he does not will, reckon not with the whole man, but with one in whom the faculty of spiritual desire is lacking. For a man who is harmoniously developed, the so-called ideas of what is "right" are not outside but within the sphere of his own nature. Moral action does not consist in extermination of one-sided self-will, but in the full development of human nature. One considering moral ideals to be attainable only if man exterminates his own will, does not know that these ideals are willed by man just as much as the satisfaction of so-called animal instincts.

It cannot be denied that the views outlined here can easily be misunderstood. Immature persons without moral imagination like to look upon the instincts of their undeveloped natures as the full content of humanity, and to reject all moral ideas which they have not produced, in order that they may "live themselves out" without restriction. But it is obvious that what holds good for a fully developed human being does not apply to one who is only half-developed. One who still has to be brought by education to the point where his moral nature breaks through the shell of his lower passions, cannot lay claim to what applies to a man who is mature. Here there is no intention to outline what an undeveloped man requires to be taught, but rather to show what human nature includes when it has come to full maturity. For this is also to prove the possibility of freedom, which manifests itself, not in actions done under constraint of body or soul, but in actions sustained by spiritual intuitions.

The fully mature man gives himself his value. He neither strives for pleasure, which is given to him as a gift of grace either from nature or from the Creator, nor does he merely fulfil what he recognizes as abstract duty after he has divested himself of the desire for pleasure. He does what he wants to do, that is, he acts in accordance with his ethical intuitions, and in the attainment of what he wants he feels the true enjoyment of life. He determines life's value by the ratio between what he attains and what he attempts. Ethics which puts "you ought" in the place of "I will," mere duty in the place of inclination, determines man's value by the ratio between what duty demands of him and what he fulfils. It applies a standard to man that is not applicable to his nature. - The view developed here refers man back to himself. It recognizes as the true value of life only what each individual himself regards as such according to what he desires. This view accepts neither a value of life not recognized by the individual, nor a purpose of life which has not sprung from the individual. In the individual who is capable of true self knowledge it recognizes someone who is his own master and the assessor of his own value.

Addition to the Revised Edition, 1918. What is presented in this chapter can be misunderstood if one clings to the apparent objection that the will is simply the irrational factor in man and that this must be proved to him because then he will realize that his ethical striving must consist in working toward ultimate emancipation from the will. An apparent objection of this kind was brought against me by a competent critic who stated that it is the business of the philosopher to make good what the thoughtlessness of animals and most men fail to do, namely, to strike a proper balance in life's account. But in making this objection he does not recognize the real issue: If freedom is to be attained, then the will in human nature must be carried by intuitive thinking; at the same time it is true that an impulse of will may also be determined by factors other than intuition, but morality and its worth can be found only in the free realization of intuitions flowing from the nature of true manhood. Ethical individualism is well able to present morality in its full dignity, for it is not of the opinion that the truly moral is brought about by conforming to an external rule, but is only what comes about through man when he develops his moral will as a member of his total being, so that to do what is immoral appears to him as a stunting and crippling of his nature.

## **INDIVIDUALITY AND SPECIES**

The view that it is inherent in man to develop into an independent, free individuality seems to be contradicted by two facts: that he exists as a member within a natural totality (race, tribe, nation, family, male or female sex) and that he is active within a totality (state, church, etc.). He shows the general characteristics of the community to which he belongs, and he gives his deeds a content that is determined by the place he occupies within a plurality.

Is individuality possible nevertheless? Can we regard man as a totality in himself when he grows out of a totality and integrates himself into a totality?

The characteristic features and functions of the individual parts belonging to a whole are determined by the whole. A tribe is such a whole, and all the human beings comprising it have characteristic features which are conditioned by the nature of the tribe itself. How the individual member is constituted and his actions will be determined by the character of the tribe. This is why the physiognomy and activity of the individual will express something generic. If we ask why some particular thing about him is like this or that, we are referred beyond the nature of the individual to the species. The species explains why something about the individual appears as it does.

But man makes himself free from what is generic. For the generic qualities of the human race, when rightly experienced by the individual do not restrict his freedom, and ought not to be made to restrict it by artificial means. Man develops qualities and activities, the sources of which we can seek only in himself. In this, the generic element serves him only as a medium through which to express his own particular being. The characteristic features that nature has given him he uses as a foundation, giving them the form that

corresponds to his own being. We shall look in vain among the laws of the species for the reason for an expression of this being. Here we have to do with something individual which can be explained only through itself. If a person has advanced so far as to loosen himself from the generic, and we still attempt to explain everything about him from the character of the species, then we have no sense for what is individual.

It is impossible to understand a human being completely if one's judgment is based on a concept of the species. The tendency to judge according to species is most persistent where the differences of sex are concerned. Man sees in woman, and woman in man, nearly always too much of the general character of the other sex, and too little of the individual. In practical life this harms men less than women. The social position of women is often so unworthy because in many respects it is not determined, as it should be, by the individual qualities of the particular woman herself, but by general representations of what is considered the natural task and needs of woman. Man's activity in life comes about through the individual's capacities and inclinations, whereas woman's tends to be determined exclusively by the fact that she is a woman. Woman is supposed to be the slave of her species, of womanhood in general. As long as men continue to debate whether according to her "natural disposition" woman is suited to this or that profession, the so-called woman's question cannot advance beyond the most elementary stage. What woman is capable of in terms of her own nature, woman must be left to judge for herself. If it is true that women are useful only in those occupations they occupy at present, then they will hardly have it in themselves to attain anything else. But they must be allowed to decide for themselves what is in accordance with their nature. The reply to him who fears an upheaval of our social conditions as a result of accepting woman, not as an example of her species but as an individual, would be that social conditions, in which the status of one-half of humanity is below the dignity of man, are indeed in great need of improvement.

[footnote: Immediately upon the publication of this book (1894) I met with the objections to the above arguments that, already now, within the character of her sex, a woman is able to shape her life as individually as she likes, and far more freely than a man who is already de-individualized, first by school, and later by war and profession. I am aware that this objection will be urged today, perhaps even more strongly. Nonetheless, I feel bound to let my sentences stand, and must hope that there are readers who also recognize how utterly such an objection goes against the concept of freedom developed in this book and will judge my sentences above by another standard than that of man's loss of individuality through school and profession.]

One judging human beings according to their generic qualities stops short just at the very frontier beyond which they begin to be beings whose activity depends on free self-assessment. What lies below this frontier can naturally be the object of scientific study. Thus the characteristics of race, tribe, nation and sex are subjects of special sciences. Only men who wanted to live simply as examples of the species could possibly fit the general picture of man these scientific studies produce. All these sciences are unable to reach the particular content of the individual. Where the sphere of freedom (in thinking and doing) begins, there the possibility of determining the individual according to the

laws of the species ceases. The conceptual content which man, through thinking, must bring into connection with perception in order to take hold of full reality (cp. p. 105 ff.), no one can fix once for all and hand over to mankind ready-made. The individual must gain his concepts through his own intuition. How the individual has to think, cannot be deduced from any concept of a species; this depends singly and solely on the individual himself. Just as little is it possible from general human qualities to decide what concrete aims an individual will set himself. One wishing to understand a particular individual must broaden his understanding to encompass the essential nature of the other, and not stop short at those qualities which are typical. In this sense every single human being is a problem. And every science which deals with abstract thoughts and concepts of species is only a preparation for that insight which becomes ours when a human individuality shares with us his way of looking at the world, and that other insight which we obtain from the content of his will. Whenever we feel: here we have to do with that in a man which is free from the typical way of thinking and free from a will based on the species, there we must cease to make use of any concepts that apply to our own I if we want to understand him. Cognition consists in combining the concept with the perception by means of thinking. In the case of all other objects the observer must gain his concepts through his own intuition; when it is a case of understanding a free individuality, the essential thing is to receive into our own I those concepts by which the free individuality determines himself, in their pure form (without mixing them with our own conceptual content). People who immediately mingle their own concepts with every judgment of another, can never reach an understanding of an individuality. Just as a free individuality frees himself from the characteristics of the species, so our cognition must become free from the means by which all that belongs to species is understood.

Only to the degree that a man has made himself free from the characteristics of the species in the way indicated, can he be considered to be a free spirit within a human community. No man is all species, none is all individuality. But every human being gradually frees a greater or lesser part of his being from the animal-like life of the species, as well as from the commands of human authorities ruling him.

With that part of his being for which a man is unable to achieve such freedom, he is a member of the natural and spiritual organism of the world in general. In this respect he does what he sees others do, or as they command. Only that part of his activity which springs from his intuitions has ethical value in the true sense. And those moral instincts that he has in him through the inheritance of social instincts become something ethical through his taking them over into his intuitions. All moral activity of mankind has its source in individual ethical intuitions and their acceptance by human communities. One could also say: The moral life of mankind is the sum-total of the products of the moral imagination of free human individuals. This is the conclusion of monism.

## **THE CONSEQUENCES OF MONISM**

What is here called monism, this unitary explanation of the world, derives from human experience<sup>62</sup> the principles it uses for explaining the world. The source of activity also is sought within the world to be observed, that is, in human nature accessible to self-knowledge, more particularly in moral imagination. Monism refuses to seek the origin of the world accessible to perceiving and thinking, outside of that world, by means of abstract conclusions. For monism, the unity that thinking observation - which can be experienced - brings to the manifold plurality of perceptions is, at the same time, just what the human need for knowledge demands, and by means of which entry into physical and spiritual realms is sought. One looking for another unity behind the one sought by thinking observation, thereby shows only that he does not recognize the agreement between what is found by thinking and what the urge for knowledge demands. The single human individual actually is not separated from the universe. He is part of it, and the connection of this part with the rest of the cosmos is present in reality; it is broken only for our perception. At first we see this part as a being existing by itself because we do not see the cords and ropes by which the fundamental forces of the cosmos sustain our life. One remaining at this standpoint sees the part of the whole as a truly independently existing being, as a monad, who somehow receives information about the rest of the world from outside. But monism, as meant here, shows that one can believe in this independence only so long as what is perceived is not woven by thinking into the network of the world of concepts. When this happens, separate existence of parts is revealed as a mere appearance due to perceiving. Man can find his self-enclosed total existence within the universe only through the intuitive experience of thinking. Thinking destroys the appearance due to perceiving, inserting our individual existence into the life of the cosmos. The unity of the world of concepts, which contains the objective perceptions, also embraces the content of our subjective personality. Thinking shows us reality in its true character as a self-enclosed unity, whereas the manifoldness of perceptions is only its appearance determined by our organization. (cp. p. 105 ff.). Recognition of the reality in contrast to the appearance resulting from perceiving has always been the goal of human thinking. Science has striven to recognize perceptions as realities by discovering the laws that connect them. But where the view was held that connections ascertained by human thinking had only a subjective significance, the real reason for the unity of things was sought in some entity existing beyond the world to be experienced (an inferred God, will, absolute Spirit, etc.). And on this basis, in addition to knowledge of the connections that are recognizable through experience, one strove to attain a second kind of knowledge which would go beyond experience and would reveal the connection between experience and the ultimate entities existing beyond experience (metaphysics arrived at by drawing conclusions and not by experience). From this standpoint, it was thought that the reason we can grasp the connection of things through strictly applied thinking is that an original creator built up the world according to logical laws, and the source of our deeds was thought to be contained in the will of the creator. It was not realized that thinking encompasses both subjective and objective in one grasp, and that in the union of perception with concept full reality is mediated. Only as long as we consider in the abstract form of concepts the laws pervading and determining perceptions, do we deal in actual fact with something purely subjective. But the content of the concept, which is attained - with the help of thinking - in order to add it to perception, is not subjective. This content is not derived from the subject but from reality.

It is that part of reality that our perceiving cannot reach. It is experience, but not experience mediated through perceiving. One unable to recognize that the concept is something real, thinks of it only in that abstract form in which he grasps it in his consciousness. But this separation is due to our organization, just as the separateness of perceptions is due to our organization. The tree that one perceives, has no existence by itself. It is only a part of the great organism of nature, and its existence is possible only in a real connection with nature. An abstract concept has no reality in itself, any more than a perception, taken by itself, has any reality. The perception is the part of reality that is given objectively, the concept is the part that is given subjectively (through intuition, cp. p. 113 ff.). Our spiritual organization tears reality into these two factors. One factor appears to perception, the other to intuition. Only the union of the two, that is, the perception fitted systematically into the universe, is full reality. If we consider the mere perception by itself, we do not have reality, but a disconnected chaos; if we consider by itself the law that connects perceptions, we are dealing with mere abstract concepts. The abstract concept does not contain reality, but thinking observation which considers neither concept nor perception one-sidedly, but the union of both, does.

Not even the most subjective orthodox idealist will deny that we live within a reality (that we are rooted in it with our real existence). He only questions whether we also reach ideally, i.e., in our cognition, what we actually experience. By contrast, monism shows that thinking is neither subjective nor objective, but is a principle embracing both sides of reality. When we observe with thinking, we carry out a process that in itself belongs in the sequence of real occurrences. By means of thinking we overcome - within experience itself - the one-sidedness of mere perceiving. We are not able through abstract conceptual hypotheses (through pure conceptual reflection) to devise the nature of reality, but when we find the ideas that belong to the perceptions we live within reality. The monist does not try to add something to our experience that cannot be experienced (a Beyond), but in concept and perception sees the real. He does not spin metaphysics out of mere abstract concepts; he sees in the concept, as such, only one side of reality, namely, that side which remains hidden from perceiving but having meaning only in union with perceptions. Monism calls forth in man the conviction that he lives in a world of reality and does not have to go beyond this world for a higher reality that cannot be experienced. The monist does not look for Absolute Reality anywhere but in experience, because he recognizes that the content of experience is the reality. And he is satisfied by this reality, because he knows that thinking has the power to guarantee it. What dualism looks for only behind the world of observation, monism finds within it. Monism shows that in our cognition we grasp reality, not in a subjective image which slips in between man and reality, but in its true nature. For monism the conceptual content of the world is the same for every human individual (cp. p. 128 ff.). According to monistic principles, the reason one human individual regards another as akin to himself is because it is the same world content that expresses itself in the other also. In the unitary world of concepts there are not as many concepts of lions as there are individuals who think of a lion, but only one concept, lion. And the concept which "A" adds to his perception of a lion is the same concept as "B" adds to his, only apprehended by a different perceiving subject (cp. p. 107). Thinking leads all perceiving subjects to the common ideal unity of all multiplicity. The one world of ideas expresses itself in them as in a multiplicity of individuals. As long as man

apprehends himself merely by means of self-perception, he regards himself as this particular human being; as soon as he looks toward the idea-world that lights up within him and embraces all particulars, he sees absolute reality living and shining forth within him. Dualism defines the divine primordial Being as pervading and living in all men. Monism sees this common divine life in reality itself. The ideal content of another human being is also my content, and I regard it as a different content only so long as I perceive, but no longer when I think. In his thinking each man embraces only a part of the total idea-world, and to that extent individuals differ one from another by the actual content of their thinking. But these contents are within one self-enclosed whole, which encompasses the content of all men's thinking. In his thinking therefore, man takes hold of the universal primordial Being pervading all humanity. A life within reality filled with the content of thought is at the same time a life within God. The merely inferred, not to be experienced Beyond is based on a misunderstanding on the part of those who believe that the world in which we live does not contain within itself the cause and reason for its existence. They do not recognize that through thinking they find what they need to explain the perceptions. This is also why no speculation has ever brought to light any content that has not been borrowed from the reality that is given us. The God that is assumed through abstract conclusions is nothing but a human being transplanted into the Beyond; Schopenhauer's will is the power of human will made absolute. Hartmann's unconscious primordial Being, composed of idea and will, is a combination of two abstractions drawn from experience. Exactly the same is true of all other transcendent principles that are not based on thinking which is experienced.

In truth, the human spirit never goes beyond the reality in which we live, nor is there any need to do so, since everything we require in order to explain the world is within the world. If philosophers eventually declare that they are satisfied when they have deduced the world from principles they borrow from experience and transplant into an hypothetical Beyond, then the same satisfaction must also be possible, if the borrowed content is allowed to remain in this world where, for thinking to be experienced, it belongs. All attempts to transcend the world are purely illusory, and the principles transplanted from this world into the Beyond do not explain the world any better than those within it. And thinking, properly understood, does not demand any such transcendence at all, because a thought-content can seek a perceptual content, together with which it forms a reality only within the world, not outside it. The objects of imagination, too, are contents which are valid only if they become representations that refer to a perceptual content. Through this perceptual content they become part of reality. A concept that is supposed to be filled with a content from beyond the world given us, is an abstraction to which no reality corresponds. We can think out only concepts of reality; in order actually to find reality itself, we must also perceive. An absolute Being for which a content is devised is an impossible assumption when thinking is properly understood. The monist does not deny the ideal; in fact he considers a perceptual content, lacking its ideal counterpart, not to be a complete reality; but in the whole sphere of thinking he finds nothing that could make it necessary to deny the objective spiritual reality of thinking and therefore leave the realm which thinking can experience. Monism regards science that limits itself to a description of perceptions without penetrating to their ideal complements, as being incomplete. But it regards as equally incomplete all abstract



concepts that do not find their complements in perceptions and nowhere fit into the network of concepts embracing the world to be observed. Therefore it can acknowledge no ideas that refer to objective factors lying beyond our experience, which are supposed to form the content of purely hypothetical metaphysics. All ideas of this kind which humanity has produced, monism recognizes as abstractions borrowed from experience; it is simply that the fact of the borrowing has been overlooked.

Just as little, according to monistic principles, could the aims of our action be derived from a Beyond outside mankind. Insofar as they are thought, they must originate from human intuition. Man does not make the purposes of an objective (existing beyond) primordial Being into his own individual purposes; he pursues his own, given him by his moral imagination. The idea that realizes itself in a deed, man detaches from the unitary idea-world, making it the foundation of his will. Consequently, what come to expression in his action are not commands projected from a Beyond into the world, but human intuitions that are within the world. For monism acknowledges no world ruler who sets our aims and directs our activity from outside. Man will find no such foundation of existence, whose decisions he must fathom in order to discover the aims toward which he is to guide his activity. He is referred back to himself. He himself must give content to his activity. If he seeks for the determining causes of his will outside the world in which he lives, then his search will be in vain. When he goes beyond the satisfaction of his natural instincts, for which Mother Nature has provided, then he must seek these causes in his own moral imagination, unless he finds it more convenient to let himself be determined by the moral imagination of others. This means: either he must give up being active altogether, or must act according to determinations he gives himself out of his world of ideas, or which others give him from that world. When he gets beyond his bodily life of instincts, and beyond carrying out the commands of others, then he is determined by nothing but himself. He must act according to an impulse produced by himself and determined by nothing else. This impulse is indeed determined ideally in the unitary idea world, but in actual fact it is only through man that it can be taken from that world and translated into reality. The reason for the actual translation of an idea into reality through man, monism finds only in man himself. For idea to become deed, man must first will before it can happen. Such will then has its foundation only in man himself. Therefore ultimately it is man who determines his own deed. He is free.

1st Addition to the Revised Edition, 1918. In the second part of this book the attempt has been made to give proof that freedom (spiritual activity) is to be found in the reality of human deeds. To do this it was necessary to separate from the total sphere of human deeds those actions that can be deemed free by unbiased self-observation. They are the deeds which prove to be the realization of ideal intuitions. No other deeds, if considered without prejudice, can be regarded as free. But unbiased self-observation will lead man to recognize that it is inherent in his nature to progress along the path toward ethical intuitions and their realization. Yet this unprejudiced observation of man's ethical nature cannot arrive at an ultimate conclusion about freedom by itself. For if intuitive thinking had its source in some other being, if its being were not such as had its origin in itself, then the consciousness of freedom, which springs from morality, would prove to be an illusion. But the second part of this book finds its natural support in the first part, where

intuitive thinking is presented as an inner, spiritual activity of man, which is experienced. To understand this nature of thinking in living experience is at the same time to recognize the freedom of intuitive thinking. And if one knows that this thinking is free, then one also recognizes that sphere of the will to which freedom can be ascribed. Acting human beings will consider that will as free to which the intuitive life in thinking, on the basis of inner experience, can attribute a self-sustaining essence. One unable to do this cannot discover any altogether indisputable argument for the acceptance of freedom. The experience which is referred to here finds intuitive thinking in consciousness, which has reality not only in consciousness. And thereby it is discovered that freedom is the characteristic feature of all deeds that have their source in the intuitions of consciousness.

2nd Addition to the Revised Edition, 1918. The content of this book is built upon intuitive thinking, of which the experience is purely spiritual, and through which, in cognition, every single perception is placed within reality. This book intends to present no more than can be surveyed through the experience of intuitive thinking. But it also intends to present the kind of thought which this experienced thinking requires. It requires that in the process of knowledge thinking is not denied as a self-dependent experience. It requires that one does not deny its ability to experience reality in union with perceptions, instead of looking for reality only in a world lying outside this experience, an inferred world in relation to which the human activity of thinking would be something merely subjective. -

This characterizes thinking as the element through which man gradually enters spiritually into reality. (It ought not to be possible to confuse this world view, based on experienced thinking, with a mere rationalism.) On the other hand, it should be evident from the whole spirit of this presentation that for human knowledge, the perceptual element contains a reality-content only if it is grasped by thinking. What characterizes reality as reality cannot lie outside thinking. Therefore it must not be imagined that the physical kind of perceiving guarantees the only reality. What comes to meet us as perception is something man must simply expect on his life journey. All he can ask is: Is one justified in expecting, from the point of view resulting from the intuitively experienced thinking, that it is possible for man to perceive not only physically but also spiritually? This can be expected. For even though on the one hand intuitively experienced thinking is an active process taking place in the human spirit, on the other hand it is also spiritual perception grasped without a physical organ. It is a perception in which the perceiver is himself active, and it is an activity of the self which is also perceived. In intuitively experienced thinking man is transferred into a spiritual world as perceiver. What comes to meet him as perceptions within this world in the same way as the spiritual world of his own thinking comes to meet him, man recognizes as a world of spiritual perception. This world of perception has the same relationship to thinking as the world of physical perception has on the physical side. When man experiences the world of spiritual perception it will not appear foreign to him, because in intuitive thinking he already has an experience which is of a purely spiritual character. A number of my writings which have been published since this book first appeared, deal with such a world of spiritual perception. The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity lays the philosophical foundation for these later writings. For here the aim is to show that a properly understood experience of

thinking is already an experience of spirit. For this reason it appears to the author that one able in all earnestness to enter into the point of view of *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* will not come to a standstill at the entry into the world of spiritual perception. It is true that by drawing conclusions from the content of this book it is not possible to derive logically what is presented in my later books. But from a living grasp of what in this book is meant by intuitive thinking, the further step will result quite naturally: the actual entry into the world of spiritual perception.

### **FIRST APPENDIX (Addition to the Revised Edition of 1918)**

Various objections brought forward by philosophers immediately after this book was first published induce me to add the following brief statement to this revised edition. I can well understand that there are readers for whom the rest of the book is of interest, but who will regard the following as superfluous, as a remote and abstract spinning of thoughts. They may well leave this short description unread. However, problems arise within philosophical world views which originate in certain prejudices on the part of the philosophers, rather than in the natural sequence of human thinking in general. What has so far been dealt with here appears to me to be a task that confronts every human being who is striving for clarity about man's being and his relationship to the world. What follows, however, is rather a problem which certain philosophers demand should be considered when such questions are under discussion as those dealt with here, because through their whole way of thinking, they have created difficulties which do not otherwise exist. If one simply ignores such problems, certain people will soon come forward with accusations of dilettantism and so on. And the opinion arises that the author of a discussion such as this book contains has not thought out his position in regard to those views he does not mention in the book.

The problem to which I refer is this: There are thinkers who are of the opinion that a particular difficulty exists when it is a question of understanding how the soul life of another person can affect one's own (the soul life of the observer). They say: My conscious world is enclosed within me; the conscious world of another person likewise is enclosed within him. I cannot see into the world of another's consciousness. How, then, do I come to know that we share the same world? A world view which considers that from a conscious sphere it is possible to draw conclusions about an unconscious sphere that can never become conscious, attempts to solve this difficulty in the following way. This world view says: The content of my consciousness is only a representative of a real world which I cannot consciously reach. In that real world lies the unknown cause of the content of my consciousness. In that world is also my real being, of which likewise I have in my consciousness only a representative. And in it exists also the being of the other person who confronts me. What is experienced consciously by him has its corresponding reality in his real being, independent of his consciousness. This reality reacts on my fundamental but unconscious being in the sphere that cannot become conscious, and in this way a representative that is quite independent of my conscious experience is produced in my consciousness. One sees here that to the sphere accessible to my

consciousness, hypothetically is added another sphere, inaccessible to my consciousness, and this is done because it is believed that we would otherwise be forced to maintain that the whole external world which seems to confront me is only a world of my consciousness, and this would result in the – solipsistic -absurdity that the other persons also exist only in my consciousness.

It is possible to attain clarity about this problem, which has been created by several of the more recent approaches to a theory of knowledge, if one endeavors to survey the matter from the point of view that observes facts in accordance with their spiritual aspect, as presented in this book. To begin with, what do I have before me when I confront another personality? Let us consider what the very first impression is. The first impression is the physical, bodily appearance of the other person, given me as perception, then the audible perception of what he is saying, and so on. I do not merely stare at all this; it sets my thinking activity in motion. To the extent that I confront the other personality with my thinking, the perceptions become transparent to my soul. To the extent that I grasp the perceptions in thinking, I am obliged to say that they are not at all what they appear to be to the external senses. Within the perceptions as they appear directly to the senses something else is revealed, namely what they are indirectly. The fact that I bring them before me means at the same time their extinction as mere appearances to the senses. But what, in their extinction, they bring to revelation, this, for the duration of its effect on me, forces me - as a thinking being - to extinguish my own thinking and to put in its place the thinking of what is revealed. And this thinking I grasp as an experience that is like the experience of my own thinking. I have really perceived the thinking of the other. For the direct perceptions, which extinguish themselves as appearances to the senses, are grasped by my thinking, and this is a process that takes place completely within my consciousness; it consists in the fact that the thinking of the other takes the place of my thinking. The division between the two spheres of consciousness is actually cancelled out through the extinction of the appearances to the senses. In my consciousness this expresses itself in the fact that in experiencing the content of the other's consciousness I am aware of my own consciousness as little as I am aware of it in dreamless sleep. Just as my day-consciousness is excluded in dreamless sleep, so in the perceiving of the foreign content of consciousness, the content of my own is excluded. There are two reasons why one tends to be deluded about these facts; one is that in perceiving the other person, the extinction of the content of one's own consciousness is replaced not by unconsciousness as in sleep, but by the content of the other's consciousness; the other reason is that the alternation between extinction and re-appearance of self-consciousness occurs too quickly to be noticed in ordinary life. - This whole problem cannot be solved by an artificial construction of concepts which draws conclusions from what is conscious to what can never become conscious, but by actual experience of what occurs in the union of thinking with perception. Instances like the above often occur in regard to many problems which appear in philosophical literature. Thinkers should seek the path to unprejudiced observation in accordance with facts, both physical and spiritual, but instead they erect an artificial construction of concepts, inserting this between themselves and reality.

Eduard von Hartmann, in an essay<sup>63</sup> includes my Philosophy of Spiritual Activity among philosophical works which are based on “epistemological monism.” And this theory is rejected by him as one that cannot even be considered. The reason for this is as follows. According to the viewpoint expressed in the essay mentioned above, only three possible epistemological standpoints exist. The first is when a person remains at the naive standpoint and takes perceived phenomena to be realities existing outside of human consciousness. In this case critical insight is lacking. It is not recognized that after all one remains with the content of one’s consciousness merely within one’s own consciousness. It is not realized that one is not dealing with a “table-in-itself” but only with the object of one’s own consciousness. One remaining at this standpoint, or returning to it for any reason, is a naive realist. However, this standpoint is impossible, for it overlooks the fact that consciousness has no other object than itself. The second standpoint is when all this is recognized and is taken into account fully. Then to begin with, one becomes a transcendental idealist. As transcendental idealist one has to give up hope that anything from a “thing-in-itself” could ever reach human consciousness. And if one is consistent, then it is impossible not to become an absolute illusionist. For the world one confronts is transformed into a mere sum of objects of consciousness, and indeed only objects of one’s own consciousness. One is forced to think of other people too - absurd though it is - as being present only as the content of one’s own consciousness. According to von Hartmann the only possible standpoint is the third one, transcendental realism. This view assumes that “things-in-themselves” exist, but our consciousness cannot have direct experience of them in any way. Beyond human consciousness - in a way that remains unconscious - they are said to cause objects of consciousness to appear in human consciousness. All we can do is to draw conclusions about these “things-in-themselves” from the merely represented content of our consciousness which we experience. In the essay mentioned above, Eduard von Hartmann maintains that “epistemological monism” - and this he considers my standpoint to be - would in reality have to confess to one of the three standpoints just mentioned; this is not done, because the epistemological monist does not draw the actual conclusion of his presuppositions. The essay goes on to say:

“If one wants to find out what position a supposed monist occupies in regard to a theory of knowledge, it is only necessary to ask him certain questions and compel him to answer them. Voluntarily he will not give any opinion on these points, and he will go to any length to avoid answering direct questions on them, because each answer will show that as a monist his claim to belong to some other standpoint than one of the above three, in relation to a theory of knowledge, is out of the question. These questions are as follows: 1) Are things continuous or intermittent in their existence? If the answer is: They are continuous, then we are dealing with one form or another of naive realism. If the answer is: They are intermittent, then we have transcendental idealism. But if the answer is: They are on the one hand continuous (as content of the absolute consciousness, or as unconscious representations, or existing as possibilities of perceptions), on the other hand they are intermittent (as content of limited consciousness), then we recognize transcendental realism. - 2) If three persons sit at a table, how many examples of the table are present? He who answers: One, is a naive realist; he who answers: Three, is a transcendental idealist; but he who answers: Four, is a transcendental realist. This last answer does indeed presuppose that it is legitimate to put under the one heading,

'examples of the table' something so dissimilar as the one table as thing-in-itself, and the three tables as perceptual objects in the three consciousnesses. Whoever finds this too much will have to answer 'one and three' instead of 'four.' - 3) If two persons are in a room by themselves, how many examples of these persons are present? One answering: Two, is a naive realist; one answering: Four (namely, one 'I' and one 'other' in each of the two consciousnesses), is a transcendental idealist; but one answering: Six (namely, two persons as 'things-in-themselves' and four objects of representation of persons in the two consciousnesses), is a transcendental realist. One wishing to prove that epistemological monism is a different standpoint from any of these three, would have to answer each of the above questions differently, and I cannot imagine what such answers could be."

The answers of The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity would be: 1) He who only grasps the perceptual content: and takes this to be the reality, is a naive realist; he does not make it clear to himself that he can actually regard the perceptual content as enduring only so long as he is looking at it and he must, therefore, think of what he has before him as intermittent. However, as soon as he realizes that reality is present only when the perceptual content is permeated by thought, he reaches the insight that the perceptual content that comes to meet him as intermittent, is revealed as continuous when it is permeated with what thinking elaborates. Therefore: the perceptual content, grasped by a thinking that is also experienced, is continuous, whereas what is only perceived must be thought of as intermittent - that is, if it were real, which is not the case. - 2) When three persons are sitting at a table, how many examples of the table are present? One table only is present; but as long as the three persons remain at their perceptual pictures they will have to say: These perceptual pictures are no reality at all. And as soon as they pass over to the table as grasped in their thinking, there is revealed to them the one reality of the table; with their three contents of consciousness they are united in this one reality. - 3) When two persons are in a room by themselves, how many examples of these persons are present? There are most definitely not six examples present - not even in the sense of transcendental realism - there are two. Only to begin with, each of the two persons has merely the unreal perceptual-picture of himself as well as that of the other person. Of these pictures there are four, and the result of their presence in the thinking-activity of the two persons is that reality is grasped. In their thinking-activity each of the persons goes beyond the sphere of his own consciousness; within each of them lives the sphere of the other person's consciousness, as well as his own. At moments when this merging takes place, the persons are as little confined within their own consciousness as they are in sleep. But the next moment, consciousness of the merging with the other person returns, so that the consciousness of each person - in his experience of thinking - grasps himself and the other. I know that the transcendental realist describes this as a relapse into naive realism. But then I have already pointed out in this book that naive realism retains its justification when applied to a thinking that is experienced. The transcendental realist does not enter into the actual facts concerned in the process of knowledge; he excludes himself from them by the network of thoughts in which he gets entangled. Also, the monism which is presented in the Philosophy of Spiritual Activity should not be called "epistemological," but rather, if a name is wanted, a monism of thought. All this has been misunderstood by Eduard von Hartmann. He did not enter into the specific points raised

in the Philosophy of Spiritual Activity, but maintained that I had made an attempt to combine Hegel's universalistic panlogism<sup>64</sup> with Hume's<sup>65</sup> individualistic phenomenalism<sup>66</sup> whereas in actual fact the Philosophy of Spiritual Activity has no similarity with these two views it is supposed to combine. (This is also the reason I did not feel inclined to compare my view with the "epistemological monism" of Johannes Rehmke,<sup>67</sup> for example. In fact, the viewpoint of the Philosophy of Spiritual Activity is utterly different from what Eduard von Hartmann and others call epistemological monism.)

## SECOND APPENDIX

In this Appendix is repeated, in all essentials, what served as a kind of "Foreword" to the first edition of this book (1894). In this edition I place it as an appendix because it conveys the kind of thoughts that occupied me when I wrote the book twenty-five years ago, rather than having any direct bearing on the content. It is not possible to omit it altogether, since the opinion crops up, again and again, that because of my writings on the science of the spirit, I have to suppress some of my earlier writings. [footnote: Only the very first opening sentences (in the first edition) are left out here, because to-day they seem to me to be quite irrelevant; whereas to say the rest seems to me as necessary to-day as it did then, despite the prevalent scientific trend of thought, and in fact just because of it.]

Our age is one in which truth must be sought in the depths of human nature. Of Schiller's two well-known paths, it will be the second that most appeals to modern man:

"Truth seek we both - Thou in the life without thee and around;

I in the heart within. By both can Truth alike be found.

The healthy eye can through the world the great Creator track;

The healthy heart is but the glass which gives Creation back."

"Wahrheit suchen wir beide, du aussen im Leben, ich innen

In dem Herren, und so findet sie jeder gewiss.

Ist das Auge gesund, so begegnet es aussen dem Schöpfer;

Ist es das Herz, dann gewiss spiegelt es innen die Welt."

(transl. by E. Bulwer Lytton)

A truth which comes to us from outside always bears the stamp of uncertainty. Only that truth which appears to us as coming from within ourselves do we trust.

Only truth can bring us security in developing our individual powers. In someone tormented by doubts, the powers are weakened. He can find no goal for his creative powers in a world that appears to him as an enigma.

No longer do we merely want to believe; we want to know. Belief demands acknowledgement of truths which are not quite clear to us. But what is not clearly recognized goes against what is individual in us, which wants to experience everything in the depth of its being. Only that kind of knowing satisfies us which is not subjected to any external standard, but springs from the inner experience of our personality.

Nor do we want a kind of knowledge which has become hardened into formulas and is stored away, valid for all time. Each of us considers himself justified in proceeding from his immediate experience, from the facts he knows, and from there going forward to gain knowledge of the whole universe. We strive for certainty in knowledge, but each in his own way.

Our scientific teachings, too, should no longer take a form that implies their acceptance to be a compulsion. Today no one should give a scientific work a title like that Fichte once gave a book: "A Pellucid Report for the Broader Public concerning the Essential Nature of Recent Philosophies. An Attempt to Compel the Reader to Understand." To-day no one is to be compelled to understand. We demand neither acceptance nor agreement from anyone unless his own particular, individual need urges him to the view in question. Today even the still immature human being, the child, should not have knowledge crammed into him; rather we should seek to develop his faculties so that he no longer needs to be compelled to understand, but understands.

I am under no illusion concerning these characteristics of the present age. I know how much of a stereotypical attitude, lacking all individuality, is prevalent everywhere. But I also know that many of my contemporaries strive to order their lives in the direction I have indicated. To them I would dedicate this book. It is not meant to be the "only possible" way that leads to truth, but it describes a path taken by one whose heart is set upon truth.

This book at first leads the reader into abstract regions, where thought must have sharp outlines if it is to reach secure conclusions. But the reader is also led out of these arid concepts into concrete life. I am convinced that one must raise oneself up into the ethereal realm of concepts if one wants to experience existence in all its aspects. One understanding only the pleasures of the senses, misses the essential enjoyments of life. Oriental sages make their disciples live a life of resignation and asceticism for years before they impart their own wisdom to them. The Western world no longer demands pious exercises and ascetic practices as a preparation for science, but it does require that



one should have the good will to withdraw occasionally from the immediate impressions of life and enter the realm of pure thought.

The spheres of life are many, and for each of them special sciences develop. But life itself is a whole, and the more the sciences strive to penetrate into the depths of the separate spheres, the more they withdraw themselves from seeing the world as a living unity. There must be a knowledge which seeks in the separate sciences the principle that leads man back to the fulness of life once more. Through his knowledge the researcher in a special branch of science wants to become conscious of the world and how it works; in this book the aim is a philosophical one: science itself must become a living, organic entity. The various branches of science are preliminary stages of the science striven for here. A similar relation is to be found in art. The composer's work is based on the theory of composition. This latter is a knowledge which is a necessary prerequisite for composing. In composing, the law of composition serves life, that is, it serves true reality. In exactly the same sense philosophy is an art. All genuine philosophers have truly been artists in concepts. For them, human ideas become the material for art, and the scientific method becomes artistic technique. Abstract thinking thereby gains concrete, individual life. Ideas become life-forces. We then have not just a knowledge of things, but we have made knowledge into a real organism, ruled by its own laws; the reality of our active consciousness has risen beyond a mere passive reception of truths.

How philosophy as an art is related to human freedom (spiritual activity), what freedom is, and whether we do or can participate in it, is the principal problem dealt with in my book. All other scientific discussions are included solely because they ultimately throw light on this question which, in my opinion, is man's most immediate concern. These pages offer a "Philosophy of Freedom."

All science would be nothing but the satisfaction of idle curiosity if it did not strive to elevate the value of existence of the human personality. The sciences attain their true value only through presenting the significance of their results in relation to man. The ultimate goal of the individual cannot be the ennoblement of one single soul-faculty only, but a development of all the capacities that slumber within us. All knowledge has value only insofar as it is a contribution to the all-round unfolding of man's entire nature.

Therefore, in this book the relation between science and life is not regarded in the sense that man must bow down to ideas and let them enslave him; rather the relation should be that man conquers the world of ideas in order to make use of it for his human aims, which go beyond the aims of mere science.

One must be able to confront the idea in living experience, or else fall into bondage to it.

# **An Outline of Occult Science**

**By  
Rudolf Steiner**

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AN OUTLINE OF  
OCCULT SCIENCE

RUDOLF STEINER

## Scan / Edit Notes

This book is a sequel to Dr. Steiner's earlier book entitled Theosophy (stein09 in my collection). Generally speaking, Occult Science deals with the evolution of Man and the Earth.

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-Salmun

## Prefaces

### Sixteenth To Twentieth Edition

Now, fifteen years after the first edition of this book, I may well be allowed to say something publicly about the state of soul out of which it arose.

Originally, it was my plan to add its essential content as final chapters to my book Theosophy, which had been published previously. This proved to be impossible. At the time of the publication of Theosophy the subject matter of Occult Science did not yet live in me in its final form as was the case with Theosophy. In my imaginative perceptions the spiritual nature of individual man stood before my soul and I was able to describe it; the cosmic relationships, however, which had to be presented in Occult Science did not yet live in my consciousness in the same way. I perceived details, but not the complete picture.

I, therefore, decided to publish Theosophy with the content I had seen as the nature of the life of individual man, and then to carry through Occult Science in the near future, without undue haste.

The contents of this book had, in accordance with my soul mood at that time, to be given in thoughts that are further elaborations of the thoughts employed in natural science, suited for the presentation of the spiritual. In the preface to the first edition, reprinted in this book, it will be noted how strongly responsible I felt toward natural science in all that I wrote at that time about the science of the spirit.

What reveals itself to spiritual perception as the world of spirit cannot, however, be presented in such thoughts alone. For this revelation does not fit into a mere thought content. He who has experienced the nature of such revelation knows that the thoughts of ordinary consciousness are only suited to express what is perceived by the senses, not what is seen by the spirit.

The content of what is spiritually perceived can only be reproduced in pictures (imagination) through which inspirations speak, which have their origin in spiritual entity intuitively perceived.<sup>1</sup>

But he who describes imaginations from the world of spirit cannot at present merely present these imaginations. For in doing so he would be presenting something that would stand as quite a different content of consciousness alongside the content of knowledge of our age, without any relationship whatsoever to it. He has to fill modern consciousness with what can be recognized by another consciousness that perceives the world of spirit.

His presentation will then have this world of spirit as content, but this content will appear in the form of thoughts into which it flows. Through this it will be completely comprehensible to ordinary consciousness, which thinks in terms of the present day but does not yet behold the world of spirit.

This comprehensibility will only then be lacking if we ourselves raise barriers against it, that is, if we labor under the prejudices that the age has produced regarding "the limits of knowledge" through an incorrectly conceived view of nature.

In spiritual cognition everything is immersed in intimate soul experience, not only spiritual perception itself, but also the understanding with which the unseeing, ordinary consciousness meets the results of clairvoyant perception.

Those who maintain that anyone who believes he understands is merely suggesting the understanding to himself have not the slightest inkling of this intimacy.

But it is a fact that what expresses itself merely in concepts of truth and error within the scope of comprehension of the physical world becomes experience in regard to the spiritual world.

Whoever permits his judgment to be influenced — be it ever so slightly — by the assertion that the spiritually perceived is incomprehensible to the everyday, still unperceiving consciousness — because of its limitations — will find his comprehension obscured by this judgment as though by a dark cloud, and he really cannot understand.

What is spiritually perceived is fully comprehensible to the unprejudiced, unperceiving consciousness if the seer gives his perceptions thought form. It is just as comprehensible as the finished picture of the painter is to the man who does not paint. Moreover, the comprehension of the spirit world is not of the nature of artistic feeling employed in the comprehension of a work of art, but it bears the stamp of thought employed in natural science.

In order, however, to make such a comprehension really possible, the one who presents what he perceives spiritually must bring his perceptions up to a point where he can pour them into thought form without loss of their imaginative character within this form.

All this stood before my soul as I developed my Occult Science.

In 1909 I felt that, under these premises, I might be able to produce a book which, in the first place, offered the content of my spiritual vision brought, to a sufficient degree, into thought form, and which, in the second place, could be understood by every thinking human being who allows no obstructions to interfere with his understanding.

I say this today, stating at the same time that in 1909 the publication of this book appeared to be a risk. For I knew indeed that professional scientists are unable to call up in themselves the necessary impartiality, nor are the numerous personalities able to do so who are dependent on them for their judgment.

But, before my soul there stood the very fact that at the time when the consciousness of mankind was furthest removed from the world of spirit, the communications from that world would answer a most urgent necessity.

I counted upon the fact that there are human beings who feel, more or less desperately, the remoteness from all spirituality as a grave obstacle to life that causes them to seize upon the communications of the spiritual world with inner longing.

During the subsequent years this has been completely confirmed. Theosophy and Occult Science, books that presume the goodwill of the reader in coping with a difficult style of writing, have been widely read.

I have quite consciously endeavored not to offer a "popular" exposition, but an exposition that makes it necessary for the reader to study the content with strict effort of thought. The character I impressed upon my books is such that their very study is the beginning of spiritual training. For the calm, conscious effort of thought that this reading makes necessary strengthens the forces of the soul and through this makes them capable of approaching the spirit world.

The fact that I have entitled this book Occult Science has immediately called forth misunderstandings. From many sides was heard, "What claims to be science must not be secret, occult." How little thought was exercised in making such an objection! As though someone who reveals a subject matter would want to be secretive about it. This entire book shows that it was not the intention to designate anything "occult," but to bring everything into a form that renders it as understandable as any science. Or do we not wish to say when we employ the term "natural science" that we are dealing with the knowledge of "nature"? Occult science is the science of what occurs occultly insofar as it is not perceived in external nature, but in that region toward which the soul turns when it directs its inner being toward the spirit.

Occult Science is the antithesis of Natural Science.

Objections have repeatedly been made to my perceptions of the spiritual world by maintaining that they are transformed reproductions of what, in the course of the ages, has appeared in human thought about the spirit world. It is said that I had read this or that, absorbed what I read into the unconscious, and then presented it in the belief that it originated in my own perception. I am said to have gained my expositions from the teachings of the Gnostics, from the poetic records of ancient oriental wisdom, and so on.

These objections are superficial.

My knowledge of things of the spirit is a direct result of my own perception, and I am fully conscious of this fact. In all details and in the larger surveys I had always examined myself carefully as to whether every step I took in the progress of my perception was accompanied by a fully awake consciousness. Just as the mathematician advances from thought to thought without the unconscious or autosuggestion playing a role, so — I told myself — spiritual perception must advance from objective imagination to objective imagination without anything living in the soul but the spiritual content of clear, discerning consciousness.

The knowledge that an imagination is not a mere subjective picture, but a representation in picture form of an objective spiritual content is attained by means of healthy inner experience. This is achieved in a psycho-spiritual way, just as in the realm of sense-perception one is able with a healthy organism to distinguish properly between mere imaginings and objective perceptions. Thus the results of my perception stood before me. They were, at the outset, "perceptions" without names. Were I to communicate them, I needed verbal designations. I then sought later for such designations in older



descriptions of the spiritual in order to be able to express in words what was still wordless. I employed these verbal designations freely, so that in my use of them scarcely one coincides with its ancient meaning.

I sought, however, for such a possibility of expression in every case only after the content had arisen in my own perception.

I knew how to exclude what had been previously read from my own perceptive research by means of the state of consciousness that I have just described.

Now it was claimed that in my expressions reminiscences of ancient ideas were to be found. Without considering the content, attention was fixed on the expressions. If I spoke of "lotus flowers" in the astral body of man, that was a proof, to the critic, that I was repeating the teachings of ancient India in which the expression is to be found. Indeed, if I spoke of "astral body," this was the result of my reading the literature of the Middle Ages. If I employed the expressions "Angeloi," "Archangeloi," and so forth, I was simply renewing the ideas of Christian Gnosis.

I found such entirely superficial thinking constantly opposing me.

I wanted to point to this fact, too, now that a new edition of Occult Science is to be published, for the book contains the outline of Anthroposophy as a whole. It will, therefore, be chiefly beset by the misunderstandings to which Anthroposophy is exposed. Since the time when the imaginations that this book presents merged into a complete picture in my soul, I have advanced uninterruptedly in my ability to investigate, by means of soul and spirit perception, the historical evolution of mankind, the cosmos, and so forth. In the details I have continuously arrived at new results. But what I offered as an outline in Occult Science fifteen years ago remains for me basically undisturbed. Everything I have been able to say since then, if inserted in this book in the proper place, appears as an amplification of the outline given at that time.

Rudolf Steiner  
January 10, 1925  
Goetheanum  
Dornach, Switzerland

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### **Footnotes:**

All that it is necessary to know concerning the nature of imagination, inspiration, and intuition is to be found in this book, Occult Science, in my book, Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment, also in The Stages of Higher Knowledge.

### **Seventh To Fifteenth Edition**

In this new edition of An Outline of Occult Science, I have almost entirely reshaped the first chapter,

"The Character of Occult Science." I believe that, as a result, there will now be less cause for the misunderstandings I saw arising from the earlier wording of this chapter. From many sides I could hear, "Other sciences offer proofs; what here is offered as science says simply, 'Occult Science states this or that.' " It is quite natural for such prejudice to arise, since the proofs of supersensible cognition cannot obtrude themselves upon us with the exposition as is the case with the exposition of relationships of sense-perceptible reality. I have, however, sought, by means of a revision of the first chapter of this book, to make clearer than I seem to have succeeded in doing in the earlier editions, that we have to contend here merely with prejudice. — In the other chapters I have attempted, through amplifications, to elaborate some items of my presentation more clearly. Throughout the entire book I have taken pains to make numerous changes in the wording of the content, which seemed to me necessary after renewed experience of the subject matter.

Rudolf Steiner  
Berlin, May 1920.

### **Fourth Edition**

Anyone attempting an exposition of the results of spiritual science as recorded in this book must, above all, take into account the fact that at present these results are universally looked upon as something quite impossible. For things are said in the following exposition that the supposedly exact thinking of our age affirms to be "probably entirely indeterminable by human intelligence." He who knows and appreciates the reasons why so many earnest persons are led to maintain this impossibility will wish to make ever new attempts to show the misconceptions upon which is based the belief that entrance into supersensible worlds is denied to human knowledge.

For two things offer themselves for consideration. First, any human soul, by reflecting deeply, will in the long run be unable to disregard the fact that its most important questions concerning the meaning and significance of life must remain unanswered if there be no access to supersensible worlds. We may theoretically deceive ourselves about this fact, but the depths of the soul-life will not tolerate this self-delusion. — If we do not wish to listen to these depths of the soul, we shall naturally reject any statement about supersensible worlds. Yet there are human beings — really not few in number — who find it impossible to remain deaf to the demands coming from these soul depths. Such people must always knock at the door that conceals, according to the opinion of others, the "inconceivable."

Second, the statements resulting from "exact thinking" are not at all to be underrated. He who occupies himself with them will certainly appreciate their seriousness where they are to be taken seriously. The writer of this book would not like to be looked upon as one who lightheartedly passes over the tremendous thought activity that has been employed in determining the limits of the human intellect. This thought activity cannot be disposed of by a few phrases about "academic wisdom" and the like. In many cases its source rests in true striving for knowledge and in genuine acumen. — Indeed, even more may be admitted: reasons have been brought forward to show that the knowledge considered scientific today cannot penetrate into the spirit world, and these reasons are in a certain sense irrefutable.

Since this is admitted without hesitation by the writer of this book himself, it may appear to many

quite strange that he, nevertheless, undertakes to make statements about supersensible worlds. It appears, indeed, to be almost impossible that someone in a certain sense admits the reasons for the inapprehensibility of the supersensible worlds and yet at the same time continues to speak about them.

It is possible, nevertheless, to have this attitude, and it is possible, at the same time, to understand that it will appear contradictory. For not everyone concerns himself with the experiences one has if one approaches the supersensible realm with the human intellect. There it becomes evident that the proofs of this intellect may well be irrefutable, and that, in spite of their irrefutability, they need not be decisive for reality. Instead of all theoretical arguments, the attempt shall be made here to bring about an understanding by means of a comparison. The fact that comparisons themselves are not proof is readily conceded; yet this does not prevent their making comprehensible what is to be expressed.

Human cognition, as it acts in everyday life and in ordinary science, is really so constituted that it cannot penetrate into supersensible worlds. This can be irrefutably proved, but this proof can have no more value for a certain kind of soul-life than the proof that is undertaken to show that the natural human eye with its power of perception cannot penetrate into the smallest cells of a living body, or into the constitution of distant celestial bodies. Just as the declaration is true and demonstrable that the ordinary power of sight does not penetrate as far as the cells, so also is the other statement correct and provable that ordinary cognition is unable to penetrate into supersensible worlds. Yet the proof that the ordinary power of sight must stop short of the cells does not decide anything against research into the cells. Why should the proof that the ordinary power of cognition must halt before supersensible worlds decide anything against the possibility of research into these worlds?

We can appreciate the feeling aroused in many a person by this comparison. We are even able to sympathize with those who doubt whether somebody who confronts the thought activity mentioned with such a comparison has even the slightest idea of the seriousness of this activity. Nevertheless, the author of this book is not only imbued with this seriousness, but he is of the opinion that this thought activity is to be counted among the noblest achievements of mankind.

To prove that the human power of sight cannot penetrate to the cell structure without the aid of instruments would be, to be sure, an unnecessary undertaking; to become conscious, through exact thinking, of the nature of this thinking is a necessary spiritual activity. It is only too understandable that those who give themselves up to such thought activity do not notice that reality can refute them. The present preface of this book cannot be the place to go into the various "refutations" of the first editions on the part of persons who lack all understanding of what this book strives for, or who direct their false attacks at the person of the author. It must, however, be strongly emphasized that only those can suspect in this book any underrating of serious scientific thought activity who wish to close their eyes to the real character of the expositions.

The human power of cognition can be strengthened and enhanced, just as the faculty of eyesight can be strengthened. The means, however, for strengthening cognition are of an entirely spiritual nature; they are purely inner soul functions. They consist in what is described in this book as meditation and concentration (contemplation). Ordinary soul-life is bound to the instruments of the body, the strengthened soul-life frees itself from them. To certain modern schools of thought such a declaration must appear quite senseless and based only upon self-delusion.

From their point of view, it will be found easy to prove that "all soul-life" is bound up with the nervous system. A person holding the point of view out of which this book is written will completely understand such proofs. He understands the people who say that only the superficial can maintain that there may be some sort of soul-life independent of the body, and who are entirely convinced that for such soul experiences a connection with the life of the nerves exists that "spiritual scientific amateurishness" fails to perceive.

Here certain entirely comprehensible habits of thought confront what is described in this book so sharply that they preclude at present any prospect of coming to an understanding. We are here at a point where the wish must make itself felt that in the present age it should no longer be in keeping with spiritual life to decry a direction of research as fantastic and visionary because it diverges abruptly from our own. — On the other hand, however, we have the fact that there are a number of human beings who have an understanding for the supersensible mode of research presented in this book. They are individuals who realize that the meaning of life does not reveal itself in general terms about soul, self, and so forth, but only through the real entering upon the results of supersensible research. It is not from lack of modesty, but with joyful satisfaction that the author of this book feels deeply the necessity of this fourth edition after a relatively brief time since the last edition appeared.

The author does not accentuate this from lack of modesty, because he feels only too clearly how little even the new edition corresponds to what it really ought to be as an "outline of a supersensible world conception." In preparing this new edition, the whole subject matter has been re-studied and re-worked with considerable amplification at important points. Clarification was also striven for. Nevertheless, in numerous places the author became conscious of how inadequate the means of presentation available to him prove to be in comparison with what supersensible research shows. Hence, scarcely more than a way could be indicated for acquiring the concepts that in this book are given for the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions.

An important point of view, also in this domain, has been briefly treated anew in this edition. But the experiences in regard to such things diverge so greatly from all the experiences in the domain of the senses that the exposition must of necessity struggle continually for expressions that appear sufficiently adequate for the purpose. Anyone who is willing to go into the exposition attempted here will perhaps notice that much that is impossible to say in dry words is striven for by the manner of the description. This manner is, for example, one thing for the Saturn evolution, but quite another for the Sun evolution, and so forth.

The second part of this book, which deals with knowledge of the higher worlds, was greatly supplemented and amplified by its author. He endeavored to present clearly the character of the inner soul processes through which knowledge frees itself from its limits present in the sense world and fits itself for experiencing the supersensible world. The author attempted to show that this experiencing of the supersensible, although acquired entirely through inner ways and means, does not have a merely subjective significance for the individual who acquires it.

The presentation was to show that, within the soul, its singularity and personal peculiarity are stripped off and an experience is reached which is similar in every human being who effects his development in the right manner out of his subjective experiences. Only when the knowledge of supersensible

worlds is conceived of as possessing this character is it possible to distinguish it from all experiences of mere subjective mysticism and the like. Of such mysticism it may well be said that it is, more or less, a subjective concern of the mystic.

The spiritual scientific training of the soul that is meant here, however, strives for objective experiences, the truth of which is indeed recognized entirely inwardly, the universal validity of which, however, is discernible for that reason. — Here again is a point where it is quite difficult to come to an understanding with many a thought habit of our age.

In conclusion, the author of this book should like to observe that also the well-intended reader should accept these expositions as they offer themselves by virtue of their own content. Today numerous attempts have been made to give to this or that spiritual movement this or that ancient historical name. To many, only then does it appear of value.

The question, however, may be asked: What have the expositions of this book to gain by designating them "Rosicrucian" or the like? The important point is that here, with the means that are possible and adequate for the soul in this present period of evolution, an insight is attempted into supersensible worlds, and that from this point of view the riddles of human destiny and of human existence beyond the limits of birth and death are observed. It is not the question of a striving bearing this or that ancient name, but of a striving for truth.

On the other hand, opponents have also employed terms for the world conception presented in this book. Apart from the fact that the terms used in order to deal the author the heaviest possible blow and to discredit him are absurd and objectively false, such terms characterize themselves in their unworthiness by the fact that they attempt to discredit a completely independent striving for truth by failing to judge it on its own merits, and by endeavoring to impose their dependence upon ideas derived from this or that trend of thought as judgment upon others. Although these words are necessary in the face of many attacks against the author, nevertheless, he is loath here to go further into this matter.

Rudolf Steiner  
June 1913.

### **First Edition**

In offering to the public a book like the present one, its author should be able to anticipate, with utter calmness, any kind of criticism that is possible in our time. Someone, for example, might begin to read the presentation given here of this or that matter, about which he has thought in accordance with the results of research in science, and he might come to the following conclusion: It is astonishing how such assertions are at all possible in our age.

The author treats the simplest scientific concepts in a manner that shows the most inconceivable ignorance concerning even the most elementary facts of scientific knowledge. For example, he treats concepts, such as "heat," in a way only possible for someone who has permitted the whole modern mode of thinking in physics to pass over his head without having the least effect. Anyone who knows

even the elementary facts of this science could show him that what he says here does not even deserve the designation "amateurishness," but can only be called "absolute ignorance."

Many sentences could be quoted that express this kind of possible criticism. One could imagine that someone might arrive at the following conclusion: "Whoever has read a few pages of this book will, according to his temperament, lay it aside either with a smile or with indignation, and say to himself, 'It is certainly queer what eccentricities can be brought forth by a wrong trend of thought in the present day. It is best that such expositions be laid aside with many other freaks of the human mind.' " — What, however, does the author of this book say if he really experienced such criticism?

Must he not, from his standpoint, simply regard the critic as a reader lacking the faculty of judgment or as someone who has not the goodwill to form an appreciative opinion? — The answer to that is emphatically, No! the author does not do that in every case. He is able to imagine that his critic may be a very clever person and also a trained scientist, someone who forms his judgments in quite a conscientious way. For the author of this book is able to enter with his thinking into the soul of such a person and into the reasons that can lead the latter to such a judgment.

A certain necessity arises to clarify what the author really says. Although in general he considers it highly improper to discuss anything of a personal nature, it seems essential to do so in regard to this book. To be sure, nothing will be brought forward that is not concerned with the decision to write this book. What is said in such a book would certainly have no reason for existence were it to bear only a personal character. It must contain views that every human being may acquire, and these must be expressed without any personal coloring as far as this is humanly possible.

The introduction of the personal element is only to make clear how the author is able to comprehend the above-mentioned criticism of his expositions, yet nevertheless was still able to write this book. There would be one way, to be sure, of avoiding mention of the personal element: that of presenting, explicitly, every detail that proves that the statements in this book really agree, with every forward step of modern science.

This would necessitate, however, the writing of many volumes of introductory matter. Since this at present is out of the question, it seems necessary for the author to describe the personal circumstances through which he feels justified in believing himself in agreement with modern science. — Never, for example, would he have undertaken to publish all that is said in this book about heat phenomena were he not able to affirm that, thirty years ago, he was in the position to make a thorough study of physics, which had ramifications into the various fields of that science.

The expositions belonging to the so-called "Mechanical Theory of Heat" ("Theory of Thermodynamics") occupied at that time the central point of his studies in the field of heat phenomena. This theory was of special interest to him. The historical development of the interpretations associated with such names as Julius Robert Mayer, Helmholtz, Joule, Clausius, and others, formed a part of his continuous studies. He thus, laid the proper foundation and created the possibility of being able to follow — right up to the present — all the advances of science in the domain of the physical theory of heat. Hence there are no difficulties to overcome when he investigates what modern science has achieved in this field.

His confession of inability to do this would have been sufficient reason for leaving the matter advanced in this book unsaid and unwritten. He has truly made it a principle to speak or write only about those subjects in the field of spiritual science about which he would be sufficiently able to say what modern science knows about them. This statement, however, is not meant as a general prerequisite for everyone. Others may, with justice, feel impelled to communicate and publish what their judgment, healthy sense of truth, and feelings indicate, although they may not know the point of view of contemporary science in such matters. The author of this book, however, intends to hold to the above expressed principle for himself.

He would not, for example, write about the human glandular or nervous system as he does, were he not at the same time in the position also to discuss these matters from the point of view of natural science. Thus in spite of the fact that it is possible to conclude that anyone who discusses "heat" in the manner of this book knows nothing about the fundamental laws of modern physics, the author believes himself fully justified in what he has done, because he is striving really to know modern research, and he would have refrained from speaking in this way were the results of this research unknown to him.

He knows that the motive for stating such a principle might easily be confused with lack of modesty. In regard to this book it is necessary, however, to state such things, in order that the author's true motives be not mistaken still further. This further mistaking might be far worse than to be accused of immodesty.

Criticism could also be possible from a philosophical standpoint. It might occur in the following way. A philosopher who reads this book might ask himself, "Has the author entirely neglected to study the present day achievements in the field of epistemology? Has he never heard of the existence of a man named Kant, according to whom it is simply philosophically inadmissible to advance such views?" Again, we could continue in this direction.

The following critical conclusion, however, might also be drawn: "For the philosopher, such uncritical, naive, amateurish stuff is unbearable and to deal with it further would be nothing but a waste of time." — From the same motive indicated above, in spite of all the misunderstandings that might arise from it, the author would again like to advance something personal here. His study of Kant began in his sixteenth year, and today he believes himself truly capable of judging quite objectively — from the Kantian standpoint — what has been advanced in the present book.

From this aspect also, he would have had a reason for leaving this book unwritten did he not know what moves a philosopher to find naive what is written here if he applies the measuring rod of modern criticism. It is, however, possible really to know how, in the sense of Kant, we pass here beyond the limits of possible knowledge. It can also be known how Herbart might discover in this book a "naive realism" that has not yet attained to the "elaboration of concepts," and so forth. It is even possible to know how the modern pragmatism of James, Schiller, and others would find that this book has gone beyond the bounds of "true representations" which "we are able to make our own, to assert, to put into action, and to verify." (see Note 1)

1 All of this may be realized and in spite of that realization, indeed because of it, one may feel

justified in writing the expositions presented here. The author has dealt with philosophical trends of thought in his writings: *The Theory of Knowledge Based on Goethe's World Conception* (*Erkenntnistheorie der Goetheschen Weltanschauung*); *Truth and Science* (*Wahrheit und Wissenschaft*); *Philosophy of Freedom* (*Philosophie der Freiheit*); *Goethe's Conception of the World* (*Goethe's Weltanschauung*); *Views of the World and Life in the Nineteenth Century* (*Welt- und Lebensanschauungen im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*); *Riddles of Philosophy* (*Die Raetsel der Philosophie*).

Many kinds of possible criticism could still be cited. There might be critics who have read the earlier writings of the author, for example, *Views of the World and Life in the Nineteenth Century*, or perhaps the brochure on *Haeckel and His Opponents*. Some such critic might say, "It is incomprehensible how one and the same man can write these books and then, besides the already published book, *Theosophy*, also write this present book. How is it possible that someone can defend Haeckel and then turn around and discredit what results from Haeckel's research as healthy, monism?"

It might be comprehensible had the author of this *Occult Science* combated Haeckel 'with fire and sword,' but, that he has defended him, indeed, has even dedicated *Views of the World and Life in the Nineteenth Century* to him, is the most monstrous thing imaginable. Haeckel would have unmistakably declined this dedication had he been conscious of the fact that the dedicator might some day write such stuff as this *Occult Science* with its exposition of a more than crude dualism." — The author of this book, however, is of the opinion that while it is possible to understand Haeckel very well, it is, nevertheless, not necessary to believe that he is only to be understood by one who considers nonsensical everything that is not derived from Haeckel's own concepts and hypotheses.

Furthermore, he is of the opinion that it is possible to come to an understanding of Haeckel only by entering upon what he has achieved for science and not by combating him "with fire and sword." Least of all does the author believe that Haeckel's opponents are right, against whom, for example in his brochure, *Haeckel and His Opponents*, he has defended the great natural philosopher. Indeed, if the writer of this brochure goes far beyond Haeckel's hypotheses and places the spiritual point of view of the world alongside Haeckel's merely naturalistic one, his opinion need not therefore coincide with the opinion of the latter's opponents. If the facts are looked at correctly, it will be discovered that the author's present day writings are in complete accord with his earlier ones.

The author also understands quite well the critic who generally regards the descriptions in this book as an outpouring of wild fancy or a dreamlike play of thoughts. All that is to be said in this regard, however, is contained in the book itself. It is shown there how, in full measure, thought based on reason can and must become the touchstone of what is presented. Only the one who applies to this book the test of reason in the same way he would apply it, for example, to the facts of natural science, will be able to determine what reason proves in such a test.

After saying so much about personalities who from the outset refute this book, a word may also be spared for those who have reason to agree with it. For them the most essential is to be found in the first chapter, *The Character of Occult Science*. Something more, however, is to be said here. Although the book deals with the results of research that lie beyond the power of the intellect bound to the sense world, yet nothing is offered that cannot be comprehended by anyone possessing an unprejudiced



reason, a healthy sense of truth, and the wish to employ these human faculties.

The author says without hesitation that he would like, above all, to have readers who are not willing to accept on blind faith what is offered here, but who endeavor to examine what is offered by means of the knowledge of their own soul and through the experiences of their own lives. (2) He would like to have above all cautious readers who only accept what can be logically justified. The author knows his book would have no value, were it dependent only on blind faith; it is only useful to the degree it can be vindicated before unbiased reason. Blind faith can so easily mistake the foolish and superstitious for the true.

Many who are gladly satisfied with a mere belief in a "supersensible world" will perhaps find that this book makes too great a demand on the powers of thought. Yet concerning the communications given here, it is not merely a question of communicating something, but that the communication be in conformity with a conscientious view of the sphere of life in question. For it is indeed the sphere in which the highest things and the most unscrupulous charlatanry, in which knowledge and crass superstition so easily meet in actual life, and where, above all, they can be so easily confused with one another.

Anyone acquainted with supersensible research will, in reading this book, notice that it has been the endeavor of its author sharply to mark the limits between what can and ought to be communicated from the sphere of supersensible knowledge at present and that which is to be presented at a later period, or at least in another form.

Rudolf Steiner  
December 1909.

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### **Footnotes:**

1. This includes an earnest consideration and study of the philosophy of the "As If," the Bergsonian philosophy, and the Critique of Speech.
2. Here is not only meant the spiritual scientific test by supersensible methods of research, but primarily the test that is possible by healthy, unprejudiced thought and common sense.

## 1 - The Character Of Occult Science

Occult science, an ancient term, is used for the contents of this book. This term can arouse in various individuals of the present day feelings of the most contrary character. For many, it possesses something repellent; it arouses derision, pitying smiles, perhaps contempt. These people imagine that the kind of thinking thus designated can only be based upon idle, fantastic dreaming, that behind such "alleged" science there can lurk only the impulse to renew all sorts of superstitions that are properly avoided by those who understand "true scientific methods" and "pure intellectual endeavor."

The effect of this term upon others is to cause them to think that what is meant by it must bring them something that cannot be acquired in any other way and to which, according to their nature, they are attracted by a deep, inner longing for knowledge, or by the soul's sublimated curiosity. In between these sharply contrasting opinions there exists every possible kind of intermediate stage of conditional rejection or acceptance of what this or that person imagines when he hears the term, "occult science." — It is not to be denied that for many the term, occult science, has a magical sound because it seems to satisfy their fatal passion for knowledge of an "unknown," of a mysterious, even of an obscure something that is not to be acquired in a natural way. For many people do not wish to satisfy the deepest longings of their souls by means of something that can be clearly understood.

Their convictions lead them to conclude that besides what can be known in the world there must be something that defies cognition. With extraordinary absurdity, which they do not observe, they reject, in regard to the deepest longing for knowledge, all that "is known" and only wish to give their approval to something that cannot be said to be known by means of ordinary research. He who speaks of "occult science" will do well to keep in mind the fact that he is confronted by misunderstandings caused by just such defenders of a science of this kind — defenders who are striving, in fact, not for knowledge, but for its antithesis.

This work is intended for readers who will not permit their impartiality to be taken away from them just because a word may arouse prejudice through various circumstances. It is not here a question of knowledge which, in any respect, can be considered to be "secret" and therefore only accessible to certain people through some special favor of fate.

We shall do justice to the use of the term, occult science, employed here, if we consider what Goethe has in mind when he speaks of the "revealed secrets" in the phenomena of the universe. What remains "secret" — unrevealed — in these phenomena when grasped only by means of the senses and the intellect bound up with them will be considered as the content of a supersensible mode of knowledge.<sup>1</sup> — What is meant here by "Occult Science" does not constitute science for anyone who only considers "scientific" what is revealed through the senses and the intellect serving them.

If, however, such a person wishes to understand himself, he must acknowledge that he rejects occult science, not from well-substantiated insight, but from a mandate arising from his own personal feelings. In order to understand this, it is only necessary to consider how science comes into existence and what significance it has in human life. The origin of science, in its essential nature, is not recognized by means of the subject matter it is dealing with, but by means of the human soul-activity arising in scientific endeavor.

We must consider the attitude of the soul when it elaborates science. If we acquire the habit of exercising this kind of activity only when we are concerned with the manifestation of the senses, we might easily be led to the opinion that this sense-manifestation is the essential thing, and we do not become aware that a certain attitude of the human soul has been employed only in regard to the manifestation of the senses.

It is possible, however, to rise above this arbitrary self-limitation and, apart from special application, consider the characteristics of scientific activity. This is the basis for our designating as "scientific" the knowledge of a non-sensory world-content. The human power of thought wishes to occupy itself with this latter world-content just as it occupies itself, in the other case, with the world-content of natural science.

Occult science desires to free the natural-scientific method and its principle of research from their special application that limits them, in their own sphere, to the relationship and process of sensory facts, but, at the same time, it wants to retain their way of thinking and other characteristics. It desires to speak about the non-sensory in the same way natural science speaks about the sensory.

While natural science remains within the sense world with this method of research and way of thinking, occult science wishes to consider the employment of mental activity upon nature as a kind of self-education of the soul and to apply what it has thus acquired to the realms of the non-sensory. Its method does not speak about the sense phenomena as such, but speaks about the non-sensory world-content in the way the scientist talks about the content of the sensory world. It retains the mental attitude of the natural-scientific method; that is to say, it holds fast to just the thing that makes natural research a science. For that reason it may call itself a science.

When we consider the significance of natural science in human life, we shall find that this significance cannot be exhausted by acquiring a knowledge of nature, since this knowledge can never lead to anything but an experiencing of what the human soul itself is not. The soul-element does not live in what man knows about nature, but in the process of acquiring Knowledge The soul experiences itself in its occupation with nature.

What it vitally achieves in this activity is something besides the knowledge of nature itself: it is self-development experienced in acquiring knowledge of nature. Occult science desires to employ the results of this self-development in realms that lie beyond mere nature. The occult scientist has no desire to undervalue natural science; on the contrary, he desires to acknowledge it even more than the natural scientist himself. He knows that, without the exactness of the mode of thinking of natural science, he cannot establish a science. Yet he knows also that after this exactness has been acquired through genuine penetration into the spirit of natural-scientific thinking, it can be retained through the force of the soul for other fields.

Something, however, arises here that may cause misgivings. In studying nature, the soul is guided by the object under consideration to a much greater degree than is the case when non-sensory world contents are studied. In the latter study, the soul must possess to a much greater degree, from purely inner impulses, the ability to hold fast to the scientific mode of thinking, Since many people believe, unconsciously, that this can be done only through the guidance of natural phenomena, they are

inclined, through a dogmatic declaration, to make their decisions accordingly; as soon as this guidance is abandoned, the soul gropes in a void with its scientific method. Such people have not become conscious of the special character of this method.

They base their judgment for the most part upon errors that must arise if the scientific attitude is not sufficiently strengthened by observation of natural phenomena and, in spite of this, the soul attempts a consideration of the non-sensory regions of the world. It is self-evident that in such cases there arises much unscientific talk about non-sensory world contents. Not, however, because such talk, in its essence, is incapable of being scientific, but because, in such an instance, scientific self-education in the observation of nature has been neglected.

Whoever wishes to speak about occult science must certainly, in connection with what has just been said, be fully awake in regard to all the vagaries that arise when, without the scientific attitude, something is determined concerning the revealed mysteries of the world. It would, however, be of no avail if, at the very beginning of an occult-scientific presentation, we were to speak of all kinds of aberrations, which in the souls of prejudiced persons discredit all research in this direction, because they conclude, from the presence of really quite numerous aberrations, that the entire endeavor is unjustified.

Since, however, in the case of scientists, or scientifically minded critics, the rejection of occult science rests in most instances solely upon the above mentioned dogmatic declaration, and the reference to the aberrations is only an often unconscious pretext, a discussion with such opponents will be fruitless. Nothing, indeed, hinders them from making the certainly quite justifiable objection that, at the very outset, there is nothing that can definitely determine whether the person who believes others to be in error, himself possesses the above characterized firm foundation.

Therefore, the person striving to present occult science can simply offer what in his estimation he has a right to say. The judgment concerning his justification can only be formed by other persons; indeed, only by those who, avoiding all dogmatic declarations, are able to enter into the nature of his communications concerning the revealed mysteries of cosmic events. To be sure, he will be obliged to show the relationship between his presentations and other achievements in the field of knowledge and life; he will have to show what oppositions are possible and to what degree the direct, external, sensory reality of life verifies his observations. He should, however, never attempt to present his subject in a way that produces its effect by means of his art of persuasion instead of through its content.

The following objection is often heard in regard to the statements of occult science: "These latter do not offer proof; they merely assert this or that and say that occult science ascertains this." The following exposition will be misjudged if it is thought that any part of it has been presented in this sense. Our endeavor here is to allow the capacity of soul unfolded through a knowledge of nature to evolve further, as far as its own nature will allow, and then call attention to the fact that in such development the soul encounters supersensible facts.

It is assumed that every reader who is able to enter into what has been presented will necessarily run up against these facts. A difference, however, is encountered with respect to purely natural scientific

observation the moment we enter the realm of spiritual science. In natural science, the facts present themselves in the field of the sense world; the exponent of natural science considers the activity of the soul as something that recedes into the background in the face of the relationships and the course of sensory facts.

The exponent of spiritual science must place his soul activity into the foreground; for the reader only arrives at the facts if he makes this activity of the soul his own in the right way. These facts are not present for human perception without the activity of the soul as they are — although uncomprehended — in natural science; they enter into human perception only by means of soul activity. The exponent of spiritual science therefore presumes that the reader is seeking facts mutually with him.

His exposition will be given in the form of a narration describing how these facts were discovered, and in the manner of his narration not personal caprice but scientific thinking trained by natural science will prevail. It will also be necessary, therefore, to speak of the means by which a consideration of the non-sensory, of the supersensible, is attained. — Anyone who occupies himself with an exposition of occult science will soon see that through it concepts and ideas are acquired that previously he did not possess. Thus he also acquires new thoughts concerning his previous conception of the nature of "proof." He learns that for an exposition of natural science, "proof" is something that is brought to it, as it were, from without.

In spiritual-scientific thinking, however, the activity, which in natural-scientific thinking the soul employs for proof, lies already in the search for facts, These facts cannot be discovered if the path to them is itself not already a proof. Whoever really travels this path has already experienced the proving in the process: nothing can be accomplished by means of a proof applied from without The fact that this is not recognized in the character of occult science calls forth many misunderstandings.

The whole of occult science must spring from two thoughts that can take root in every human soul. For the occult scientist, as he is meant here, these two thoughts express facts that can be experienced if we use the right means. For many people these thoughts signify extremely controversial statements about which there may be wide differences of opinion; they may even be "proved" to be impossible.

These two thoughts are the following. First, behind the "visible" there exists an invisible world, concealed at the outset from the senses and the thinking bound up with the senses; and second, it is possible for man, through the development of capacities slumbering within him, to penetrate into this hidden world.

One person maintains that there is no such hidden world, that the world perceived by means of the human senses is the only one, that its riddles can be solved out of itself, and that, although the human being at present is still far from being able to answer all the questions of existence, a time will surely come when sense experience and the science based upon it will be able to give the answers.

Others state that we must not maintain there is no hidden world behind the visible, yet the human powers of cognition are unable to penetrate into it. They have limits that cannot be overstepped. Let those who need "faith" take refuge in a world of that kind: a true science, which is based upon assured facts, cannot concern itself with such a world.

There is a third group that considers it presumptuous if a man, through his cognitive activity, desires to penetrate into a realm about which he is to renounce all "knowledge" and be content with "faith." The adherents of this opinion consider it wrong for the weak human being to want to penetrate into a world that is supposed to belong to the religious life alone.

It is also maintained that a common knowledge of the facts of the sense world is possible for everyone, but that in respect of supersensible facts it is only a matter of the personal opinion of the individual, and that no one should speak of a generally valid certainty in these matters.

Others maintain still other things.

It can become clear that the observation of the visible world presents riddles that can never be solved out of the facts of that world themselves. They will never be solved in this way, although the science concerned with these facts may have advanced as far as is possible. For the visible facts, through their very inner nature, point clearly to a hidden world. Whoever does not discern this closes his mind to the riddles that spring up everywhere out of the facts of the sense world. He refuses to perceive certain questions and riddles; he, therefore, thinks that all questions may be answered by means of the sensory facts.

The questions he wishes to propound can indeed all be answered by means of the facts that he expects will be discovered in the future. This may be readily admitted. But why should a person wait for answers to certain things who does not ask any questions? Whoever strives for an occult science merely says that for him these questions are self evident and that they must be recognized as a fully justified expression of the human soul. Science cannot be pressed into limits by forbidding the human being to ask unbiased questions.

The opinion that there are limits to human cognition that cannot be overstepped, compelling man to stop short before an invisible world, must be replied to by saying that there can be no doubt about the impossibility of finding access to the invisible world with the kind of cognition referred to here. Whoever considers that form of cognition to be the only possible one cannot come to any other opinion than that the human being is denied access to a possibly existent higher world.

Yet the following may also be stated. If it is possible to develop another kind of cognition, this then may well lead into the supersensible world. If this kind of cognition is considered to be impossible, then we reach a point of view from which all talk about a supersensible world appears as pure nonsense. From an impartial viewpoint, however, the only reason for such an opinion can be the fact that the person holding it has no knowledge of this other kind of cognition. Yet how can a person pass judgment upon something about which he himself admits his ignorance?

Unprejudiced thinking must hold to the premise that a person should speak only of what he knows and should not make statements about something he does not know. Such thinking can only speak of the right that a person has to communicate what he himself has experienced, but it cannot speak of the right that somebody declare impossible what he does not know or does not wish to know. We cannot deny anyone the right to ignore the supersensible, but there can never be any good reason for him to declare himself an authority, not only on what he himself can know, but also on all that a man can not

know.

In the case of those who declare that it is presumptuous to penetrate into the domain of the supersensible an occult-scientific exposition has to call attention to the fact that this can be done, and that it is a transgression against the faculties bestowed upon man if we allow them to stagnate, instead of developing and making use of them.

Whoever thinks, however, that the views concerning the supersensible world must belong entirely to personal opinion and feeling denies what is common to all human beings. It is certainly true that the insight into these things must be acquired by each person for himself, but it is also a fact that all human beings who go far enough arrive, not at different opinions about these things, but at the same opinion. Differences of opinion exist only as long as human beings wish to approach the highest truths, not by a scientifically assured path, but by way of personal caprice. It must again be admitted, however, that only that person is able to acknowledge the correctness of the path of occult science who is willing to familiarize himself with its characteristics.

At the proper moment, every human being can find the way to occult science who recognizes, or even merely assumes or divines, out of the manifest world, the existence of a hidden world and who, out of the consciousness that the powers of cognition are capable of development, is driven to the feeling that the concealed is able to reveal itself to him. To a person who has been led to occult science by means of these soul experiences there opens up not only the prospect of finding the answer to certain questions springing from his craving for knowledge, but also the quite different prospect of becoming the victor over all that hampers and weakens life.

It signifies, in a certain higher sense, a weakening of life, indeed a death of the soul, when a human being sees himself forced to turn away from the supersensible, or to deny it. Indeed, under certain conditions it leads to despair when a man loses hope of having the hidden revealed to him. This death and despair in their manifold forms are, at the same time, inner soul opponents of occult-scientific striving. They appear when the inner force of the human being dwindles. Then all force of life must be introduced from without if such a person is to get possession of any life force at all. He then perceives the things, beings, and events that appear before his senses; he analyses these with his intellect. They give him pleasure and pain, they drive him to the actions of which he is capable.

He may carry on in this way for a while yet at some time he must reach a point when he inwardly dies. For what can be drawn from the world in this way becomes exhausted. This is not a statement derived from the personal experience of one individual, but the result of an unbiased consideration of all human life. What guards against this exhaustion is the concealed something that rests within the depths of things. If the power to descend into these depths, in order to draw up ever new life-force, dies away within the human being, then finally also the outer aspect of things no longer proves conducive to life.

This question by no means concerns only the individual human being, only his personal welfare and misfortune. Precisely through true occult-scientific observations man arrives at the certainty that, from a higher standpoint, the welfare and misfortune of the individual is intimately bound up with the welfare or misfortune of the whole world. The human being comes to understand that he injures the

whole universe and all its beings by not developing his forces in the proper way. If he lays waste his life by losing the relationship with the supersensible, he not only destroys something in his own inner being — the decaying of which can lead him finally to despair — but because of his weakness he creates a hindrance to the evolution of the whole world in which he lives.

The human being can deceive himself. He can yield to the belief that there is no hidden world, that what appears to his senses and his intellect contains everything that can possibly exist. But this deception is only possible, not for the deeper, but for the surface consciousness. Feeling and desire do not submit to this deceptive belief. In one way or another, they will always crave for a concealed something, and if this is withdrawn from them, they force the human being into doubt, into a feeling of insecurity of life, indeed, into despair. A cognition that reveals the hidden is capable of overcoming all hopelessness, all insecurity, all despair, in fact all that weakens life and makes it incapable of the service required of him in the cosmos.

This is the beautiful fruit of the knowledge of spiritual science that it gives strength and firmness to life, and not alone gratification to the passion for knowledge. The source from which this knowledge draws its power to work and its trust in life is inexhaustible. No one who has once really approached this source will, by repeatedly taking refuge in it, go away unstrengthened.

There are people who wish to hear nothing about this knowledge because they see something unhealthy in what has just been said. Such people are quite right in regard to the superficial and external side of life. They do not wish to see stunted what life offers in its so-called reality. They consider it weakness when a person turns away from reality and seeks his salvation in a hidden world that to them appears as a fantastic, imaginary one.

If, in our spiritual scientific striving, we are not to fall into an unhealthy dreaminess and weakness, we must acknowledge the partial justification of such objections. For they rest upon a healthy judgment that leads, not to a whole, but only to a half-truth through the very fact that it does not penetrate into the depth of things, but remains on the surface. Were the striving for supersensible knowledge likely to weaken life and to estrange men from true reality, then such objections would certainly be strong enough to remove the foundation from under this spiritual trend.

Also concerning such points of view, spiritual-scientific endeavors would not take the right path if they wished to "defend" themselves in the usual sense of the word. Here also they can only speak out of their own merit, recognizable to every unprejudiced person, when they make evident how they increase the vital force and strength in those who familiarize themselves with them in the right way. These endeavors cannot turn man into a person estranged from the world, into a dreamer; they give him strength from the sources of life out of which his spirit and soul have sprung.

Many a man encounters still other intellectual obstacles when he approaches the endeavors of occult science. For it is fundamentally true that the reader finds in the presentation of occult science a description of soul experiences through the pursuit of which he can approach the supersensible world-content. But in practice this must present itself as a kind of ideal. The reader must at first absorb a comparatively large number of supersensible experiences in the form of communications, experiences that he, however, has not yet passed through himself.



This cannot be otherwise and will also be the case with this book. The author will describe what he believes he knows about the nature of man, about his conduct between birth and death, and in his disembodied state in the spiritual world; in addition, the evolution of the earth and of mankind will be described. Thus it might appear as though a certain amount of alleged knowledge were presented in the form of dogmas for which belief based on authority were demanded. This is not the case. What can be known of the supersensible world-content is present in him who presents the material as a living content of the soul, and if someone becomes acquainted with this soul-content, this then enkindles in his own soul the impulses that lead to the corresponding supersensible facts.

While reading the communications concerning spiritual-scientific knowledge, we live in a quite different manner than we do while reading those concerning external facts. If we read communications from the outer sense world, we are reading about them. But if we read communications about supersensible facts in the right way, we are living into the stream of spiritual existence. In absorbing the results we, at the same time, enter upon our own inner path to them. It is true that what is meant here is often not at all observed by the reader. Entrance into the spiritual world is imagined in a way too similar to an experience of the senses; therefore, what is experienced when reading about this world is considered to be much too much of the nature of thought. But if we have truly absorbed these thoughts we are already within this world and have only to become quite clear about the fact that we have already experienced, unnoticed, what we thought we had received merely as an intellectual communication.

Complete clarity concerning the real nature of what has been experienced will be gained in carrying out in practice what is described, in the second and last part of this book, as the "path" to supersensible knowledge. It might easily be thought that the opposite would be the right way; that this path should be described first. That is not the case. For anyone who only carries out "exercises" in order to enter the supersensible world, without directing the attention of his soul to definite facts concerning it, that world remains an indefinite, confused chaos.

We learn to become familiar with that world naively, as it were, by gaining information about certain of its facts, and then we account for the way in which we ourselves, abandoning naiveté, fully consciously acquire the experiences about which we have gained information. If we penetrate deeply into the descriptions of occult science we become convinced that this is the only sure path to supersensible knowledge. We shall also realize that the opinion that supersensible knowledge might at first have the effect of a dogma through the power of suggestion, as it were, is unfounded.

For the content of this knowledge is acquired by a soul activity that takes from it all merely suggestive power and only gives it the possibility of appealing to another person in the same way in which all truths speak to him that offer themselves to his thoughtful judgment. The reason the other person does not at first notice that he is living in the spiritual world does not lie in a thoughtless, suggestive absorption of what he has read, but in the subtlety and unfamiliarity of what he has experienced in his reading. — Therefore, by first absorbing the communications as given in the first part of this book, we become participators in the knowledge of the spiritual world; by means of the practical application of the soul exercises given in the second part, we become independent knowers of this world.

In the spirit and true sense of the word, no real scientist will be able to find a contradiction between

his science built upon the facts of the sense world and the method by which the supersensible world is investigated. The scientist makes use of certain instruments and methods. He produces his instruments by transforming what "nature" offers him. The supersensible method of knowledge also makes use of an instrument.

This instrument is man himself. This instrument, too, must first be made ready for higher research. The capacities and forces given to man by nature, without his assistance, must be transformed into higher capacities and powers. Man is thereby able to make himself the instrument for research in the supersensible world.

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### **Footnotes:**

It has happened that the term "occult science," as used by the author in earlier editions of this book, has been rejected for the reason that a science cannot be "something hidden." That would be correct if the matter were meant in this way. But such is not the case. The science of nature cannot be called a "natural" science in the sense that it belongs by "nature" to everyone, nor does the author consider occult science as a "hidden" science, but one that has to do with the unrevealed, the concealed, in the phenomena of the world for ordinary methods of cognition. It is a science of the "mysteries," of the "revealed secrets." This science, however, should not be a secret for anyone who seeks knowledge of it by the proper methods.

## 2 - The Essential Nature Of Mankind

In the observation of man from the point of view of a supersensible mode of cognition, the general principles of this method become immediately applicable. This observation rests upon the recognition of the "revealed mystery" within the individual human being. Only a part of what supersensible cognition apprehends as the human being is accessible to the senses and to the intellect dependent upon them, namely, the physical body.

In order to elucidate the concept of this physical body, our attention must first be turned to that phenomenon which, as the great riddle, lies spread out over all observation of life, that is, to death and, in connection with it, to so-called lifeless nature — the mineral kingdom — which always bears death within it. We have, thereby, referred to facts that are only fully explainable through supersensible knowledge, and to which a large part of this volume must be devoted. Here, however, a few thoughts must first be offered for the sake of orientation.

Within the manifest world, the physical body is the part of man having the same nature as the mineral world. On the other hand, what differentiates man from the mineral cannot be considered as physical body. Especially important in an unbiased consideration is the fact that death lays bare the part of man that, after death, is of the same nature as the mineral world. We can point to the corpse as that part of man subject to the processes of the mineral realm.

It can be emphasized that in this member of man's being, the corpse, the same substances and forces are active as in the mineral realm, but it is necessary to emphasize, equally strongly, the fact that at death the decay of the physical body occurs. Yet we are also justified in saying that while it is true that the same substances and forces are active in both the human physical body and the mineral, their activity during life is dedicated to a higher purpose. Only when death has occurred is their activity similar to that of the mineral world. They then appear as they must appear, according to their own nature, namely, as the dissolver of the physical bodily form.

Thus, in man we have to differentiate sharply between the visible and the concealed. For during life the concealed must wage constant battle against the substances and forces of the mineral element in the physical body. When this battle ceases, the mineral activity comes to the fore. We have thereby drawn attention to the point where the science of the supersensible must enter.

It must seek that which wages the above-mentioned battle. It is just this that is hidden from sense-observation and is only accessible to supersensible observation. In a later chapter of this work we shall consider how the human being is able to reach the point where this hidden something becomes manifest to him just as the phenomena of the senses are manifest to the ordinary eye. Here, however, we shall describe the result of supersensible observation.

It has already been indicated that the description of the path on which man attains to a higher perception can be of value to him only after he has become acquainted in simple narrative form with the disclosures of supersensible research. For in regard to the supersensible realm it is possible to comprehend what has not yet been observed. Indeed, the right path toward perception is that which proceeds from comprehension.

Even though that hidden something, which in the physical body carries on the battle against disintegration, is only observable by higher perception, yet its effects are clearly evident to the reasoning power that limits itself to the manifest. These effects express themselves in the form or shape into which the mineral substances and forces of the physical body are fashioned during life.

This form disappears by degrees and the physical body becomes a part of the rest of the mineral world when death has occurred. Supersensible perception, however, is able to observe, as an independent member of the human entity, what prevents the physical substances and forces during life from taking their own path, which leads to dissolution of the physical body. Let us call the independent member the ether or lifebody. — In order to prevent misunderstandings from the very beginning, two things should be borne in mind concerning this designation of a second member of the human entity.

The word "ether" is used here in a sense quite different from the one in use in present day physics, which, for example, designates the vehicle of light as ether. Here, however, the word will be limited to the meaning given above. It will be used for what is accessible to higher perception and for what is recognizable to sense-observation only in its effects, that is through its ability to give a definite form and shape to the mineral substances and forces existing in the physical body. The word "body" also must not be misunderstood. In designating the higher things of existence, it is necessary to use the words of ordinary language, and for sense-observation these words express only the sensory. From the standpoint of the senses, the ether body is, naturally, nothing of a bodily nature, however tenuous we may picture it. (see Note #1.)

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Having reached, in the presentation of the supersensible, the mention of this ether body or life body, the point has also been reached where such a concept will have to encounter the opposition of many present-day opinions. The evolution of the human spirit has led to the point where in our age the discussion of such a member of the human organism must be considered as something unscientific. The materialistic mode of thought has reached the point of seeing in the living body nothing but a combination of physical substances and forces, like those to be found in the so-called lifeless body, in the mineral. The combination in the living is supposed to be more complicated than in the lifeless, however.

Not so long ago, ordinary science, too, held still other points of view. Whoever has followed the writings of many serious scientists of the first half of the nineteenth century realizes that at that time "real natural scientists" were conscious of the fact that something exists in the living body besides what is present in the lifeless mineral. They spoke of a "life force." This "life force," to be sure, is not visualized as having the nature of the lifebody designated here, but an inkling that something of the kind exists, underlies such a concept.

This "life force" was thought of as though supplementing in the living body the physical substances and forces as the magnetic force supplements the mere iron in the magnet. Then came the time when this "life force" was discarded from the store of scientific concepts. Purely physical and chemical causes were to suffice for everything. In this respect, a reaction has set in today among many modern scientific thinkers. It is admitted on many sides that the assumption of something similar to "life

force" is not, after all, pure nonsense.

The scientist who admits this, however, will not be inclined to make common cause with the point of view presented here concerning the life body. It is useless, as a rule, to enter into a discussion, from the standpoint of supersensible knowledge, with people holding such views. It ought rather be the concern of this knowledge to recognize that the materialistic mode of thought is a necessary concomitant phenomenon of the great progress in natural science in our age.

This progress rests upon an enormous improvement in the means of sense-observation, and it lies in the nature of man, during his evolution, at times to bring to a certain degree of perfection particular faculties at the cost of others. Exact sense-observation, which has developed so significantly through natural science, caused the cultivation of those human capacities that lead into "hidden worlds" to retreat into the background, but the time has come again when this cultivation is necessary.

Acknowledgment of the concealed, however, will not be won by contending against opinions that result with logical accuracy from the denial of the concealed, but by placing the concealed itself in the proper light. Then those for whom "the time has come" will acknowledge it.

It was necessary to speak of this here in order to keep people from assuming that the author is ignorant of the viewpoint of natural science when he speaks of an "ether body" that in many circles is considered as something purely fantastic.

This ether body, then, is a second member of the human entity. For supersensible cognition, it possesses a higher degree of reality than the physical body. A description of its appearance to supersensible perception can only be given in a subsequent chapter of this book after the sense in which such descriptions are to be taken has become clear. For the present it may suffice to say that the ether body penetrates the physical completely and that it is to be looked upon as a kind of architect of the latter.

All organs are preserved in their form and shape by means of the currents and movements of the ether body. The physical heart is based upon an "etheric heart," the physical brain upon an "etheric brain," and so forth. The ether body is organized like the physical body, only with greater complexity. Wherever in the physical body separated parts exist, in the ether body everything is in living, interweaving motion.

The human being possesses this ether body in common with the plants, just as he possesses the physical body in common with the mineral element. Everything living has its ether body.

Supersensible observation advances from the ether body to a further member of the human entity. In order to aid the student in forming a visualization of this member, it points to the phenomenon of sleep, just as it pointed to the phenomenon of death when it spoke of the ether body. All human endeavor rests upon activity in the waking state, in so far as the manifest is concerned. This activity, however, is only possible if man again and again gathers new strength for his exhausted forces from sleep.

Action and thought disappear in sleep; all suffering, all pleasure are submerged for conscious life. As though out of hidden, mysterious depths, conscious forces arise out of the unconsciousness of sleep as man awakens. It is the same consciousness that sinks into shadowy depths when we go to sleep and arises again when we awaken. The power that awakens life again and again out of a state of unconsciousness is, according to supersensible cognition, the third member of the human entity, We may call it the astral body. Just as the physical body is unable to retain its form by means of the mineral substances and forces contained in it, but only by being interpenetrated by the ether body, so likewise the forces of the ether body are unable, by themselves, to illuminate this body with the light of consciousness. An ether body, left entirely to itself, would have to remain in a continuous state of sleep.

We might also say: it could only maintain a plant-existence within the physical body. An awakened ether body is illuminated by an astral body. For sense-observation, the activity of the astral body disappears when man sinks into sleep. For supersensible observation, the astral body still exists, but it appears to be separated or withdrawn from the ether body. Sense-observation is not concerned with the astral body itself, but only with its effects within the manifest, and during sleep these effects are not directly present. In the same sense that man has his physical body in common with the minerals, his ether body with the plants, he is, in regard to his astral body, of the same nature as the animals. Plants are in a continuous state of sleep.

A person who does not judge accurately in these things can easily fall into the error of ascribing a kind of consciousness also to plants that is similar to that of animals and men in their waking state. That, however, can happen only if he has an unclear idea of the nature of consciousness. It is then stated that if an external stimulus is applied to the plant it makes certain movements like the animal. One speaks of the "sensitivity" of some plants that, for example, contract their leaves if certain outer stimuli act upon them.

Yet it is not the characteristic of consciousness that a being reacts to certain stimuli, but that the being experiences something in its inner nature that adds something new to the mere reaction. Otherwise, one could also speak of consciousness when a piece of iron expands under the influence of heat. Consciousness is present only when, through the effect of heat, the being, for example, inwardly experiences pain.

The fourth member of his being that supersensible cognition must ascribe to man has nothing in common with the world of the manifest surrounding him. It is what distinguishes him from his fellow-creatures and through which he is the crown of creation belonging to him. Supersensible cognition forms a conception of this additional member of the human entity by calling attention to the essential difference in the experiences of waking life.

This difference appears at once when man realizes that in the waking state he stands, on the one hand, always in the midst of experiences that of necessity come and go, and that, on the other hand, he has experiences in which this is not the case. This becomes especially clear when human and animal experiences are compared. The animal experiences with great regularity the influences of the outer world, and under the influence of heat and cold, pain and pleasure, under certain regularly recurring processes of its body, it becomes conscious of hunger and thirst.

The life of man is not exhausted with such experiences. He can develop passions and desires that transcend all this. In the case of the animal it would always be possible, were we able to go far enough, to show where the cause for an action or sensation lies, outside of or within the body. With man this is by no means the case. He can produce desires and passions for whose origin neither the cause within nor without his body is sufficient.

We must ascribe a special source to everything that falls within this domain. In the light of supersensible science this source can be seen in the human ego. The ego can, therefore, be called the fourth member of the human entity. — If the astral body were left to itself, pleasure and pain, feelings of hunger and thirst would take place in it; but what would not occur Is the feeling that there is something permanent in all this.

Not the permanent as such is here called the "ego," but what experiences this permanency. We must formulate the concepts precisely in this realm, if misunderstandings are not to arise. With the becoming aware of something enduring something permanent in the change of the inner experiences the dawning of the "ego feeling" begins. The fact that a being feels hunger, for example, cannot give it an ego feeling. Hunger arises when the renewed causes of it make themselves felt within the being in question.

It pounces upon its food just because these renewed causes are present. The ego feeling appears when not only these renewed impulses drive the human being to seek food, but when pleasure has arisen at a previous appeasement of hunger and the consciousness of this pleasure has remained, thus making not only the present experience of hunger, but the past experience of pleasure the driving force in the human being's search for food. — Without the presence of the ether body, the physical body would decay.

Without the illumination by the astral body, the ether body would sink into unconsciousness. In like manner the astral body would have to let the past sink, again and again, into oblivion, were it not for the "ego" to carry this past over into the present. What death is for the physical body, and sleep for the ether body, oblivion is for the astral body. One might also say that life belongs to the ether body, consciousness to the astral body, and memory to the ego.

It is even easier to fall into the error of ascribing memory to animals than it is to ascribe consciousness to plants. It is very natural to think of memory when a dog recognizes its master whom he has not seen perhaps for a long time. Yet, in reality, this recognition does not rest upon memory, but upon something quite different. The dog feels a certain attraction to its master. This attraction proceeds from the master's personality.

This personality causes pleasure in the dog when the master is in its presence, and every time the master's presence reoccurs, it causes a renewal of this pleasure. Memory, however, is only present when a being not only feels with its experiences in the present, but when it retains also those of the past. One might acknowledge this and still fall into the error of thinking that the dog has memory. For it might be said that the dog mourns when its master leaves it, therefore it has retained a memory of him. That also is an incorrect conclusion.

Through sharing the master's life, his presence becomes a need to the dog and it, therefore, experiences his absence in the same way that it experiences hunger. Whoever does not make these distinctions, will not arrive at clarity concerning the true relationships of life.

Out of certain prejudices, one might object to this exposition by maintaining that it cannot be known whether or not there exists in the animal anything similar to human memory. Such an objection, however, is the result of untrained observation. Anyone who can observe quite factually how the animal behaves in the complex of its experiences notices the difference between its behavior and that of the human being, and he realizes that the animal's behavior corresponds to the non-existence of memory. For supersensible observation this is quite clear.

Yet, what arises as direct experience in supersensible observation may also be known by its effects in this domain through sense-perception permeated by thought activity. If one says that man is aware of his memory through inner soul-observation, something he cannot carry out in the case of the animal, one states something based upon a fatal error. What man has to say to himself about his capacity for memory he cannot derive from inner soul-observation, but only from what he experiences with himself in relation to the things and occurrences of the outer world.

Man has these experiences with himself and with another human being and also with animals in exactly the same way. He is blinded by pure illusion when he believes that he judges the existence of memory merely by means of inner observation. The power underlying memory may be called an inner power; the judgment concerning this power is acquired, also in regard to one's own person, through the outer world by directing one's attention to the relationships of life. Just as one is able to judge these relationships in regard to oneself, so one can judge them in regard to the animal. In regard to such things our current psychology suffers from its wholly untrained, inexact ideas, deceptive to a great degree because of errors in observation.

Memory and oblivion signify for the ego what waking and sleeping signify for the astral body. Just as sleep permits the cares and troubles of the day to disappear into nothingness, oblivion spreads a veil over the bad experiences of life, blotting out a part of the past. Just as sleep is necessary for the restoration of the exhausted life forces, so man has to eradicate certain parts of the past from his memory if he is to approach new experiences freely and without bias. But precisely through forgetting, strength develops for perception of the new. Consider certain facts, like that of learning to write. All the details the child has to experience in learning to write are forgotten. What remains is the ability to write. How would man be able to write if at every stroke of the pen all the past experiences in learning to write were to arise again in the soul as memory?

Memory appears in various stages. Its simplest form occurs when a person observes an object and, after turning away, is able to call up its mental image, is able to visualize it. He has formed this image while perceiving the object. A process has taken place between his astral body and his ego. The astral body has aroused the consciousness of the outer impression of the object. Yet knowledge of the object would last only as long as the latter is present, if the ego were not to absorb this knowledge and make it its own. — It is at this point that supersensible perception separates the bodily element from the soul nature. One speaks of the astral body as long as one considers the arising of knowledge of an object that is present. What, however, gives permanence to this knowledge one designates as soul.



From what has been said we can see at the same time how closely the human astral body is connected with that part of the soul that gives permanence to knowledge. Both are united into one member of the human entity. This union, therefore, may also be called astral body. If we desire an exact designation, we may call the human astral body the soul body, the soul, in so far as it is united with this soul body, we may call the sentient soul.

The ego rises to a higher stage of its being when it directs its activity toward what it has made its own out of the knowledge of the objects. This is the activity by which the ego severs itself more and more from the objects of perception in order to work within what it has made its own. The part of the soul in which this occurs may be designated the intellectual or mind soul. — It is characteristic of both the sentient and intellectual souls that they work with what they receive through the impressions of the objects perceived by the senses, and what is retained from this in memory. The soul is here completely surrendered to what is external to it.

What it makes its own through memory it has also received from outside. But it can pass beyond all this. It is not alone sentient soul and intellectual soul. For supersensible perception it is easiest to give an idea of this passing beyond by pointing to a simple fact, the comprehensive significance of which, however, must be appreciated. This fact is the following: In the whole range of language there is one name that, through its very nature, distinguishes itself from every other name. That name is " I . " Every other name may be given by every man to the object or being to whom it applies. The " I " as designation for a being has meaning only when this being applies it to itself. The name " I " can never resound to the ear of a human being from without as his designation; only the being himself can apply it to himself. "I am an ' I ' to myself only.

For every other person I am a 'you' and everyone else is for me a 'you.' " This fact is the outer expression of a deeply significant truth. The true nature of the " I " is independent of all that is external; therefore its name " I " cannot be called to it by anything external. Those religious denominations that have consciously maintained their relationship with supersensible perception designate the " I " as the "Ineffable Name of God." By using this expression, reference is made to what has been indicated. Nothing of an external nature has access to that part of the soul with which we are concerned here.

Here is the "hidden sanctuary" of the soul. Only a being with whom the soul is of like nature can gain entrance there. The God who dwells within man speaks when the soul becomes aware of itself as an I. Just as the sentient and intellectual souls live in the outer world, so a third soul member immerses itself in the Divine when the soul gains a perception of its own being.

The above conceptions may easily be misunderstood as an attempt to identify the I with God. But it has not been stated that the I is God, but only that it is of the same nature and essence as the Divine. Would anyone contend that a drop of water is the sea when he says that the drop is of the same essence or substance as the sea? If we wish to use a comparison, we may say that the drop of water has the same relationship to the sea that the I has to the Divine. Man can find the Divine within himself because his innermost being is drawn from the Divine.

Thus he acquires, through this, the third member of his soul, an inner knowledge of himself, just as he

gains through his astral body a knowledge of the outer world. Therefore, occult science can call this third member of the soul the consciousness soul; and, in this sense, the soul consists of three members: the sentient soul, the intellectual soul, and the consciousness soul, just as the corporeal part of man consists of three members — the physical body, the ether body, and the astral body.

Psychological errors of observation, similar to those already mentioned concerning the judging of the capacity of memory, make it difficult to gain the proper insight into the nature of the I. Much that people believe they understand can be regarded as a refutation of the above, yet it is in reality a confirmation. This is the case, for example, with the remarks about the I which Eduard von Hartmann makes in his *Outline of Psychology* (2) "In the first place, consciousness of self is more ancient than the word I. Personal pronouns are a rather late product of the evolution of languages and have only the value of abbreviations.

The word I is a short substitute for the speaker's own name, but a substitute that each speaker, as such, uses for himself, no matter by what proper name others may call him. Consciousness of self can be developed in animals and in uneducated deaf and dumb persons to a high degree, even without reference to a proper name. Consciousness of the proper name can fully replace the lack of use of the word I.

With this insight the magical nimbus is eliminated which for many people envelops the little word I; it cannot add the slightest thing to the concept of self-consciousness, but receives its whole content solely from the latter." It is possible to be quite in agreement with such points of view; also with the contention that no magical nimbus be bestowed upon the little word, I, which would only dim a thoughtful consideration of the matter. But the nature of a thing is not decided by the way the verbal designation for this thing has gradually been brought about.

The important point is the fact that the essential nature of the ego in self-consciousness is "more ancient than the word I " and that man is compelled to use this little word — endowed with the qualities belonging to it alone — for what he experiences, in his reciprocal relationship with the outer world, differently from the way the animal can experience it. Nothing can be known concerning the nature of the triangle by showing how the "word" triangle has been evolved; likewise, nothing can be decided concerning the nature of the I by knowing how this word has taken form in the evolution of language out of a different verbal usage.

The true nature of the I reveals itself only in the consciousness soul. For while the soul sinks itself into other things in feeling and intellect, as consciousness soul it takes hold of its own being. Therefore this I can be perceived by the consciousness soul only through a certain inner activity. The visualizations of external objects are formed just as these objects come and go, and these visualizations continue to work in the Intellect by means of their own force. But if the I is to observe itself, it cannot simply surrender itself; it must, through inner activity, first lift its being out of its own depths in order to have a consciousness of it. With the perception of the I, with self-contemplation, an inner activity of the I begins.

Through this activity, the perception of the I within the consciousness soul has a significance for man quite different from the observation of all that reaches him through the three corporeal members and

the two other members of the soul. The force that discloses the I within the consciousness soul is indeed the same force that manifests in all the rest of the world. This force does not, however, appear directly in the body and in the lower members of the soul, but reveals itself by degrees in its effects. The lowest manifestation is the manifestation through the physical body; this then mounts up by stages to what fills the intellectual soul.

One might say that, with each step upward, one of the veils that envelop the hidden falls away. In what fills the consciousness soul, the hidden enters unveiled into the innermost temple of the soul. Yet it appears there only like a drop out of the ocean of all-pervading spirituality. Here, however, man must first take hold of this spirituality. He must recognize it in himself, then he will be able to find it also in its manifestations.

What here like a drop penetrates into the consciousness soul, occult science calls the spirit. Thus the consciousness soul is united with the spirit, which is the hidden in all that is manifest. If man wishes to take hold of the spirit in all manifestation, he must do it in the same way he takes hold of the ego in the consciousness soul. He must direct the activity that has led him to the perception of this I toward the manifest world. He, thereby, develops to higher stages of his being. He adds something new to the corporeal and soul members.

The next thing is that he, himself, also conquer what lies hidden within the lower members of his soul, and this happens through his work on his soul, proceeding from the ego. How man is engaged in this work becomes evident if one compares a person who still surrenders himself to his lower passions and so-called sensual lust, with a noble idealist. The latter develops out of the former if he rids himself of certain low inclinations and turns toward nobler ones. In doing so he has worked on his soul, ennobling and spiritualizing it out of his ego.

The ego has become master within the soul-life. This can be carried so far that no desire, no enjoyment can gain entrance into the soul without the I being the power that makes the entrance possible. In this way, the whole soul now becomes a manifestation of the I, as this was previously the case with the consciousness soul alone. In fact, all cultural life and all spiritual human endeavor consists in a work that has as its aim this rulership of the ego. Every human being living in the present age is engaged in this work whether he wants it or not, whether he is conscious of it or not.

Through this work, however, higher stages of the being of man are reached. Through it, man develops new members of his being. These lie as the concealed behind what is manifest to him. Not only can he become master of the soul by working on the latter through the power of the ego so that the soul drives the concealed into manifestation, but he can also extend this work. He can extend it to the astral body.

The I thus takes possession of this astral body by uniting itself with the latter's hidden nature. This astral body, overcome and transformed by the ego, may be called the spirit self. (This is what, in connection with oriental wisdom, is called "manas.") In the spirit self we have a higher member of man's being, one which, so to speak, exists within it as a germ and which emerges more and more as it actively works upon itself.

Just as the human being conquers his astral body by penetrating to the hidden forces standing behind it, so, too, in the course of evolution, does this happen with the ether body. The work upon the ether body is, however, more intensive than the work upon the astral body, for what is concealed in the former is enveloped by two veils, while the concealed in the astral body is veiled by only one.

It is possible to form a concept of the difference in the work on these two bodies by pointing to certain changes that can take place in man in the course of his development. Let us call to mind how certain human soul qualities develop when the ego is working upon the soul; how passion and desire, joy and sorrow may change. It is only necessary to think back to the time of childhood. At that time, what was man's source of pleasure? What caused him pain? What has he learned in addition to what he was able to do in childhood? All this is only an expression of the way the ego has gained mastery over the astral body. For this body is the bearer of pleasure and pain, of joy and sorrow.

Compare this with how little certain other qualities of man change in the course of time, for example, his temperament, the deeper peculiarities of his character, and so forth. A person, hot-tempered as a child, will often retain certain aspects of this violent temper in later life. This is such a striking fact that there are thinkers who wholly deny the possibility of any change in the fundamental character of a human being.

They assume that this is something that remains unchanged throughout life, manifesting in one way or another. Such a judgment is merely based upon lack of observation. Anyone who has the capacity of observing such things can perceive clearly that also man's temperament and character change under the influence of his ego. To be sure, this change is slow when compared with the change in the qualities described above.

The relationship between the two kinds of changes may be compared with the advancing of the hour hand of a clock in relation to the minute hand. The forces that bring about this change of character or temperament belong to the hidden realm of the ether body. They are of like nature with the forces that rule in the kingdom of life, that is to say, with the forces of growth and nutrition and those that bring about reproduction. Subsequent explanations in this book will shed the right light upon these matters. — The I is not working upon the astral body if the human being simply gives himself up to pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, but if the peculiarities of these soul qualities change.

Likewise, the work extends to the ether body if the ego applies its activity to the changing of its traits of character, of its temperament, and so forth. Also on this latter change every human being is working, whether he is conscious of it or not. The strongest impulses producing this change in ordinary life are the religious ones. When the I allows the impulses that flow from religion to act upon it again and again, they form within it a power that works right into the ether body and transforms it in much the same way that lesser life-impulses cause a transformation of the astral body. These lesser impulses of life, which come to man through study, contemplation, ennobling of the feelings, and so forth, are subject to the manifold changes of existence; religious experiences, however, imprint upon all thinking, feeling, and willing a uniform character.

They shed, as it were, a common, uniform light over the entire soul-life. A man thinks and feels this way today, tomorrow differently. The most varied causes bring this about. But if a person through his

religious feelings, whatever they may be, divines something that persists throughout all changes, he will relate his current soul experiences of thinking and feeling to that fundamental feeling just as he does with his soul experiences of tomorrow. Religious creed, therefore, has a far-reaching effect upon the whole soul-life; its influence becomes ever stronger in the course of time, because it works by means of constant repetition. It therefore acquires the power of working upon the ether body. — The influence of true art has a similar effect upon the human being.

If, through outer form, through color and tone of a work of art, he penetrates to its spiritual basis with thought and feeling, then the impulses that the I thus receives work down even into the ether body. If we think this thought through to the end we can estimate what a tremendous significance art has for all human evolution. We have referred here only to a few instances that give to the I the impulse to act upon the ether body. There are many similar influences in human life that are not so apparent to the observing eye as those that have been mentioned. But from these it is evident that hidden within man there is another member of his being that the I gradually develops.

This member may be called the second spiritual member, the life spirit. (It is called "buddhi" in oriental wisdom.) The expression "life spirit" is the appropriate term for the reason that the same forces are active in what it designates as in the "life body"; only, in these forces, when they manifest themselves as life body, the human ego is not active. If they manifest as life spirit, however, they are permeated by the activity of the I.

The intellectual development of man, his purification and ennobling of the utterances of feeling and will are the measure of his transformation of the astral body in spirit self; his religious and many other experiences imprint themselves upon the ether body and transform it into life spirit. In the usual course of life this occurs more or less unconsciously. On the other hand, what is called initiation of man consists in his being directed by supersensible knowledge to the means that enable him to undertake this work on the spirit self and life spirit in full consciousness. These means will be discussed in later parts of this book.

For the present, it was a question of showing that, beside the soul and the body, the spirit is also active within the human being. We shall see later how this spirit, in contrast to the transient body, belongs to the Eternal in man.

The activity of the I is not exhausted with its work upon the astral and ether bodies; it extends also to the physical body. A trace of the influence of the I upon the physical body can be seen when, for example, under certain circumstances a person blushes or turns pale. In this case the I is actually the cause of a process in the physical body. If, through the activity of the I, changes take place in man in respect of its influence upon the physical body, the I is actually united with the hidden forces of this physical body, with the same forces that cause the physical processes to take place. It can be said, then, that the I, through this activity, works upon the physical body. This expression must not be misunderstood.

It must not be imagined that this activity is something grossly material. What appears in the physical body as gross matter is only the manifested part of it. Behind this manifested part lie the hidden forces of its being, and these forces are of a spiritual nature. We are not speaking here of work upon a

material substance, of which the physical body seems to consist, but of the spiritual work upon the invisible forces that bring this body into existence and allow it to decay. In ordinary life this work of the I on the physical body enters human consciousness indistinctly.

Complete clarity of consciousness in this respect is acquired only if man, under the influence of supersensible knowledge, takes this activity consciously in hand. Then the fact emerges that there is still a third spiritual member in man. It is what may be called spirit man, in contrast to the physical man. (In oriental wisdom this spirit-man is called "atma.")

It is easy to be misled in respect of the spirit man, owing to the fact that in the physical body we see the lowest member of man's being, and it is, therefore, hard to be reconciled to the idea that work on the physical body brings into being the highest member of the human entity. But just because the physical body conceals the active spirit within it behind three veils, the highest form of human endeavor is needed to unite the I with this hidden spirit.

Thus in occult science man presents himself as a being composed of various members. Those of a corporeal nature are the physical body, the ether body, and the astral body. Those belonging to the soul are sentient soul, intellectual soul, and consciousness soul. The I, the ego, spreads out its light within the soul. The members possessing a spiritual nature are spirit self, life spirit, and spirit man. We see from the above descriptions that the sentient soul and the astral body are closely united and in a certain respect form a whole.

In a similar manner, consciousness soul and spirit self are a whole, for the spirit flashes up within the consciousness soul and from there rays through the other members of human nature. With this in mind, we can also speak of the following membering of the human being. We may combine astral body and sentient soul into a single member, likewise consciousness soul and spirit self, and the intellectual soul we may call the I, since it partakes of the I nature and, in a certain respect, is already the I that has not yet become conscious of its spiritual nature. We have, therefore, seven members of man:

1. physical body,
2. ether or life body,
3. astral body,
4. I,
5. spirit self,
6. life spirit, and
7. spirit man.

Even for those who are accustomed to materialistic ideas this membering of man according to the number seven would not possess anything "vaguely magical," which they often ascribe to it, if they but held to the meaning of the above description and did not, from the very outset, themselves introduce this magical element into the matter.

It is from the standpoint of a higher form of observing the world and in no other way that we ought to speak of these seven members of man, just as we speak of the seven colors of light or of the seven

tones of the scale, (considering the octave as a repetition of the tonic.) Just as light appears in seven colors, and tone in a sevenfold scale, so does the homogeneous human nature appear in the above-mentioned seven members.

Just as the number seven in tone and color bears nothing of "superstition" in it, so is this also the case in regard to the sevenfold membering of the human being. (On one occasion, when this question was discussed verbally, it was said that in the case of colors the number seven does not hold good, since beyond red and violet there are other colors that are not visible to the eye. Even in this respect, however, the comparison with the colors agrees, for the being of man extends beyond the physical body on the one side and spirit man on the other, only these extensions are "spiritually invisible" to the spiritual means of observation in the same way that the colors beyond red and violet are invisible to the physical eye.

This comment had to be made because the opinion so easily arises that supersensible perception is not particular with respect to natural scientific thinking, that it is amateurish in this regard. But whoever pays strict attention to what is meant by the statements made here will find that, in fact, they are nowhere in contradiction to true natural science — neither when facts of natural science are used for illustration nor when, in the remarks made here, a direct relationship to natural-scientific research is indicated.)

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#### **Footnotes:**

1. In his book, *Theosophy*, the author has discussed the fact that with the designation "ether body" or "life body" he has no intention of renewing the old concept of "life force" discarded by natural science.
2. Eduard von Hartmann, *Grundriss der Psychologie*, Vol. 111, p.55. Bad Sachsa, 1908.

### 3 - Sleep And Death

It is not possible to penetrate into the nature of waking consciousness without observing the state through which the human being passes during sleep, and it is impossible to solve the riddle of life without considering death. For a human being in whom there is no feeling for the significance of supersensible knowledge, doubts may arise in regard to such knowledge because of the way in which it carries on its considerations regarding sleep and death.

Supersensible knowledge is able to understand the motives that give rise to such a distrust. For it is quite comprehensible when someone says that man is here for an active, purposeful life and his accomplishments are based upon his devotion to it; furthermore, that the occupation with states such as sleep and death can only result from an inclination to idle dreaming and can only lead to empty imaginings.

The rejection of what is thus held to be "fantastic" may readily be looked upon as the expression of a healthy soul, and an inclination toward "idle dreaming" of this kind as something unhealthy, characteristic of persons lacking in vital energy and the joy of life, and who are incapable of "real accomplishment." It is wrong to declare forthwith that such an opinion is false, for it contains a certain kernel of truth. It is a quarter-truth that must be supplemented by the other three-quarters belonging to it, and a person who sees the one-quarter very well, but who has no conception of the other three-quarters, will only be made distrustful by our combating the true one-quarter.

It must, in fact, be acknowledged without question that a consideration of what lies concealed in sleep and death is unhealthy if it leads to a weakening, to an estrangement from real life, and we must admit that much that has called itself occult science in the world from time immemorial, and is practiced also today under that name, bears a character unhealthy and hostile to life. But this unsound element does not spring from true supersensible knowledge. On the contrary, the real fact is the following. Just as man cannot always be awake, he also cannot, in regard to the real conditions of life in its widest sense, get along without what the supersensible is able to offer.

Life continues during sleep, and the forces that are active and creative during the waking state receive their strength and renewal from what is given to them by sleep. Thus it is with what can be observed in the manifest world. The domain of the world is greater than the field of this observation, and what is known about the visible universe must be supplemented and fructified by what can be known about the invisible. A human being who does not continually draw strength for his weakened forces from sleep must of necessity destroy his life. Likewise, a world concept that is not fructified by a knowledge of the hidden world must lead to desolation. It is similar with death. Living beings succumb to death in order that new life may arise.

It is precisely the knowledge of the supersensible that can shed clear light upon the beautiful words of Goethe: "Nature has invented death that she might have abundant life." Just as there could be no life in the ordinary sense of the word without death, so can there be no true knowledge of the visible world without insight into the supersensible. All knowledge of what is visible must plunge again and again into the invisible in order to evolve. Thus it is evident that the science of the supersensible alone makes the life of revealed knowledge possible. It never weakens life when it appears in its true form. When, having been left to itself, life becomes weak and sickly, supersensible knowledge strengthens it and



makes it, ever and again, fresh and healthy.

When man sinks into sleep, there is a change in the relationship of his members. That part of the sleeping man that lies in bed contains the physical and ether bodies, but not the astral body and not the ego. Because the ether body remains united with the physical body in sleep, the life-activities continue; for, the moment the physical body were left to itself, it would have to crumble to dust. What, however, is extinguished in sleep includes the mental images, pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow, the capacity to express a conscious will, and similar facts of existence. The astral body is the bearer of all this. An unbiased point of view can naturally never entertain the thought that in sleep the astral body is destroyed along with all pleasure and pain and the world of ideas and will.

It simply exists in an other state. In order that the human ego and astral body not only be filled with joy and sorrow and all the other facts of existence mentioned above, but also have a conscious perception of them, it is necessary that the astral body be united with the physical and ether bodies. In the waking state, all three are united; in the sleeping state, the astral body withdraws from the physical and ether bodies. It assumes a different kind of existence from the one that falls to its lot during its union with the physical and ether bodies.

It is the task of supersensible knowledge to consider this other kind of existence in the astral body. Observed from the standpoint of the outer world, the astral body disappears in sleep; supersensible perception must follow its life until it again takes possession of the physical and ether bodies on awakening. Just as in all cases where it is a matter of knowledge of the hidden things and events of the world, so supersensible observation is necessary for the discovery of the facts of the sleeping state in their particular form. If, however, what can be discovered by means of supersensible observation has once been uttered, it is comprehensible to truly unbiased thinking, for the processes of the hidden world reveal themselves in their effects in the manifest world.

If it is seen how the revelations of supersensible perception make the sensory processes comprehensible, such a corroboration by means of life itself is the proof that can be required for such things. Anyone not desiring to employ the means for acquiring supersensible perception, indicated later on in this book, can have the following experience. He may at first accept the evidence of supersensible perception and then apply it to the manifest facts of his experience. He may, in this way, find that life has thereby become clear and comprehensible, and the more exact and thorough his observations of ordinary life are, the more readily will he come to this conviction.

Although the astral body, during sleep, experiences no mental pictures and also no pleasure and pain, it does not remain inactive. On the contrary, it is just in the sleep state that a lively activity is incumbent upon it. It is an activity into which it must again and again enter in rhythmical succession, if it has been for a time active in connection with the physical and ether bodies. Just as the pendulum of a clock, after having swung to the left and returned again to the center, must swing to the right because of the momentum gathered in its left swing, so the astral body and the ego living within it, after having been active for a time in the physical and ether bodies must, as a result of this, unfold a subsequent activity, body-free, in a surrounding world of soul and spirit.

For the ordinary conditions of human life, unconsciousness occurs during this body-free condition of the astral body and ego because it presents the antithesis of the state of consciousness developed in the

waking state through union with the physical and ether bodies, just as the swing of the pendulum to the right is the antithesis of the swing to the left. The necessity of entering into this state of unconsciousness is experienced by the soul-spirit nature of man as fatigue. But this fatigue is the expression of the fact that the astral body and ego, during sleep, prepare themselves to transform, during the following waking state, what has arisen in the physical and ether bodies through purely organic formative activity when freed from the presence of the spirit and soul elements.

This unconscious formative activity and what takes place in the human being during and by means of consciousness are antitheses that must alternate in rhythmic succession. — The physical body can retain the form and stature suitable for man only by means of the human ether body, which in turn receives its proper forces from the astral body. The ether body is the builder, the architect, of the physical body, but it can only build in the right way if it receives the impulse for this purpose from the astral body. In the astral body reside the prototypes according to which the ether body gives form to the physical body. During the waking state, the astral body is not filled with these prototypes of the physical body, or at least only to a certain degree, for, during the waking state, the soul puts its own images in the place of these prototypes. When man directs the senses toward his environment he forms, by means of perception, thought images that are likenesses of the world about him.

These likenesses are at first disturbances for the images that stimulate the ether body to maintain the physical body. Were the human being able, through his own activity, to bring to his astral body the images that are required to give the right impulse to the ether body, then there would be no such disturbance. This very disturbance, however, plays an important role in human existence. It expresses itself in the fact that the prototypes for the ether body do not act to the full extent of their power during waking life. The astral body carries on its waking activity within the physical body. In sleep, it works upon the physical body from without.

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Just as the physical body, for example, needs the outer world, which is of like nature to itself, to supply it with the means of subsistence, something similar is also the case with the astral body. Just imagine a physical human body removed from its surrounding world. It would have to perish. This demonstrates that without the whole physical environment it is not possible for the physical body to exist.

In fact, the entire earth must be as it is, if human physical bodies are to exist upon it. The whole human body is, in reality, only a part of the earth; indeed, in a wider sense, a part of the whole physical universe. In this respect its relationship is similar, for example, to that of a finger to the entire human body. If the finger is severed from the hand, it can no longer continue to be a finger; it withers. This would also happen to the human body were it removed from the organism of which it is a member, from the life conditions offered it by the earth.

If we were to lift it a sufficient number of miles above the earth's surface, it would perish just as the finger perishes that has been severed from the hand. If less consideration has been given to this fact in respect of the physical body and the earth than in respect of the finger and the body, it is simply because the finger cannot stroll about on the body in the way that the human being walks about on the earth, and because in the former case the dependence is more obvious.

Just as the physical body belongs to the physical world in which it is embedded, so does the astral body belong to its own world; during waking life, however, it is torn out of this world of its own. What happens there may be illustrated by an analogy. Imagine a vessel filled with water. A drop within this whole mass of water is not something isolated. Let us, however, take a little sponge and with it absorb a drop from the whole. Something similar occurs with the human astral body on awaking.

During sleep it is in a world like itself; in a certain sense it constitutes something that belongs to this world. On awaking, the physical and ether bodies suck it up; they fill themselves with it. They contain the organs through which the astral body perceives the outer world. But in order that it may acquire this perception, it must separate itself from its own world. From this world it can only receive the prototypes that it needs for the ether body. — Just as the physical body receives its food, for example, from its environment, so during the sleep state the astral body receives the images from the world about it. It lives there actually in the universe, separated from the physical and ether bodies, in the same universe out of which the entire human being is born.

The source of the images through which the human being receives his form lies in this universe. During sleep he is harmoniously inserted into it, and during the waking state he lifts himself out of this all-encompassing harmony in order to gain external perception. In sleep, his astral body returns to this cosmic harmony and on awaking again brings back to his bodies sufficient strength from it to enable him to dispense with his dwelling within the cosmic harmony for a certain length of time.

The astral body, during sleep, returns to its home and on awaking brings back with it renewed forces into life. These forces that the astral body brings with it on awaking find outer expression in the refreshment that healthy sleep affords. Further descriptions of occult science will show that this home of the astral body is more encompassing than that which belongs to the physical body of the physical environment in the narrower sense. Whereas the human being is physically a part of the earth, his astral body belongs to worlds in which still other cosmic bodies besides our earth are embedded. Therefore he enters, during sleep, into a world to which other worlds than the earth belong, a fact that will only become clear from later descriptions.

It ought to be superfluous to call attention to a misunderstanding that can easily arise in regard to these facts, but to do so is not out of place in our age in which certain materialistic modes of thought are prevalent. Those who hold such thoughts can naturally say that it is only scientific to investigate the physical conditions of such a thing as sleep. They maintain that although scholars are not yet in agreement concerning the physical causes of sleep, yet one fact is certain: that definite physical processes must be assumed as lying at the foundation of this phenomenon. Oh! if people would only acknowledge the fact that supersensible knowledge in no way contradicts this assertion!

It agrees with everything that is said from this point of view just as one agrees that in the physical erection of a house one brick must be laid upon another, and when it is finished, its form and cohesion can be explained by purely mechanical laws. In order that the house may be built at all, however, the thought of the builder is necessary. This thought is not to be discovered when merely the physical laws are investigated. — Thus, just as the thoughts of the builder of the house lie behind the physical laws that make the house comprehensible, so behind what physical science presents in an absolutely correct way lies the spiritual content of which supersensible knowledge speaks.

It is true, this comparison is often presented when it is a matter of justification of a spiritual background of the world and it may be considered trivial. But in these things the point is not whether there is a familiarity with certain concepts, but rather whether they are properly evaluated in arguing the question. Opposing theories can have so great an effect on the power of judgment that the possibility of arriving at a proper evaluation is entirely excluded.

Dreaming is an intermediate state between waking and sleeping. What dream experiences offer to thoughtful consideration is a multi-colored interweaving of a picture world that conceals within it certain rules and laws. This world of dreams seems to display an ebb and flow, often in confused succession. In his dream life, the human being is freed from the law of waking consciousness that fetters him to sense-perception and to the rules governing his power of reason.

Yet dreams have certain mysterious laws that are fascinating and alluring to man's prescience, and that are the deeper reason why the beautiful play of fantasy underlying artistic feeling is readily likened to "dreaming." It is only necessary to call to mind certain characteristic dreams to find this corroborated. Someone dreams, for example, that he drives away a dog that is rushing upon him. He awakens and finds himself in the act of unconsciously throwing off a part of the bedclothes that had pressed upon an unaccustomed part of his body and had, therefore, become burdensome. What does dreaming here make out of the sense-perceptible process?

What the senses would perceive in the waking state, the life of sleep allows to remain in complete unconsciousness. It retains, however, something essential, namely the fact that the sleeping person wishes to ward off something. Around this fact sleep weaves a pictorial process. The images, as such, are echoes of waking-day life. The manner in which they are borrowed from it has something arbitrary about it. Every person has the feeling that under the same external provocation, the dream could conjure up different pictures in his soul, but they express symbolically the feeling that the person has something he wishes to ward off. Dreams create symbols; they are symbol-makers. Inner processes, too, can transform themselves into such dream symbols. A person dreams that a fire is crackling near him; in his dream he sees the flames. He awakens and finds that he has been too heavily covered and has become too warm.

The feeling of too much warmth is symbolically expressed in the dream picture. Quite dramatic experiences can be enacted in dream. For example, a person dreams that he is standing at an abyss. He sees a child running toward it. In his dream he experiences all the agony of the thought: Oh! if the child would only take heed, would only pay attention and not fall into the abyss! He sees it falling and hears the dull thud of its body below. He awakens and becomes aware that an object hanging on the wall of his room had become loosened and, in falling, has made a dull sound.

Dream life expresses this simple occurrence in an event that is enacted in exciting pictures. — For the present we do not need to enter into a consideration of why, in the last example, the moment of the dull thud of the falling object should spread out into a series of events that seem to extend over a certain period of time. We need only keep in mind how the dream transforms into a picture what sense-perception would offer were we awake.

We see that as soon as the senses cease their activity, something creative asserts itself in man. This is

the same creative element that is also present in completely dreamless sleep and there presents the soul state that appears as the antithesis of the soul's waking state. If this dreamless sleep is to take place, the astral body must be withdrawn from the ether and physical bodies.

During the dream state, it is separated from the physical body in so far as it no longer has any connection with this body's sense organs, but it still retains a certain connection with the ether body. That the processes of the astral body can be perceived in pictures is due to this connection with the ether body. The moment this connection ceases, the pictures sink down into the darkness of unconsciousness, and we have dreamless sleep. The arbitrary and often absurd character of dream pictures rests upon the fact that the astral body, because of its separation from the sense organs of the physical body, cannot relate its pictures to the proper objects and events of the external environment.

This fact becomes especially clear if we consider a dream in which the ego is, as it were, split up; when, for example, a person dreams that, as a pupil, he cannot answer a question put to him by his teacher, while directly afterwards the teacher, himself, answers the question. Because the dreamer cannot make use of the organs of perception of his physical body he is unable to relate the two occurrences to himself, as the same individual. Thus, in order to recognize himself as an enduring ego, he must be equipped with the external organs of perception.

Only if a person had acquired the capacity of becoming conscious of his ego otherwise than through these organs of perception, would the enduring ego become perceptible to him outside his physical body. Supersensible consciousness must acquire these capacities, and the means of accomplishing this will be considered later on in this book.

Even death occurs only because there is a change in the relationship of the members of man's being. What supersensible perception has to say about death can also be observed in its effects in the outer world, and by unbiased reason the communications of supersensible knowledge can be verified on this point also through observation of external life. The expression of the invisible within the visible is, however, less obvious in these facts.

It is more difficult fully to feel the importance of what, in the events of external life, corroborates the communications of supersensible knowledge in this realm. Even more than in the case of many things already mentioned in this book it would be quite natural here to declare that these communications are simply figments of the imagination, if no heed is paid to the knowledge of how a clear indication of the supersensible is contained in the sensory.

In passing over into sleep, the astral body only severs its connection with the ether and physical bodies, the latter remaining bound together; in death, the physical body, however, is severed from the ether body. The physical body is left to its own forces and must, for that reason, disintegrate as a corpse.

When death occurs, the ether body enters into a state that it never experienced during the time between birth and death, except under rare conditions that will be spoken of later. It is now united with its astral body, without the presence of the physical body, for the ether body and astral body do not separate immediately after death. For a time they remain together by means of a force whose existence is easily to be understood. If it did not exist, the ether body could not sever itself from the physical body, for it

is bound to it.

This is seen in sleep when the astral body is unable to tear these two members of the human organism apart. This force begins its activity at death. It severs the ether body from the physical, with the result that the ether body is now united with the astral body. Supersensible observation shows that after death this union varies in different people. Its duration is measured by days. For the present this duration is only mentioned by way of information. — Later the astral body separates from its ether body also and continues on its way bereft of it.

During the union of the two bodies man is in a condition that enables him to perceive the experiences of his astral body. As long as the physical body is present, the work of refreshing the worn out organs must begin from outside the moment the astral body is severed from it. With the severance of the physical body this work ceases. The force that is employed for this work when the human being sleeps remains after death and can now be used to make the astral body's own processes perceptible.

An observation that clings to the externals of life may say that these are statements that are clear to those endowed with supersensible perception, but there is no possibility of anyone else ascertaining the truth about them. This is not a fact. What supersensible perception observes in this realm, removed from ordinary perception, can be comprehended by ordinary thought power after it has once been discovered.

This thought power must consider in the right way the relationships of life that are present in the manifested world. Thinking, feeling, and willing stand in such a relationship to each other and to the experiences of man in the outer world, that they remain incomprehensible if the manner of their revealed activity is not considered as the expression of an unrevealed activity. This manifest activity becomes clear to the judgment only when it can be looked upon, in its course within physical human life, as the result of what supersensible knowledge establishes for the non-physical.

In regard to this activity we are, without supersensible knowledge, much like a man in a dark room without light. Just as the physical objects around us are perceived only in the light, so will what takes place through the soul-life of man be explicable only by means of supersensible knowledge.

During the union of the human being with his physical body, the outer world enters his consciousness in images; after casting off this body, what the astral body experiences when it is not bound to the outer world by means of physical sense organs becomes perceptible. It has at first no new experiences. Union with the ether body prevents it from experiencing anything new. What it does possess, however, is a memory of the past life.

The still present ether body allows this memory to appear as a comprehensive, living picture. This is the first experience of the human being after death. He perceives the life between birth and death in a series of pictures spread out before him. During physical life, memory exists only during the waking state when man is united with his physical body. Memory is present only to the extent allowed by this body. Nothing is lost to the soul that makes an impression upon it during life. Were the physical body a perfect instrument for this, it would be possible at every moment of life to conjure up before the soul the whole of life's past.

This hindrance disappears at death. As long as the human being retains the ether body, a certain perfection of memory exists, and it disappears to the degree that the ether body loses the form it had during its sojourn in the physical body, when it resembled the physical body. This is also the reason why the astral body after a time separates from the ether body. It can remain united with the latter only as long as the ether form, which corresponds to the physical body, endures. During life between birth and death, a separation of the ether body from the physical body takes place only in exceptional cases, and then only for a short time.

If, for example, a person presses heavily upon one of his limbs, a part of the ether body may separate from the physical. When this occurs we may say that the limb has "gone to sleep." The peculiar feeling one has at that time comes from the severance of the ether body. (Naturally, here also a materialistic mode of thought may deny the existence of the invisible within the visible and say that all this simply comes from the physical disturbance caused by the pressure.) In such a case, supersensible perception is able to observe how the corresponding part of the ether body passes out of the physical. If a person experiences an unusual shock, or something of the kind, a separation of the ether body from a large part of the physical body may result for a short time.

This happens if a person for one reason or another sees himself suddenly near death; if, for example, he is on the verge of drowning, or if, on a mountaineering trip, he is in danger of a precipitous fall. What is told by people who have experienced such things comes very near the truth and may be corroborated by supersensible observation. They state that in such moments their entire life passed before the soul in a great memory-picture. Of the many examples that could be cited here, only one will be referred to because it originates with a person to whose mode of thinking all that has been said here about these experiences must appear as idle fancy.

For anyone who takes a few steps in supersensible observation, it is always useful to become acquainted with the statements of those who consider this science as something fantastic. Such statements cannot be so lightly attributed to the prejudice of the observer of the supersensible. (Spiritual scientists may well learn a great deal from those who consider their endeavors nonsense, and they need not be disconcerted if there is no reciprocal "affection" in this respect on the part of the critics. To be sure, for supersensible perception itself there is no need of verification of its results through such experiences.

It does not desire to prove anything by these references, but to elucidate its findings.) The eminent criminologist and well known researcher in many other fields of natural science, Moritz Benedict, relates a personal experience in his memoirs. Once, when he was near being drowned while bathing, he saw in memory his whole life before him as though in a single picture. — If others describe differently the pictures experienced under similar circumstances, even in a way that lets them appear to have little to do with the events of their past, this does not contradict what has been said.

For the pictures that occur in the quite unusual condition of the separation of the ether body from the physical are often not readily explicable in regard to their relation to life. Proper consideration will always recognize this relationship. Neither is it an objection if someone, for example, once came near drowning and did not have the experience described.

It must be remembered that this can only occur when the ether body is actually separated from the physical and at the same time remains united with the astral body. If through the shock a loosening of the ether and astral bodies also takes place, then the experience does not occur, because there exists complete unconsciousness, as in dreamless sleep.

In the period immediately following death the experiences of the past appear summarized in a memory-picture. After the separation of the ether body and the astral body, the latter is left to itself in its further journey. It is not difficult to see that, within the astral body, everything remains that it has made its own through its own activity during its sojourn in the physical body.

To a certain degree, the ego has developed spirit self, life spirit, and spirit man. As far as they are developed, they receive their existence, not from what exists as organs in the bodies, but from the ego. The ego is the very member that needs no external organs for self-perception; it also needs none in order to remain in possession of what it has united with itself. The objection can be made, "Why, then, is there no perception in sleep of this spirit self, life spirit, and spirit man, which have been developed?"

There is none, because the ego is fettered to the physical body between birth and death. Even though in sleep the ego, united with the astral body, is outside the physical body, it remains, nevertheless, in close union with the latter, for the activity of the astral body is directed toward this physical body. Thus the ego with its perception is relegated to the external sense world and cannot therefore receive the revelations of the spirit in its direct form.

Only at death does the ego receive these revelations because, at death, the ego is freed from its connection with the physical and ether bodies. Another world can flash up for the soul the moment it is withdrawn from the physical world that chains the soul's activity to itself during life.

There are reasons why even at this moment all connections between man and the external sense world do not cease. Certain desires remain that maintain this connection. These are desires that the human being creates because he is conscious of his ego, the fourth member of his being. Those desires and wishes arising out of the nature of the three lower bodies can only be active within the external world, and when these bodies are laid aside the desires cease. Hunger is caused by the external body; it is silenced as soon as this outer body is no longer united with the ego.

If the ego possessed no other desires than those arising from its own spiritual nature, it could at death draw complete satisfaction from the spiritual world into which it is translated. But life has given it still other desires. It has enkindled in the ego a longing for enjoyments that can only be satisfied through physical organs, although the desires do not have their origin in these organs themselves. Not only do the three bodies demand their satisfaction through the physical world, but the ego itself finds enjoyments within this world for which the spiritual world offers no means of satisfaction.

For the ego there are two kinds of desires in life: the desires that have their source in the bodies, and therefore must be satisfied within these bodies, ceasing with the disintegration of these bodies, and the desires that have their source in the spiritual nature of the ego.



As long as the ego is within the bodies, these desires also are satisfied by means of bodily organs, for in the manifestations of the bodily organs the hidden spirit is at work, and in all that the senses perceive they receive at the same time something spiritual. This spiritual element exists also after death, although in another form. All spiritual desires of the ego within the sense world exist also when the senses are no longer present. If a third kind of desire were not added to these two, death would signify merely a transition from desires that can be satisfied by means of the senses to those that find their realization in the revelation of the spiritual world.

This third type of desire is produced by the ego during its life in the sense world because it finds pleasure in this world also in so far as there is no spirit manifest in it. — The basest enjoyments can be a manifestation of the spirit. The gratification that the hungry being experiences in taking food is a manifestation of spirit because through the eating of food something is brought about without which, in a certain sense, the spirit could not evolve. The ego can, however, transcend the enjoyment that this fact of necessity offers.

It may long for good tasting food, quite apart from the service rendered the spirit by eating. The same is true of other things in the sense world. Desires are created thereby that would never have come into being in the sense world had the human ego not been incorporated in it. But neither do these desires spring from the spiritual nature of the ego.

The ego must have sense enjoyments as long as it lives in the body, also in so far as it is spiritual; for the spirit manifests in the sense world and the ego enjoys nothing but spirit when, in this world, it surrenders itself to that medium through which the light of the spirit radiates. It will continue to enjoy this light even when the sense world is no longer the medium through which the rays of the spirit pass.

In the spirit world, however, there is no gratification for desires in which the spirit has not already manifested itself in the sense world. When death takes place, the possibility for the gratification of these desires is cut off. The enjoyment of appetizing food can come only through the physical organs that are used for taking in food: the palate, tongue, and so forth.

After throwing off the physical body man no longer possesses these organs. But if the ego still has a longing for these pleasures, this longing must remain ungratified. In so far as this enjoyment is in accord with the spirit, it exists only as long as the physical organs are present. If it has been produced by the ego, without serving the spirit, it continues after death as desire, which thirsts in vain for satisfaction.

We can only form an idea of what now takes place in the human being if we think of a person suffering from burning thirst in a region in which water is nowhere to be found. This, then, is the state of the ego, in so far as it harbors, after death, the unextinguished desires for the pleasures of the outer world and has no organs with which to satisfy them. Naturally, we must imagine the burning thirst that serves as an analogy for the conditions of the ego after death to be increased immeasurably, and imagine it spread out over all the other still existing desires for which all possibility of satisfaction is lacking. The next task of the ego consists in freeing itself from this bond of attraction to the outer world.

In this respect the ego has to bring about a purification and emancipation within itself. All desires that have been created by it within the body and that have no inherent rights within the spiritual world must

be rooted out. — Just as an object takes fire and is consumed, so is the world of desires, described above, consumed and destroyed after death. This affords us a glimpse into the world that supersensible knowledge designates as the "consuming fire of the spirit." All desires of a sensual nature, in which the sensual is not an expression of the spirit, are seized upon by this "fire."

The ideas that supersensible knowledge must give in regard to these processes might be found to be hopeless and awful. It might appear terrifying that a hope, for whose realization sense organs are necessary, must change into hopelessness after death; that a desire, which only the physical world can satisfy, must turn into consuming deprivation. Such a point of view is possible only as long as one does not consider the fact that all wishes and desires, which after death are seized by the "consuming fire," in a higher sense represent not beneficial but destroying forces in life. By means of such destructive forces, the ego tightens the bond with the sense world more strongly than is necessary in order to absorb from this very sense world what is beneficial to it.

This sense world is a manifestation of the spirit hidden behind it. The ego would never be able to enjoy the spirit in the form in which it is able to manifest through bodily senses alone, did it not want to use these senses for the enjoyment of the spiritual within the sense world. Yet the ego deprives itself of the true spiritual reality in the world to the degree that it desires the sense world without the spirit. If the enjoyment of the senses, as an expression of the spirit, signifies an elevation and development of the ego, then an enjoyment that is not an expression of the spirit signifies the impoverishing, the desolation of the ego.

If a desire of this kind is satisfied in the sense world, its desolating effect upon the ego nevertheless remains. Before death, however, this destructive effect upon the ego is not apparent. Therefore the satisfaction of such desires can produce similar desires during life, and man is not at all aware that he is enveloping himself, through himself, in a "consuming fire." After death, what has surrounded him in life becomes visible, and by becoming visible it appears in its healing, beneficial consequences.

A person who loves another is certainly not attracted only to that in him which can be experienced through the physical organs. But only of what can thus be experienced may it be said that it is withdrawn from perception at death; just that part of the loved one then becomes visible for the perception of which the physical organs were only the means. Moreover, the only thing that then hinders that part from becoming completely visible is the presence of the desire that can only be satisfied through physical organs.

If this desire were not extirpated, the conscious perception of the beloved person could not arise after death. Considered in this way, the picture of frightfulness and despair that might arise in the human being concerning the events after death, as depicted by supersensible knowledge, must change into one of deep satisfaction and consolation.

The first experiences after death are different in still another respect from those during life. During the time of purification man, as it were, lives his life in reverse order. He passes again through all that he has experienced in life since his birth. He begins with the events that immediately preceded death and experiences everything in reverse order back to childhood. During this process, everything that has not arisen out of the spiritual nature of the ego during life passes spiritually before his eyes, only he

experiences all this now inversely.

For example, a person who died in his sixtieth year and who in his fortieth year had done someone a bodily or soul injury in an outburst of anger will experience this event again when, in passing through his life's journey in reverse order after death, he reaches the place of his fortieth year. He now experiences, not the satisfaction he had in life from his attack upon the other person, however, but the pain he gave him. From what has been said above, it is at the same time also possible to see that only that part of such an event can be experienced painfully after death that has arisen from passions of the ego having their source only in the outer physical world.

In reality, the ego not only damages the other person through the gratification of such a passion, but itself as well; only the damage to itself is not apparent to it during life. After death this whole, damaging world of passion becomes perceptible to the ego, and the ego then feels itself drawn to every being and every thing that has enkindled such a passion, in order that this passion may again be destroyed in the "consuming fire" in the same way it was created. Only when man in his backward journey has reached the point of his birth have all the passions of this kind passed through the fire of purification, and, from then on, nothing hinders him from a complete surrender to the spiritual world.

He enters upon a new stage of existence. Just as, at death, he threw off the physical body, then, soon after, the ether body, so now that part of the astral body falls away that can live only in the consciousness of the outer physical world. For supersensible perception there are, thus, three corpses: the physical, the etheric, and the astral corpse. The point of time when the latter is thrown off by man is at the end of the period of purification, which lasts about a third of the time that passed between birth and death.

The reason why this is so can only become clear later on, when we shall consider the course of human life from the standpoint of occult science. For supersensible observation, astral corpses are constantly present in the environment of man, which have been discarded by human beings who are passing over from the state of purification into a higher existence, just as for physical perception there are physical corpses in the world in which men dwell.

After purification an entirely new state of consciousness begins for the ego. While before death the outer perceptions had to flow toward the ego in order that the light of consciousness might fall upon them, now, as it were, a world flows from within of which it acquires consciousness.

The ego lives in this world also between birth and death. There, however, this world is clothed in the manifestations of the senses, and only there where the ego, taking no heed of all sense-perceptions, perceives itself in its innermost sanctuary is what otherwise appears veiled by the sense world revealed in its real form. Just as before death the self-perception of the ego takes place in its inner being, so after death and after purification the world of spirit in its plenitude is revealed from within.

This revelation, in fact, takes place immediately after the stripping off of the ether body. But, like a darkening cloud, the world of desires, which are still turned toward the outer world, spreads out before it. It is as though dark demoniacal shadows, arising out of the passions "consuming themselves in fire," intermingled with a blissful world of spiritual experience. Indeed, these passions are now not mere shadows, but actual entities.

This becomes at once apparent when the physical organs are removed from the ego and it, therefore, can perceive what is of a spiritual nature. These creatures appear like distortions and caricatures of what the human being previously knew through sense-perception. Supersensible perception says about the world of the purifying fire that it is inhabited by beings whose appearance for the spiritual eye can be horrible and painful, whose pleasure seems to be destruction and whose passion is bent upon a spiritual evil, in comparison with which the evil of the sense world appears insignificant. The passions indicated, which human beings bring into this world, appear to these creatures as food by means of which their power receives constant strengthening. The picture thus drawn of a world imperceptible to the senses can appear less incredible if one for a moment observes a part of the animal world with unprejudiced eyes.

For the spiritual gaze, what is a cruel, prowling wolf? What manifests itself in what the senses perceive in it? Nothing but a soul that lives in passions and acts through them. One can call the external form of the wolf an embodiment of these passions, and even if a person had no organs with which to perceive this form, he would still have to acknowledge the existence of the being in question, if its passions showed invisibly in their effects; that is, if a power, invisible to the eye, were prowling around by means of which everything could happen that occurs through the visible wolf.

To be sure, the beings of the purifying fire do not exist for sensory, but for supersensible consciousness only; their effects, however, are clearly manifest: they consist in the destruction of the ego when it gives them nourishment. These effects become clearly visible when a well-founded pleasure increases to lack of moderation and excess, for what is perceptible to the senses would also attract the ego only in so far as the pleasure is founded in its own nature. The animal is impelled to desire only by means of that in the outer world for which its three bodies are craving.

Man possesses nobler pleasures because a fourth member, the ego, is added to the three bodily members. But if the ego seeks for a gratification that serves to destroy its own nature, not to maintain and further it, then such craving can be neither the effect of its three bodies, nor that of its own nature. It can only be the effect of beings who, in their true form, remain hidden from the senses, beings who can set to work on the higher nature of the ego and arouse in it passions that have no relationship to sense existence, but can only be satisfied through it.

Beings exist who are nourished by desires and passions that are worse than any animal passions, because they do not have their being in the sense world, but seize upon the spiritual and drag it down into the realm of the senses. For that reason the forms of such beings are, for supersensible perception, more hideous and gruesome than the forms of the wildest animals, in which only passions are embodied that originate in the sense world. The destructive forces of these beings exceed immeasurably all destructive fury existing in the visible animal world. Supersensible knowledge must, in this way, enlarge the human horizon to include a world of beings that, in a certain respect, stand lower than the visible world of destructive animals.

When man, after death, has passed through this world, he finds himself confronted by a world that contains the spirit, producing a longing within him that finds its satisfaction only in the spirit. Now too, however, he distinguishes between what belongs to his ego and what forms the environment of this

ego, that is, its spiritual outer world. Only, what he experiences of this environment streams toward him in the way the perception of his own ego streams toward him during his sojourn in the body.

While in the life between birth and death his environment speaks to him through his bodily organs, after all bodies have been laid aside the language of the new environment penetrates directly into the "innermost sanctuary" of his ego. The entire environment of the human being is filled with beings of like nature with his ego, for only an ego has access to another ego.

Just as minerals, plants, and animals surround him in the sense world and compose that world, so after death he is surrounded by a world that is composed of beings of a spiritual nature. — Yet he brings with him into this world something that does not belong to his environment there, namely, what the ego has experienced within the sense world. Immediately after death, and as long as the ether body was still united with the ego, the sum of these experiences appeared in the form of a comprehensive memory picture.

The ether body itself is then, to be sure, cast off, but something from this memory picture remains as an imperishable possession of the ego. What has thus been retained appears as an extract, an essence made from all the experiences that the human being has passed through between birth and death. This is life's spiritual yield, its fruit. This yield contains everything of a spiritual character that has been revealed through the senses. Without life in the sense world, however, it could not have come into existence.

After death the ego feels this spiritual fruit of the sense world as its own inner world with which it enters a world composed of beings who manifest themselves as only his ego can manifest itself in its innermost depths. Just as the plant seed, which is an extract of the entire plant, develops only when it is inserted into another world — the earth, so what the ego brings with it out of the sense world unfolds like a seed upon which the spiritual environment acts that has now received it. If the science of the supersensible is to describe what occurs in this "land of the spirits," it can indeed only do so by portraying it in pictures.

Still, these pictures appear as absolute reality to supersensible consciousness when it investigates the corresponding occurrences imperceptible to the physical eye. What is to be described here may be illustrated by means of comparisons with the sense world, for although it is wholly of a spiritual nature, it has, in a certain respect, a similarity to the sense world. For example, just as in the world of the senses a color appears when an object impresses the eye, in the "land of the spirits," when a spiritual being acts upon the ego, an experience is produced similar to one made by a color. But this experience is produced in the way in which, in the life between birth and death, only the perception of the ego can be produced in the soul's inner being.

It is not as though the light struck the human inner being from without, but as though another being were acting directly upon the ego, causing it to portray this activity in a colored picture. Thus all beings of the spiritual environment of the ego express themselves in a world of radiating colors. Since their origin is of a different kind, these color experiences of the spirit world are, naturally, of a character somewhat different from the experiences of physical color. The same thing can be said of other impressions that the human being receives from the sense world.

The impressions that resemble most those of the sense world are the tones of the spiritual world, and the more the human being becomes familiar with this world, the more will it become for him an inwardly pulsating life that may be likened to tones and their harmonies in sensory reality. These tones, however, are not experienced as something reaching an organ from outside, but as a force streaming through the ego out into the world.

The human being feels the tone as he feels his own speaking or singing in the sense world, but he knows that in the spiritual world these tones streaming out from him are at the same time manifestations of other beings poured out into the world through him. A still higher manifestation takes place in the land of spirit beings when the tone becomes "spiritual speech."

Then not only the pulsing life of another spirit being streams through the ego, but a being of this kind imparts its own inner nature to this ego. Without that separation which all companionship must experience in the physical world, two beings live in each other when the ego is thus permeated by "spiritual speech." The companionship of the ego with other spirit beings after death is really of this kind.

Three realms of the land of spirits appear before supersensible consciousness that may be compared with three regions of the physical sense world. The first region is the "solid land" of the spiritual world, the second, the "region of oceans and rivers," the third, the "atmospheric region." — What assumes physical form on earth so that it may be perceived by means of physical organs is perceived in its spiritual nature in the first realm of the land of spirit beings.

For example, the force that gives the crystal its form may be perceived there, but what thus appears is the antithesis of the form it assumes in the sense world. The space, which in the physical world is filled with the stone mass, appears to spiritual vision as a kind of cavity. Around this cavity, however, the force is visible that gives form to the stone. The color the stone possesses in the physical world is experienced in the spiritual world as the complementary color. Thus a red stone appears greenish in the spirit land and a green stone, reddish.

The other characteristics also appear in their complementary forms. Just as stones, earth masses, and so forth, make up the solid land — the continental regions — of the physical world, so the structures described above compose "the solid land" of the spirit world. — Everything that is life within the sense world is the oceanic region in the spirit world. Life to the physical eye is manifest in its effects in plants, animals, and men. Life to spiritual vision is a flowing entity that permeates the land of spirits like seas and rivers.

A still better analogy is that of the circulation of the blood in the body, for whereas oceans and rivers appear irregularly distributed within the physical world, there is a certain regularity, like that of the circulation of the blood, in the distribution of this streaming life of the land of spirit beings.

This flowing life is heard simultaneously as a spiritual entoning. — The third realm of the spirit land is its "atmosphere." What appears in the sense world as sensation exists in the spiritual realm as an all-pervading presence like the earth's air. Here we must imagine a sea of flowing feeling. Sorrow and pain, joy and delight flow through this realm like wind or a raging tempest in the atmosphere of the

sense world. Imagine a battle raging upon earth. Not only human forms confront each other there, forms that can be seen with the physical eyes, but feelings stand forth opposing feelings, passions opposing passions.

The battlefield is filled with pain as well as with human forms. Everything that is experienced there of the nature of passion, pain, joy of conquest, is present not alone in its effects perceptible to the senses, but the spiritual sense becomes conscious of it as atmospheric processes in the land of spirits. Such an event in the spirit is like a thunder storm in the physical world, and the perception of these events may be likened to the hearing of words in the physical world. Therefore it is said that just as the air surrounds and permeates the earth beings, so do "wafting spiritual words" enclose the beings and processes of the spirit land.

There are still other perceptions possible in this spiritual world. What may be compared to warmth and light of the physical world is also present. What permeates everything in the spirit land, like warmth permeating earthly things, is the thought world itself, only here, thoughts must be imagined as living, independent entities. What is apprehended as thoughts in the physical world is like the shadow of what exists in the land of spirits as thought beings.

If we imagine thought, as it exists in human beings, withdrawn from man and endowed as an active entity with its own inner life, then we have a feeble illustration of what permeates the fourth region of the spirit land. What man perceives as thoughts in his physical world between birth and death is only the manifestation of the thought world as it is able to express itself through the instrumentality of the bodies. But all such thoughts entertained by human beings, which signify an enrichment of the physical world, have their origin in this region. One need not think here merely of the ideas of the great inventors, of the geniuses. It can be seen how every person has sudden ideas that he does not owe merely to the outer world, but with which he transforms this outer world itself.

Feelings and passions whose causes lie in the outer world have to be placed in the third region of the spirit land. But everything that can so live in the human soul as to make him a creator, causing him to transform and fructify his surroundings, is perceptible in its primeval, essential form in the fourth sphere of the spiritual world. — What exists in the fifth region may be compared with physical light. It is wisdom revealing itself in its innermost form. Beings belonging to this region shed wisdom upon their environment, just as the sun sheds light upon physical beings. What is illuminated by this wisdom appears in its true significance and meaning for the spiritual world, just as a physical object displays its color when it is shone upon by the light. — There exist still higher regions of the land of the spirits, descriptions of which will be found in a later part of this work.

After death, the ego is immersed in this world, together with the harvest that it brings with it from its life in the sense world. This harvest is still united with that part of the astral body that has not been thrown off at the end of the period of purification. Only that part falls away which after death was inclined with its desires and longings toward physical life. The immersion of the ego in the spiritual world, together with what it has acquired in the sense world, may be compared with the insertion of a seed into the ripening earth.

Just as this seed draws substances and forces from its environment in order to develop into a new plant, so, too, unfolding and growth is the very essence of the ego being embedded in the world of

spirit. — Within what an organ perceives lies hidden the force by means of which the organ itself is created. The eye perceives the light, but without the light there would be no eye. Beings that pass their lives in darkness develop no organs of sight. In this manner the whole bodily organism of the human being is created out of the hidden forces lying within what is perceived with these bodily members. The physical body is built up by the forces of the physical world, the ether body by those of the life world, and the astral body is formed out of the astral world.

When the ego is now transplanted into the spirit land, it encounters those forces that remain hidden to physical perception. In the first region of the spirit land the spiritual beings are perceptible who always surround the human being and who have also fashioned his physical body. Thus in the physical world, man perceives nothing but the manifestations of those spiritual forces that have also formed his own physical body. After death, he is himself in the midst of these formative forces that now appear to him in their own, previously concealed, form. Likewise, in the second region he is in the midst of the forces composing his ether body. In the third region, forces stream toward him out of which his astral body has been organized. The higher regions of the spirit land also now impart to him what composes his form in his life between birth and death.

These beings of the spirit world now co-operate with what man has brought with him as fruit from the former life and what now becomes a seed. By means of this cooperation man is built up anew as a spiritual being. In sleep the physical and ether bodies continue their existence; the astral body and ego are, to be sure, outside of these two bodies, but still united with them. Whatever influences the astral body and the ego receive in this state from the spiritual world can only serve to restore the forces exhausted during the waking period.

When the physical and ether bodies have been laid aside, however, and when, after the period of purification, those parts of the astral body that are still connected with the physical world through their desires are also laid aside, all that streams toward the ego from the spirit world now becomes not only a perfecter, but a recreator. After a certain length of time, which will be discussed in later parts of this work, an astral body has formed itself around the ego; the former can again dwell in ether and physical bodies befitting the human being between birth and death.

He can again pass through birth and appear in a new earth existence into which the fruit of the previous life has been incorporated. Up to the time of re-forming a new astral body, man is a witness of his own re-creation. Since the powers of the spirit land do not reveal themselves to him by means of outer organs, but from within, like his own ego in self-consciousness, he is able to perceive this revelation as long as his mind is not yet directed to an outwardly perceptible world. The moment, however, the astral body is newly formed, his attention turns outward.

The astral body once more requires an external ether and physical body. It therefore turns away from the revelations of the inner world. For this reason an intermediate state now begins, during which man sinks into unconsciousness. Consciousness can only reappear in the physical world when the necessary organs for physical perception have been formed. During this period in which consciousness, illuminated by inner perception, ceases, the new ether body begins to attach itself to the astral body and the human being can then again enter into a physical body.

Only an ego that has of itself produced life spirit and spirit man, the hidden, creative forces in the ether



and physical bodies, would be able to take part consciously in the attachment of these two members. As long as man is not developed to this point, beings who are further advanced than he in their evolution must direct the attachment of these members. The astral body is led by such beings to certain parents, so that he may be endowed with the proper ether and physical bodies. — Before the attachment of the ether body is completed, something extraordinarily significant occurs for the human being who is re-entering physical existence. He has, in his previous life, created destructive forces that became evident when he experienced his life in reverse order after death.

Let us take again the example suggested above. A person had caused someone pain in an outburst of anger in the fortieth year of his previous life. After death, he met this pain of the other person in the form of a force destructive to the development of his own ego. So it is with all such occurrences of his previous life. On re-entering physical life, these hindrances to evolution confront the ego anew. Just as at death a kind of memory picture of the past life arose before the human ego, now a pre-vision of the coming life presents itself. Again he sees a tableau, which this time displays all the hindrances he must remove if his evolution is to make further progress.

What he thus sees becomes the starting point of forces that he must carry with him into a new life. The picture of the pain that he has caused another person becomes the force impelling the ego, on re-entering life, to make reparation for this pain. Thus the previous life has a determining effect upon the new life. The actions of this new life are in a certain way caused by those of the previous life. This orderly connection between a former and a later existence must be considered as the law of destiny. It has become the custom to designate this law by the name karma, a term borrowed from oriental wisdom.

The fashioning of a new corporeal organization is not the only activity that is required of the human being between death and a new birth. While this building up is taking place, man lives outside the physical world. But during this time the earth proceeds in its evolution. Within relatively short periods of time the earth changes its countenance. How did those regions, which at present are occupied by Germany, appear a few millennia ago?

When man reappears in a new life, the earth as a rule presents quite a different appearance from the one it had in his previous life. While he was absent from the earth all sorts of changes have occurred. Hidden forces also are at work in this transformation of the face of the earth. Their activities proceed from the same world in which man dwells after death, and he himself must co-operate in this transformation of the earth. He can do so only under the guidance of higher beings, as long as he has not acquired, through the development of life spirit and spirit man, a clear consciousness concerning the relationship between the spirit and its expression in the physical. But he helps to transform the earthly conditions.

It can be said that human beings, during the period between death and a new birth, transform the earth in such a way that its conditions harmonize with their own development. If we observe a particular spot on the earth at a definite point of time and observe it again after a long span, finding it in a fully changed condition, the forces that have wrought this change are the forces of the human dead. In this way men have a relationship with the earth also during the period between death and a new birth. Supersensible consciousness sees in all physical existence the manifestation of a hidden spirituality. For physical observation, it is the light of the sun, climatic changes, and similar phenomena that bring

about the transformation of the earth.

For supersensible observation, the forces of the human dead are active in the rays of light that fall upon the plants from the sun. By observing supersensibly one becomes aware of how human souls hover above the plants, how they change the surface of the earth, and so forth. The attention of the human being is not only turned upon himself and upon the preparation for his own new earth life; indeed, he is called upon to work spiritually upon the outer world, just as he is called upon to work physically in the life between birth and death.

Not only from the land of spirit beings does human life affect the conditions of the physical world, however, but, vice versa, all activity in physical existence has its effects in the spiritual world. An example will illustrate what happens in this respect. A bond of love exists between mother and child.

This love arises out of an attraction between the two that has its roots in the forces of the sense world. But it changes in the course of time; a spiritual bond is formed more and more out of the sensory, and this spiritual link is fashioned not merely for the physical world, but also for the land of spirits.

This is also true for other relationships. What has been spun in the physical world through spiritual beings remains in the spiritual world. Friends who have become closely united in life belong together also in the land of spirits and, after laying aside their bodies, they are in much more intimate communion than in physical life. For as spirits they exist for each other through the manifestation of their inner nature in the same way that the higher spiritual beings manifest their existence to one another through their inner nature, as we have described above, and a tie that has been woven between two people brings them together again in a new life. Therefore, in the truest sense of the word, we must speak of people finding each other again after death.

What has once taken place with a person, during the period from birth to death and then from death to a re-birth, repeats itself. Man returns to earth again and again when the fruit that he has acquired in one physical life has reached maturity in the land of the spirits. Yet, we must not think here of repetition without beginning and end, for the human being passed, at some time, from other forms of existence into those that take place in the manner described, and he will in the future pass on to others. A picture of these transitional stages will be presented when, subsequently, the evolution of the cosmos — in relation to man — is described from the standpoint of supersensible consciousness.

The processes that occur between death and a new birth are, naturally, still more concealed for outer sensory observation than the spiritual element that underlies manifest existence between birth and death. This sensory observation can see the effects of this part of the concealed world only where they enter into physical existence. The question for sensory observation is, whether the human being who passes through birth into life brings with him something of the processes described by supersensible cognition as taking place between a previous death and birth.

If someone finds a snail shell in which no trace of an animal is to be seen, he will nevertheless acknowledge that this snail shell has come into existence through the activity of some animal and will not believe that it has been constructed in its form purely by means of physical forces. Likewise, a person who observes a living human being and finds something that cannot have its origin in this life, can admit with reason that it originates in what the science of the supersensible described, if thereby a

clarifying light is thrown upon what is otherwise inexplicable.

Thus intelligent sensory observation would be able to find that the invisible causes are comprehensible through their visible effects, and to anyone who observes this physical life entirely without prejudice, the above will appear — with every new observation — more and more convincing. It is only a question of finding the right standpoint for observing the effects in outer life. For example, where are the effects of what supersensible cognition describes as processes of the time of purification? How do the effects of the experiences that man undergoes manifest themselves after this time of purification in the purely spiritual realm, according to the evidence of spiritual research?

Problems enough force themselves into every earnest and deep consideration of life in this field. We see one person born in need and misery, equipped with only meager ability, and he appears to be predestined to a pitiable existence because of the conditions prevailing at his birth. Another will, from the first moment of his life, be cherished and cared for by solicitous hands and hearts; brilliant capacities unfold in him, he is cut out for a fruitful, satisfactory existence. Two contrasting points of view can be asserted in respect of such problems.

The one adheres to what the senses perceive and what the intellect, bound to the senses, can grasp. This point of view sees no problem in the fact that one person is born to good fortune, the other to misfortune. Although such a point of view may not wish to use the word "chance," still those who hold it are not ready to assume an interrelated web of laws that causes such diversities, and with respect to aptitudes and talents, this way of thinking adheres to what is said to be "inherited" from parents, grandparents, and other ancestors.

It will refuse to seek the causes in spiritual events that man himself has experienced before his birth, and through which he has formed his capacities and talents, quite apart from the hereditary descent from his ancestors. — Another point of view will not feel satisfied with such an interpretation. It will hold that even in the outer world nothing occurs at a definite place or in definite surroundings without the necessity of presupposing a reason for the cause of it. Although in many instances these causes have not yet been investigated, yet they exist.

An Alpine flower does not grow in the lowlands; there is something in its nature that unites it with the Alpine regions. Likewise, there must be something in a human being that causes him to be born in a definite environment. This is not to be explained by causes that lie merely in the physical world. To a serious thinker this must appear as though a blow dealt another should be explained not by the feelings of the aggressor, but rather by the physical mechanism of his hand. — Those who have this point of view must also be dissatisfied with all explanations of aptitude and talents as mere inheritance. Yet it may be said in this connection that obviously certain aptitudes continue to be inherited in families. During two and a half centuries musical aptitudes were inherited by the members of the Bach family.

Eight mathematicians, some of whom in their childhood were destined for quite different professions, have appeared in the Bernoulli family. The "inherited" talents have always impelled them to take up the family profession. Furthermore, it can be shown through exact investigation of the line of ancestry of an individual that, in one way or another, the talents of this individual have appeared in the ancestors and that they present only a summation of inherited tendencies. The one having the second

point of view mentioned will certainly not disregard such facts, but they cannot mean the same thing to him as to the other who rests his explanations solely upon the processes of the sense world.

The former will point out that it is just as impossible for the inherited traits to sum themselves up into an entire personality as it is for the metal parts of a clock to form themselves into a clock. If the objection is made that the united activity of the parents can bring about the combination of traits and that this, as it were, takes the place of the clock-maker, he will reply, "Just look with impartiality at the completely new element in every child's personality; this cannot come from the parents for the simple reason that it does not exist in them."

Unclear thinking can cause great confusion in this realm. The worst is if those having the first point of view previously stated look on those having the second as opponents of what is based upon "sure facts." But these latter may not even think of denying the truth or the value of these facts. They also see quite clearly, for example, that a definite spiritual predisposition, even a spiritual direction, is "inherited" in a family, and that certain capacities summarized and combined in one descendant result in a remarkable personality.

They are ready to admit that the most illustrious name seldom stands at the beginning, but at the end of a blood relationship. But those holding this view should not be blamed if they are forced to draw conclusions from these findings quite different from those of the persons who merely hold to the facts of the senses. The latter may be countered by saying that the human being certainly displays the attributes of his ancestors, for the soul-spirit element, which enters into physical existence through birth, takes its physical form from what heredity gives it. But by this, nothing else is said than that a being bears the qualities of the medium in which it is immersed.

The following is certainly a strange and trivial comparison, but the unprejudiced mind will not deny its justification when it is said that the fact that a human being appears clothed in the traits of his forebears gives no more evidence of the origin of his personal characteristics than the fact that he is wet because he fell into the water gives evidence of his inner nature. It can be said further that if the most illustrious name stands at the end of a blood relationship covering many generations, it shows that the bearer of this name needed this blood relationship in order to form the body required for the development of his entire personality.

It is, however, no proof whatsoever of the "inheritance" of the personal element itself; in fact, for a healthy logic, this fact proves just the opposite. If indeed the personal gifts were inherited, they would have to stand at the beginning of this series of generations and be transmitted to the descendants. But the appearance of a great endowment at the end of a human series proves that it is not inherited.

It is not to be denied that those who speak of spiritual causation in life often add to the confusion. They often speak too much in general, indefinite terms. When it is declared that the inherited attributes are summed up into the personality of a human being, this can certainly be compared with the statement that the metal parts of a clock have assembled themselves. But it must also be admitted that many statements about the spiritual world are similar to the declaration that the metal parts of a clock cannot assemble themselves so that the hands move forward; therefore something spiritual must be present that takes care of the forward movement of the hands.

In respect of such an assertion, he builds on a firmer foundation who says, "Oh, I shall not trouble about such 'mystical beings' who advance the hands of the clock; I am trying to learn to understand the mechanical relationships that bring about this forward movement of the hands." For it is not a question of merely knowing that behind such a mechanism as the clock, for example, there stands something spiritual — the clock-maker — but it is of significance only to learn to know the thoughts in the mind of the clock-maker that have preceded the construction of the clock. These thoughts can be found again in the mechanism.

All mere dreaming and imagining about the supersensible brings only confusion for they are incapable of satisfying the opponents. The latter are right when they say that such general references to supersensible beings are not an aid to the understanding of the facts. These opponents, it is true, may say the same thing about the definite indications of spiritual science. In this case, however, it can be shown how the effects of hidden spiritual causes appear in outer life.

The following can be maintained: Suppose that what spiritual research has established by means of observation is true, namely, that man after death has passed through a period of purification and that he has experienced psychically during that time how a definite act, which has been performed in a previous life, is a hindrance to further evolution. While he was experiencing this, the impulse developed in him to rectify the consequences of this act. He brings this impulse with him into a new life, and it then forms the trait of character that places him in a position where this rectification is possible. Consider the totality of such impulses, and you have a reason for the destined environment in which a person is born. — The same may apply to another supposition.

Again assume that what spiritual science says is true, namely, that the fruits of a past life are incorporated in the spiritual human seed, and that the land of the spirits in which this seed exists between death and rebirth is the realm in which these fruits ripen in order to appear again in a new life changed into talents and capacities, and to form the personality in such a way that it appears as the effect of what has been gained in a former life. — Anyone who makes these assumptions and, with them, observes life without prejudice will see that through them all facts of the sense world can be acknowledged in their full significance and truth, while at the same time everything becomes comprehensible that must remain forever incomprehensible to the one who, while relying only on physical facts, directs his attitude of mind toward the spiritual world.

Above all, every illogical assumption will disappear, for instance the one mentioned above, that because the most important name stands at the end of a blood relationship series, the bearer of that name must have inherited his talents. Life becomes logically comprehensible by means of the supersensible facts communicated by spiritual science.

The conscientious truth-seeker who, without personal experiences in the supersensible world, wishes to find his way within the facts will, however, still be able to raise an important objection. For it can be asserted that it is inadmissible to assume the existence of any fact whatever simply for the reason that something that otherwise is inexplicable can thereby be explained. Such an objection is surely wholly without meaning for the one who knows the corresponding facts from supersensible experience. In the subsequent chapters of this work, the path will be indicated that can be traveled for the purpose of becoming acquainted, not only with other spiritual facts to be described here, but also with the law of spiritual causation as an individual experience.

However, the above objection can, indeed, have significance for the person who is not willing to tread this path, but what can be said in refutation of this objection is also valuable for the one who has decided to take this path. For a person who accepts this in the right way has made the best initial step that can be taken on the path. — It is absolutely true that we should not accept something, the existence of which we do not otherwise know, simply because something, which otherwise remains incomprehensible, can be explained by it. In the case of the spiritual facts mentioned, however, the matter is quite different.

If they are accepted, this has not only the intellectual consequence that life becomes comprehensible through them, but by the admission of these assumptions into our thoughts something else is experienced. Imagine the following case. Something happens to a person that arouses in him a feeling of distress. He can take this in two different ways. He can experience distress over the occurrence and yield himself to its disturbing aspects, even perhaps sink into grief. He can, however, take it in another way.

He can say, "In reality, I have in a past life developed in myself the force that has confronted me with this event; I have, in fact, brought this thing upon myself," and he can arouse in himself all the feelings that can result from such a thought. Naturally, the thought must be experienced with the utmost sincerity and all possible force if it is to have such a result for the life of feeling and sensation. Whoever achieves this will have an experience that can best be illustrated by a comparison. Let us suppose that two men get hold of a stick of sealing wax. One makes intellectual observations concerning its "inner nature."

These observations may be very clever; if there is nothing to show this "Inner nature," one might easily reply that this is pure fantasy. The other, however, rubs the sealing wax with a cloth and then shows that it attracts small particles. There is a tremendous difference between the thoughts that have passed through the head of the first man, arousing his observations, and those of the second man. The thoughts of the first have no actual results; those of the second, however, have aroused a force, that is, something actual, from its concealment. — This is also the case with the thoughts of the human being who imagines that, through a former life, he has implanted into himself the power to encounter an event. This mere thought arouses in him a real force by means of which he can meet the event quite differently from the way he would have met it had he not entertained this thought.

The inherent necessity of this event, which otherwise he might have considered merely due to chance, dawns upon him, and he will at once understand that he has had the right thought, for it had the force to disclose to him the facts. If a person repeats such inner processes, they become the means of an inner supply of strength and thus they prove their truth through their fruitfulness, and this truth becomes manifest gradually and powerfully. These processes have a healthy effect in regard to spirit, soul, and body; indeed, in every respect they act beneficially upon life. Man becomes aware that in this way he enters in the right manner into the relationships of life, whereas he is on the wrong path when he considers only the one life between birth and death.

His soul becomes stronger because of this knowledge. — Such purely inner proof of spiritual causation can only be produced by each person himself in his own intimate soul life, but everyone can have such proof. Anyone who has not produced this proof cannot, of course, judge its power. Anyone who has

produced it can no longer have any doubt about it. It is not surprising that this is so, for it is only natural that what is so intimately connected with man's innermost nature, his personality, can also be satisfactorily proved only by means of the most intimate experience. — The objection cannot be made, however, that each person must deal personally with such matters since they have to do with an inner experience of this kind, and that they cannot be the concern of spiritual science.

It is true that each person must have the experience himself, just as each person must himself understand the proof of a mathematical problem. The means by which the experience can be attained, however, holds good for everyone, just as the method of proving a mathematical problem holds good for everyone.

It should not be denied that — aside from supersensible observations, of course — the proof by means of the forceproducing power of the corresponding thoughts just referred to, is the only one that holds its own if viewed with impartial logic. All other considerations are certainly important, but they all will possess something that offers a point of attack. To be sure, anyone who has acquired a sufficiently unprejudiced point of view will find something in the possibility and actuality of the education of man that has logically effective power of proof for the fact that a spiritual being is struggling for existence within the bodily sheath.

He will compare the animal with the human being and say to himself that in the former, its normal characteristics and capacities appear at birth as something definite, which shows clearly how it is predestined by heredity and how it will develop in the outer world. See how the tiny chick from birth carries out vital functions in a definite way. In the human being, however, something enters into relationship with his inner life, through education, that can exist without any connection whatsoever with heredity, and he can make the effects of such outer influences his own.

Anyone who teaches knows that forces from the inner being must come to meet such influences. If this is not the case, then all schooling, all education is meaningless. For the unprejudiced educator, there exists a clear-cut boundary between inherited characteristics and those inner human forces that shine through these characteristics originating in former earth lives.

True, it is impossible to adduce "weighty" proofs for these things in the same way that certain physical facts may be demonstrated by means of the scales. But then, these things are the intimacies of life, and for the person who has a sense for such things, these impalpable evidences are likewise conclusive, even more conclusive than the obvious reality. That animals can be trained, that is, that they acquire qualities and faculties through education, offers no objection for the one who is able to see the essential thing. Aside from the fact that everywhere in the world transitions are to be found, the results of animal training do not fuse in like manner with the animal's personal nature, as is the case with human beings.

It is even emphasized that the abilities the domestic animal acquires through training during its life with man, are inheritable, that is, that they have their effects in the species, not in the individual. Darwin describes how dogs fetch and carry without having learned to do so or having seen it done. Who would assert a similar thing in regard to human education?

There are thinkers who through their observation pass beyond the opinion that the human being is constructed from without purely through the forces of heredity. They rise to the idea that a spiritual being, an individuality, precedes physical existence and forms it. Many of them do not find it possible to comprehend that there are repeated earth lives, and that in the intervening existence between lives the fruits of the previous ones act cooperatively as formative forces. Let us mention one out of the list of such thinkers. Immanuel Hermann Fichte, son of the great Fichte, in his work *Anthropology 2* cites his observations that bring him to the following comprehensive conclusion:

"The parents are not the producers of the child in the fullest sense of the word. They offer the organic substance, and not alone that, but at the same time the median, sensory soul element that expresses itself in temperament, in special soul coloring, in definite specification of impulses, and the like, the general source of which is 'fantasy' in that broader sense already proved by us. In all these elements of personality the mixture and peculiar union of the parent souls is unmistakable; there are good reasons, therefore, to explain these as purely a product of procreation; all the more so, if procreation is understood to be an actual soul process.

We had to come to this conclusion. But the actual conclusive central point of the personality is lacking just here. For by means of a deeper, more penetrating observation we see that even those characteristics of mind and soul are only vestures and instruments for embracing the real spiritual, ideal aptitudes of man, capable of furthering or retarding them in their development, but in no way capable of bringing them into existence out of themselves."

And we read further:

"Each person existed previously in accordance with his spiritual fundamental form, for spiritually considered, no individual resembles another any more than one species of animal resembles another." (see Note #3)<sup>3</sup>

These thoughts only go so far as to permit a spiritual being to enter the physical corporeality of man. Since, however, this spiritual being's formative forces are not derived from the causes of a former life, each time that a personality comes into existence a spiritual being of this kind would have to emerge out of a divine primal fount.

Assuming this to be true, there would be no possibility of explaining the relationship that exists between the aptitudes struggling forth out of the human inner being and what approaches this inner being in the course of life from the outer earthly environment. The human inner being, which in every individual would have to spring from a divine primal source, would have to stand as a complete stranger before what confronts it in earth life. Only then will this not be the case — and so it is indeed — if this human inner nature had already been united with the external world — in other words, if it is not living in this world for the first time.

The unbiased educator can clearly make the observation, "I bring something to my pupil from the results of earth life that is indeed foreign to his merely inherited characteristics, yet is something that makes him feel as if he had already been connected with the work in which these results of earth life have their source."



Only repeated earth lives, in connection with the facts in the spiritual realm between these earth lives as presented by spiritual research, can give a satisfactory explanation of the life of present day humanity, considered from every point of view. — The expression, "present day" humanity, was intentionally used here, for spiritual research finds that there was a time when the cycle of earth lives began, and that at that time conditions different from those of the present existed for the spiritual being of man as it entered into the corporeal sheath.

In the following chapters we shall go back to this primeval state of the human being. When it will have to be shown, from the results of spiritual science, how this human being has attained his present form in relation to the evolution of the earth, we shall then be able to point out still more exactly how the spiritual essential core of man penetrates into the physical body from supersensible worlds, and how the spiritual law of causation — "human destiny" — is developed.

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### **Footnotes:**

1. Concerning the nature of fatigue, see "Details from the Domain of Spiritual Science" at the end of this book, Chapter VII
2. Immanuel Hermann Fichte, *Anthropologie*, p. 528. Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1860.
3. Immanuel Hermann Fichte, *Anthropologie*, p. 532.

## 4 - The Evolution Of The Cosmos And Man

### Part 1

From the foregoing considerations it may be seen that the being of man is composed of four members: physical body, life body, astral body, and the vehicle of the ego. The ego is active within the three other members and transforms them. Out of this transformation, at a lower level, are developed sentient soul, intellectual soul, and consciousness soul. At a higher stage of human existence, spirit self, life spirit, and spirit man are formed. These members of the human being stand in the most manifold relationships to the whole cosmos and their evolution is bound up with cosmic evolution. By considering this cosmic evolution, an insight may be gained into the deeper mysteries of man's being.

It is evident that human life is related in the most diverse ways to its environment, to the dwelling place in which it evolves. By means of existing facts even external science has been forced to the opinion that the earth itself, this dwelling place of man in the most comprehensive sense, has undergone an evolution. It points to the conditions of earth existence in which the human being, in his present form, did not yet exist upon our planet. It shows how mankind has slowly and gradually evolved from simple states of civilization to the present conditions. Thus, science also has come to the opinion that a relationship exists between the evolution of man and that of his heavenly body, the earth.

Spiritual science<sup>1</sup> traces this relationship by means of knowledge that gathers its facts from perception sharpened by spiritual organs. It traces back the process of human development, and it becomes clear to it that the real inner spiritual being of man has passed through a series of lives upon this earth. Spiritual science thus reaches a point of time, lying far back in the remote past, when for the first time this inner being of man enters an external life in the present sense of the word. It was in this first earthly incarnation that the ego began to be active within the three bodies, astral body, life body, and physical body, and it then carried with it the fruits of this activity into the succeeding life.

If one goes back in one's consideration to this point of time, in the manner indicated, one then becomes aware that the ego meets with an earth condition in which the three bodies, physical body, life body, and astral body, are already developed and have already a certain connection. The ego unites for the first time with the being composed of these three bodies. From now on, it takes part in the further evolution of the three bodies. Heretofore, these bodies developed without this human ego up to the stage at which the ego came in touch with them.

Spiritual science must go still further back in its research, if it wishes to answer the following questions: How did the three bodies reach the stage of evolution at which they were able to receive an ego into themselves, and how did this ego itself come into existence and acquire the capacity to be active within these bodies?

An answer to these questions is only possible if one traces out the development of the earth planet itself, in the sense of spiritual science. By means of such research one arrives at the beginning of this earth planet. The mode of observation that relies merely upon the facts of the physical senses cannot come to conclusions that have anything to do with this beginning of the earth. A certain point of view,

which makes use of such final conclusions, decides that all earthly substance has been formed out of a primeval mist. It cannot be the task of this work to enter into these ideas because for spiritual research it is a question of not merely considering the material processes of the earth's evolution, but chiefly of taking into account the spiritual causes lying behind matter.

If we have before us a man who raises his hand, this raising of the hand can suggest two different ways of considering the act. We may investigate the mechanism of the arm and the rest of the organism and describe the process as it takes place purely in the realm of the physical. On the other hand, we may turn our spiritual attention to what is taking place in the human soul, to what constitutes the inner impulse of raising the hand.

In a similar way the researcher, schooled by means of spiritual perception, sees spiritual processes behind all processes of the physical sense-world. For him, all transformations in the substances of the earth planet are manifestations of spiritual forces lying behind these substances. If, however, this spiritual observation of the life of the earth goes further and further back, it comes to a point in evolution where all matter has its primal beginnings. Matter evolves out of the spiritual. Prior to this, only the spiritual exists.

By means of this spiritual insight, the spiritual is perceived, and on further investigation it can be seen how this spiritual element in part condenses, so to speak, into matter. Here we have before us, on a higher level, a process that may be likened to what would take place if we were observing a container of water in which lumps of ice were gradually forming by means of ingeniously controlled refrigeration. Just as we see here ice condensing from what was formerly water, so also, through spiritual observation, we are able to trace out the manner in which material things, processes, and beings are condensed from an element that was formerly spiritual. — In this way the physical earth planet has evolved out of a spiritual cosmic being, and everything material connected with this earth planet has condensed out of what was spiritually bound up with it previously.

We must not imagine, however, that at any time all that exists of a spiritual nature is transformed into matter, but in matter we have before us transformed parts only of the primeval spiritual substance. Moreover, also during the period of evolution of matter, the spiritual remains the directing and guiding principle. It is obvious that the mode of thought that restricts itself to the processes of the physical sense-world, and to what the intellect is able to infer from them, is incapable of giving information concerning the spiritual element in question. Let us imagine a being having only the senses that can perceive ice, not, however, the finer condition of water, out of which ice is formed by means of refrigeration.

For such a being, water would be non-existent, and only when parts of this water had been transformed into ice would the water be at all perceptible to it. Thus the spiritual part lying behind the earth processes remains concealed to anyone who admits only what exists for the physical senses. If, from the physical facts he observes now in the present, he forms a correct conclusion concerning earlier conditions of the earth planet, he merely arrives at that point in evolution where a part of the preceding spiritual element condensed into matter.

This method of observation perceives just as little of the preceding spiritual element as it does of the

spiritual element that holds sway, also at the present time, invisibly behind the world of matter.

Only in the last chapters of this work shall we be able to speak of the paths upon which man must travel to acquire the capacity for looking back, with spiritual perception, at those earlier conditions of the earth under discussion here. Here we only wish to indicate that for spiritual research the facts even of the remote past have not disappeared. When a being reaches corporeal existence, the substance of his body disappears with his physical death. The spiritual forces that have expelled these corporeal elements from themselves do not "disappear" in the same way.

They leave their impressions, their exact counterparts, behind in the spiritual foundations of the world, and he who, penetrating the visible world, is able to lift his perception into the invisible, is finally able to have before him something that might be compared with a mighty spiritual panorama, in which all past world-processes are recorded. These imperishable impressions of all that is spiritual may be called the "Akashic Record," thus designating as the Akashic essence the spiritually permanent element in universal occurrences, in contradistinction to the transient forms of these occurrences. It must be repeated, once more, that research in the supersensible realms of existence can only be carried on with the help of spiritual perception, that is, in the realm with which we are now dealing, only by reading the above-mentioned "Akashic Record."

Yet what has already been said in earlier parts of this work in a similar connection applies here also. Supersensible facts can be investigated only by means of supersensible perception; if, however, they have been investigated and are communicated through the science of the supersensible, they may then be comprehended by ordinary thinking, provided this thinking is really unprejudiced. In the following pages, information concerning the evolution of the earth will be imparted from the standpoint of supersensible cognition. The transformations of our planet will be traced down to the condition of life in which we find it today.

If a person observes what he has actually before him in pure sense-perception, and then grasps what supersensible cognition has to say in regard to the way in which what exists at the present time has been evolving since time immemorial, he is then able to say, if he really thinks impartially: in the first place, the information imparted by this form of cognition is thoroughly logical; in the second place, I can understand that things have become what they now are, if I admit the truth of what has been communicated through supersensible research.

Naturally, when we speak of logic in this connection, we do not infer thereby that it is impossible for errors in logic to be contained in some presentation of supersensible research. We shall here speak of logic only as that word is used in the ordinary life of the physical world. Just as logical presentation is demanded in the physical world, even though the individual person presenting a range of facts may fall into logical error, so it is also the case in supersensible research. It may even happen that a researcher who has the power of perception in supersensible realms may fall into error in his logical presentation, and that someone who has no supersensible perception, but who has the capacity for sound thinking, may correct him.

Essentially, however, there can be no objection to the logic employed in supersensible research. Moreover, it should be quite unnecessary to emphasize the fact that nothing can be charged against the

facts themselves on purely logical grounds. Just as in the realm of the physical world it is never possible to prove logically the existence of a whale except by seeing one, so also the supersensible facts can be known only by means of spiritual perception. — It cannot, however, be sufficiently emphasized that it is necessary for the observer of supersensible realms first to acquire a view by means of the above-mentioned logic, before he tries to approach the spiritual world through his own perception. He must also recognize how comprehensible the manifest world of the senses appears when it is assumed that the communications of spiritual science are correct.

All experience in the supersensible world remains an insecure, even dangerous, groping, if the above-mentioned preparatory path is ignored. Therefore in this work the supersensible facts of earth evolution are first communicated, before the path to supersensible knowledge itself is dealt with. — We must also consider the fact that anyone who finds his way purely through thinking into what supersensible cognition has to impart is not at all in the same position as someone who listens to the description of a physical process that he himself is unable to observe, since pure thinking is itself a supersensible activity.

Thinking, as a sensory activity, cannot of itself lead to supersensible occurrences. If, however, this thinking be applied to the supersensible occurrences described by supersensible perception, it then grows through itself into the spiritual world. In fact, one of the best ways of acquiring one's own perception in the supersensible realm is to grow into the higher world by thinking about the communications of supersensible cognition, for, entrance into the higher realms in this way is accompanied by the greatest clarity of perception. For this reason a certain school of spiritual-scientific investigation considers this thinking the most excellent first stage of all spiritual-scientific training. — It should be quite comprehensible that in this book the way in which the supersensible finds its verification in the outer world is not described in all the details of earth evolution as it is perceived in spirit.

That is not what was meant when it was said that the hidden is everywhere demonstrable by its visible effects. The idea is, rather, that whatever is encountered can become entirely clear and comprehensible to man, if the manifest processes are placed into the light afforded by spiritual science. Only in a few characteristic instances will reference be made in the following pages to a verification of the concealed by means of the manifest, in order to show how it can be done at any point in the course of practical life.

If we trace back the evolution of the Earth by means of the spiritual-scientific method of research mentioned above, we come to a spiritual state of our planet. If we continue still further back on our path of research, we find that this spiritual element previously existed in a sort of physical embodiment. Thus we come upon a past physical planetary state that later became spiritualized and then, later still, through repeated materialization, became transformed into our Earth. Our Earth appears, therefore, as a reincarnation of an ancient planet. But spiritual science is able to go still further back and it then discovers the whole process repeated twice more.

This Earth of ours passed through three preceding planetary stages, and in between these stages there lie intermediate stages of spiritualization. The physical element appears ever more subtle, the further back we trace the Earth's incarnations.

One may ask: How can a sound power of thought accept the existence of world stages lying so far back in the past, such as these that are spoken of here? This is a natural objection to the descriptions that are to follow. Our reply is that for anyone who with understanding is able to see the present hidden spiritual element in what is revealed to the senses, an insight into the earlier evolutionary states, however remote, presents no impossibility. Only for someone who does not acknowledge this hidden spiritual element finds that, in his perception of the present stage, the earlier ones are also contained, just as in his perception of a man of fifty the one-year-old child is still contained. But, you may say, in the latter case you have before you, besides the man of fifty, one-year-old children and all the possible intermediate stages. That is true, but it is also true for the evolution of the spirit as it is meant here.

Whoever has come to an objective understanding in this field sees also that in a comprehensive survey of the present, which includes the spiritual, the past evolutionary stages have really survived, alongside the perfected stages of present-day evolution, just as alongside a man of fifty, one-year-old children are present. Within the earthly events of the present, the primeval happenings of the past may be seen if we are but able to distinguish between these different successive stages of evolution.

In the form in which he is evolving at present man appears for the first time during the fourth of the planetary incarnations characterized above, the actual Earth itself. The essential nature of this form shows the human being to be composed of the four members: physical body, life body, astral body, and ego. Yet this form would not have been able to appear had it not been prepared through the preceding processes of evolution.

This preparation took place because within the previous planetary incarnation there were beings evolving who already possessed three of the present four human members — the physical body, life body, and astral body. These beings, who in a certain sense may be called our human ancestors, did not yet possess an ego, but they developed these three other members and their inter-relationships to the degree that made them mature enough later on to receive the ego. Thus the human ancestor, in the previous planetary incarnation, reached a certain stage of maturity in his three members. This state passed over into a spiritual one and out of it a new physical planetary state developed, that of the Earth.

Within this Earth, the matured human ancestors were present, as it were, in a germinal state. Because the entire planet had passed over into a spiritualized condition and had reappeared in a new form, it offered to the embryonic human entities contained within it, with their physical, life, and astral bodies, the opportunity not only of developing again to their previous level, but also the further possibility, after having attained this point, of reaching out beyond it through the reception of the ego. The Earth evolution, therefore, falls into two parts. In the first period, the Earth itself appears as a reincarnation of the previous planetary stage.

This recapitulatory stage, however, stands at a higher level than that of the previous incarnation because of the intervening stage of spiritualization. The Earth now contains within itself the germinal nuclei of the human ancestors from the previous planet. These at first develop to their previous level; then, when they have attained this point, the first period is concluded, but because of its own higher stage of evolution, the Earth can now develop the nuclei still further, namely, by making them fit to

receive the ego. The unfoldment of the ego within the physical, life, and astral bodies is characteristic of the second period of Earth evolution.

In this way, by means of the evolution of the Earth, man is brought a stage higher. This was also the case in the previous planetary incarnations, for even in the first of these incarnations some element of the human being was present. Therefore, light is shed upon the human being of the present if his evolution is traced back to the distant past of the very first of the planetary incarnations mentioned. — In supersensible research, the first of these planetary incarnations may be named Saturn, the second may be designated Sun, the third, Moon, and the fourth, Earth.

It must be clearly understood, however, that these designations must not, at the outset, be associated with the same names that are used for the members of our present solar system. Saturn, Sun, and Moon are to be names for bygone evolutionary forms through which the Earth has passed.<sup>2</sup> The relationship that these worlds of the ancient past hold to the heavenly bodies constituting the present solar system will appear in the course of the subsequent descriptions. It will then become clear why these names have been chosen.

The conditions of the four planetary incarnations mentioned can be described only in outline, because the processes and the beings and their destinies upon Saturn, Sun, and Moon are truly as manifold as upon the Earth itself. Therefore in our descriptions of these states only single characteristic points will be brought out that illustrate how the Earth's states have developed out of earlier ones. We must also consider the fact that the further back we go, the more do these states become dissimilar to those of the present. Yet in characterizing them, they can only be described by employing mental representations borrowed from present earthly relationships.

When, for instance, we speak of light, heat, or other phenomena, in connection with these earlier states, we should not overlook the fact that we do not mean exactly what is meant by these words, light and heat, at the present time, and yet this terminology is correct, because for the observer of supersensible realms something appears in these earlier stages of evolution out of which the light and heat of the present have evolved. Those who follow the descriptions given here will indeed be well able to gather — from the connection in which these things are placed — what mental pictures are to be made in order to have characteristic images and symbols for things that have occurred in the distant, primeval past.

To be sure, these difficulties become especially significant for the planetary conditions that preceded the Moon incarnation, for, during this latter period, conditions prevailed that still show a certain similarity to earthly conditions. He who attempts to describe these conditions has in this similarity to the present a certain starting point for expressing in clear mental pictures the supersensibly acquired perceptions. It is a different matter when the evolution of Saturn and Sun are to be described.

What presents itself there to clairvoyant observation is very different from the objects and beings belonging at present to the sphere of human life, and this dissimilarity makes it difficult to the highest degree to bring the ancient matters in question within the scope of supersensible consciousness. Since, however, the present being of man cannot be understood unless we go back as far as the Saturn state, the description must nevertheless be given. Surely such a description will not be misunderstood by the

one who holds the existence of such difficulties in mind and who remembers that much of what is said must of necessity be considered more in the light of an allusion and a reference to the corresponding facts than as an exact description of them.

A contradiction might be found between what is given here and in the following pages, and what is said on page 109 [e.Ed link] concerning the continuation of the past into the present. One might imagine that nowhere does there exist, alongside the present Earth state, a previous Saturn, Sun, and Moon state, or even a human form such as is described in this exposition as having existed in these earlier stages. It is true that Saturn human beings, Sun and Moon human beings do not move about side by side with Earth humanity in the same way as three-year-old children move about alongside fifty-year-old men and women, but within the earthly human being the previous states of humanity are supersensibly perceptible.

In order to know this we must have acquired the power of discrimination and extend it to include the full scope of the conditions of life. The three-year-old child exists alongside the fifty-year-old man; similarly, the corpse, the sleeping, and the dreaming human being exist alongside the living, waking Earth man. Although these various forms of existence of the being of man — as they are at present — do not directly correspond to the various stages of evolution, nevertheless a genuine perception sees in such forms of manifestation these various evolutionary stages.

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### **Footnotes:**

1. The term "spiritual science," as is apparent from the context, is here synonymous with the terms "occult science" and "supersensible knowledge."
2. In order to make clear the difference between the designations of the Planetary Evolutions and our present planetary bodies, which bear the same names, the following system has been worked out. Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth, Jupiter, Venus, Vulcan printed in italics with initial capitals designate the great cosmic planetary cycles of evolution.
3. In the Sun evolution, after the separation of the main cosmic body into two parts, the designation is Sun and Saturn, spelt with initial capitals, but not with italics. In the Moon evolution, when a separation takes place, the remaining main body is spelt Moon, with an initial capital, the separating planetary sun is spelt with small letter. In the Earth evolution, the separated planetary bodies are spelt as is customary, that is, the planets Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury with initial capitals; sun, moon, earth with small letters. (Tr.)

### **Part 2**

Of the present four members of the being of man, the physical body is the oldest. It is also the member that, in its own way, has attained the greatest perfection. Supersensible research shows that this human member was already in existence during the Saturn evolution. It will be seen in the course of this description that the form, however, which this physical body possessed upon Saturn was something



quite different from the present human physical body.

This earthly human physical body can only maintain its existence by reason of its connection with the life body, astral body, and ego, described in the preceding parts of this book. Such a connection did not yet exist upon Saturn. At that time the physical body passed through its first stage of evolution without having a human life body, astral body, or ego inserted into it. During the Saturn evolution it gradually matured so as to be able to receive a life body. To this end, Saturn had first to pass over into a spiritual state and then reincarnate as the Sun.

During the Sun incarnation, what had become the physical body on Saturn unfolded again, as though from a germ of a past evolution, and only then could it draw into itself an etheric body. Through this insertion of an etheric body, the physical body changed its character. It was raised to a second degree of perfection.

A similar thing occurred during the Moon evolution. The human ancestor, having evolved from the Sun to the Moon, received into himself the astral body, and thus the physical body became changed a third time; that is, it was raised to the third degree of its perfection. Moreover, the life body was likewise changed, and it stood now in the second stage of its perfection. Upon the Earth the ego was added to the human ancestor consisting of physical body, life body, and astral body. The physical body thereby reached its fourth degree of perfection, the life body its third, the astral body its second; the ego stands only in its first stage of existence.

If we give ourselves up to an unprejudiced examination of the human being, there will be no difficulty in correctly picturing these various degrees of perfection of the individual members. We need only in this connection compare the physical body with the astral. Certainly it is true that the astral body, as a soul member, stands at a higher stage of evolution than the physical body, and when, in the future, the astral body will have perfected itself, it will have a much greater significance for the entire being of man than the present physical body. Still in its own way the physical body has reached a certain climax of evolution.

In this connection one need but think of the structure of the heart, organized in accordance with the greatest wisdom, the marvellous structure of the brain and other organs, even that of an individual portion of a bone, for example, that of the upper part of the thigh bone, the great trochanter. There is within the end of this bone a net-like or trestle-like structure of delicate bony fibers, formed in harmony with the laws of mechanics.

The whole is fitted together in such a manner that, with the least amount of material, the most advantageous effect on the articular surfaces is attained, for example, the most suitable distribution of friction and as a result a proper kind of mobility. Thus in the various parts of the human body structures are to be found full of wisdom, and if we consider further the harmonious co-operation between the parts and the whole, we shall certainly find that it is correct to speak of the particular perfection of this member of the human being. In this connection, the fact that in certain parts of the physical body seemingly inadequate phenomena may appear, or that disturbances may arise either in the structure or in the functions, is of no importance.

We shall even be able to discover that these disturbances are, in a certain sense, only the necessary shadow side of the wisdom-filled light that is shed over the entire physical organism. Now compare with this the astral body as the bearer of joy and sorrow, of desire and passion. Oh, what insecurity reigns in this body in respect of joy and sorrow, what desires and passions are enacted within it, often meaningless and running counter to higher human purposes! The astral body is only in process of acquiring the harmony and inner completeness that we already find in the physical body. In like manner it is possible to show that the ether body, in its way, appears more perfect than the astral body, but less perfect than the physical body, and an adequate consideration will prove that the essential kernel of the human being, the ego, stands at present only at the beginning of its evolutions.

For how much has this ego already accomplished of its task of transforming the other members of man's being in such a manner that they be a manifestation of its own nature? What results from external observation in this direction is made more acute for those who understand spiritual science by means of something else. One may quote the fact that the physical body can be overtaken by sickness. Spiritual science is in the position to show that a great part of all sicknesses originates from the fact that the perversity and mistakes of the astral body are transmitted to the etheric body, and in a roundabout way through the latter destroy the complete harmony of the physical body.

The deeper connection which can only be touched upon here, and the actual cause of many disease processes elude the scientific mode of observation that confines itself only to physical sensory facts. In most cases it happens that the damaging of the astral body does not produce pathological tendencies of the physical body in the same life in which the damage has occurred, but only in a subsequent one. Therefore, the laws that apply here have a meaning only for those who are able to acknowledge the repetition of human life on earth, but even if there is no desire to gain such deeper knowledge, yet the ordinary view of life shows that the human being indulges himself altogether too much in enjoyments and desires that undermine the harmony of the physical body.

Pleasure, desire, passion do not reside in the physical, but in the astral body, and this is in many respects still so imperfect that it can destroy the perfection of the physical body. — We wish to call attention to the fact that no attempt is made here to prove by such arguments the statements of spiritual science concerning the evolution of the four members of man's being.

The proofs are taken from spiritual research, and this shows that the physical body has passed through a fourfold metamorphosis on to higher degrees of perfection, and that the other human members, as already described, have undergone fewer transformations. We only wished to point out that these communications of spiritual research relate to facts the effects of which show also in the outwardly observable degrees of perfection of the physical, life, and astral bodies.

### **Part 3**

If we wish to form an approximately accurate pictorial idea of the conditions during the Saturn evolution, we must take into consideration the fact that during that period essentially nothing existed of the things and creatures that belong at present to the earth, and are counted among the mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms. The beings of these three kingdoms only came into existence in later periods of evolution. Of the present physically visible earth beings, only man existed at that time, and

only that part of him, the physical body, as already described.

At the present time, not only do these beings of the mineral, plant, animal, and human kingdoms belong to the earth, but there are also other beings who do not manifest in a physical body. These beings were also present during the Saturn evolution, and their activity on Saturn as a sphere of action resulted in the subsequent evolution of man.

If one directs the spiritual organs of perception, not to the beginning and the end, but to the middle evolutionary period of this Saturn incarnation, a state appears consisting chiefly of "heat." No gaseous, fluid, or solid elements are to be found there. All these conditions only appear in later cosmic incarnations. Let us imagine a human being with his present sense organs approaching this Saturn world as an observer. He would then experience none of the sense-impressions of which he is capable, except the sensation of heat. On reaching the space occupied by Saturn, he would only perceive that it had a condition of heat different from the rest of the surrounding space.

He would not find this space uniformly warm throughout, but would find hot and cold regions alternating in the most varied manner. Heat would be perceived radiating according to certain lines, not straight lines, but in irregular forms, produced by the variations in heat. He would have before him something like an organized cosmic being, appearing in ever changing states, consisting only of heat.

For man of the present day it must be difficult to imagine something that consists only of heat, since he is not accustomed to recognize heat as something in itself, but to perceive it only in connection with hot or cold gaseous, fluid, or solid bodies. Especially the man who has acquired the ideas of modern physics will look upon the above way of speaking about heat as pure nonsense. He will perhaps say that there are solid, fluid, and gaseous bodies; heat, however, denotes only the condition in which any one of these three bodily forms finds itself. When the smallest particles of a gas are in motion, this motion is perceived as heat.

Where there is no gas, there can be no such motion, therefore also no heat. — The matter appears quite different to the researcher in spiritual science. For him, heat is something about which he can speak in the same sense he can speak of a gas, of a fluid, or of a solid body; it is for him only a substance still finer than gas, and gas is to him nothing else than condensed heat, in the same sense that a fluid is a condensed vapor, or a solid body a condensed fluid.

Thus the spiritual scientist speaks of heat bodies just as he speaks of gaseous and vaporous bodies. — If someone wishes to follow the spiritual researcher into this realm, it is only necessary to grant that there exists spiritual perception. In the given world of the physical senses, heat exists entirely as a state of a solid, a fluid, or gaseous body. This condition, however, is only the external aspect of heat, or its effect.

The physicists speak only of this effect of heat, not of its inner nature. Let us try to disregard all effects of heat that we receive through external objects, and picture to ourselves only our inner experience when we say, "I feel warm," "I feel cold." This inner experience can alone give us an idea of the Saturn state at the period of its development described above. It would have been possible to pass through the whole of the space occupied by Saturn without finding any sort of gas that could

exert pressure, or any sort of solid or fluid body from which we could receive an impression of light. But in every point in space, without any impression from outside, we would have had the inner feeling that here there exists this or that degree of heat.

In a cosmic body of such a character there are no conditions suitable for the animals, plants, and minerals of the present time. (It is, therefore, hardly necessary to state that what has just been described could never occur. A man of today, as such, cannot confront ancient Saturn as an observer.

The exposition was only to serve as an illustration.) The beings of whom supersensible cognition becomes conscious while observing Saturn, were at a stage of evolution quite different from the present, sensorily-perceptible earth beings. Before this faculty of cognition beings appear who did not possess a physical body like that of present-day man. When we speak here of "physical body," we must be careful not to think of the physical corporeality as it exists today. Rather, we must differentiate carefully between the physical body and the mineral body. A physical body is one that is ruled by physical laws observed today in the mineral kingdom.

The present human physical body is not only ruled by these physical laws, but it is also permeated by mineral substance. It is impossible to speak of a physical-mineral body of this kind on ancient Saturn. At that time there existed only a physical corporeality governed by physical laws, but these physical laws manifested themselves only through heat effects. Thus the physical body was a fine, attenuated, etheric heat body, and the whole of Saturn consisted of these heat bodies. They were the first germinal beginnings of the present physical-mineral body of man.

The latter fashioned itself out of the heat body as a result of the insertion into it of gaseous, fluid, and solid matter, which only came into existence later on. Among the beings perceived by supersensible consciousness when it becomes aware of the Saturn state and who, besides man, may be called inhabitants of Saturn, are those, for example, who have no need at all of a physical body. The lowest vehicle of these beings was an ether body; they had, however, besides this a higher member that transcended all the human vehicles. Man has as highest member spirit man.

These beings have a still higher member, and between the ether body and spirit man they have all the members described in this book as belonging also to human beings: astral body, ego, spirit self, and life spirit. Just as our earth is surrounded by a sphere of air — an atmosphere — so was it also on Saturn, only this "atmosphere" was of a spiritual character.<sup>1</sup> It consisted of the beings just mentioned and still others. Between the heat bodies of Saturn and these beings there was a constant reciprocal action.

The latter submerged the members of their being into the physical heat bodies of Saturn and, although there was no life in these heat bodies themselves, the life of the beings in their environment was expressed, in them. They might be compared to mirrors, only it was not the images of the beings in question that were mirrored, but their life-conditions. Nothing living could have been discovered on Saturn itself, but through its activity Saturn vitalized the surrounding heavenly space by reflecting back, like an echo, the life sent down to it.

The whole of Saturn appeared like a mirror of celestial life. Certain exalted beings whose life was

radiated back by Saturn may be called "Spirits of wisdom." (In Christian Esotericism they bear the name "Kyriotetes" or "Dominions.") Their activity on Saturn does not begin with the middle period of its evolution just described, in fact, it had then already ceased. Before they had reached the ability to become conscious of the reflection of their own life from the heat bodies of Saturn, they had to develop these bodies to the point of being able to effect this reflection.

Therefore their activity began soon after the beginning of the Saturn evolution. At that time the bodily nature of Saturn still consisted of chaotic substance that was unable to reflect anything — By considering this chaotic substance, one has transplanted oneself through spiritual perception to the beginning of the Saturn evolution. What is observable there does not yet bear sequent heat character. If we wish to characterize it, it is only possible to speak of a quality that may be compared with the human will. It is will, through and through.

Thus we have to do here entirely with a soul state. If we wish to trace back the source of this will, we find that it originates from the emanations of exalted beings who brought their development, in stages that can only be divined, to such a height that they were able, when the evolution of Saturn began, to pour forth the will from their own being. After this emanation had lasted for a time, the activity of the already mentioned Spirits of Wisdom unites with the will.

Thus will, previously wholly without attributes, now gradually acquires the ability to reflect life back into cosmic space. — These beings, who experience their supreme bliss in poring forth will out of themselves at the beginning of the Saturn evolution, may be called the "Spirits of Will." (In Christian esotericism they are called "Thrones.") — After a certain stage of the Saturn evolution has been reached through the co-operation of will and life there begins the activity of other beings who are likewise present in the environment of Saturn. They may be called the "Spirits of Motion." (In Christian esotericism, "Dynameis," or "Powers.")

They have no physical or ether body, but their lowest vehicle is the astral body. When the Saturn bodies have acquired the ability to reflect life, this reflected life is in a condition to be permeated with the qualities that reside in the astral bodies of the Spirits of Motion. The result of this is that it appears as though the manifestations of sensation and feeling and similar soul activities were flung out into celestial space from Saturn.

The whole of Saturn appears like an ensouled being, manifesting sympathies and antipathies. These manifestations of soul-qualities, however, are in no way its own, but only the flung-back soul activities of the Spirits of Motion. — After this state has lasted a certain length of time, there begins the activity of still other beings that may be called the "Spirits of Form." Their lowest member is also an astral body, but it stands at a stage of development different from that of the Spirits of Motion. Whereas these latter communicate only general expressions of feeling to the reflected life, the activity of the astral body of the Spirits of Form (in Christian esotericism, "Exusiai," or "Authorities,") is of such a nature that the expressions of feeling are flung back into cosmic space as though from individual beings. One might say that the Spirits of Motion cause Saturn as a whole to appear like an ensouled being.

The Spirits of Form divide this life into individual living beings, so that Saturn now appears like an

agglomeration of such soul beings. — In order to have a picture of this state, imagine a mulberry or a blackberry, and note how it is composed of small individual parts. For the observer of the spiritual world, Saturn, in the period of evolution just described, is similarly composed of a number of Saturn entities that, to be sure, do not possess a life and soul of their own, but that reflect the life and soul of the beings dwelling in them. — In this state of Saturn, beings now intervene who likewise have the astral body as their lowest member, but who have developed it to such a stage that it has the effect of a present-day human ego.

Through these beings, the ego looks down upon Saturn from its environment and communicates its nature to the individual living beings of Saturn. Thus something is sent out into cosmic space from Saturn that appears similar to the activity of the human personality in the present cycle of life. The beings who bring this about may be called the "Spirits of Personality," ("Archai," "Primal Beginnings" in Christian Esotericism). They confer upon the small Saturn bodies the appearance of the character of personality. Personality does not exist on Saturn itself, however, but only its reflection, as it were, the shell of personality.

The Spirits of Personality have their real personality on the periphery of Saturn. Just because these Spirits of Personality let their being be reflected back by the Saturn bodies in the manner indicated, the fine substance just described as "heat" is imparted to the latter. — In the whole of Saturn there is no inner life, but the Spirits of Personality recognize the image of their own inner life as it streams back to them from Saturn in the form of heat.

When all this occurs, the Spirits of Personality stand at the stage at which the human being is at present. At that time they pass through their human epoch. If we wish to look at these facts with an unprejudiced eye, we must imagine that a being can be "man" not merely in the form borne by man at the present time.

The Spirits of Personality are "human beings" on Saturn. They do not have the physical body as their lowest principle, but the astral body with the ego. Therefore they are not able to express the experiences of this astral body in a physical and ether body like that of the present-day man; yet they not only possess an ego, but are fully aware of it, because the heat substance of Saturn brings it to their consciousness in reflecting it back to them. They are "human beings" under conditions different from the earth state.

In the further course of the Saturn evolution, events ensue that are different in character from anything existing heretofore. While up to the present time everything was a reflection of external life and sensation, now a kind of inner life begins. Here and there within the Saturn world a life of light begins, now flaring up, now darkening. Flickering glimmers of light appear in certain places, and in others something occurs like flashes of lightning.

The Saturn heat bodies begin to glimmer, to sparkle, even to radiate. Because this stage of evolution has been reached, again certain beings have the possibility of becoming active. These are beings who may be called "Spirits of Fire," (in Christian esotericism, "Archangeloi," or "Archangels"). Although these beings have an astral body of their own, they are unable, at this stage of their existence, to stimulate it; they would not be able to awake any feeling or sensation if they could not work upon the

heat bodies that had reached the Saturn stage already described. This activity exerted by them gives them the possibility of becoming aware of their own existence.

They cannot say to themselves, "I exist," but rather, "My environment permits me to exist." They perceive, and their perceptions consist in the activities of light described as taking place on Saturn. These activities are in a certain sense their ego. This gives them a certain kind of consciousness that may be designated as picture consciousness.

It can be thought of as a kind of human dream consciousness, only we must think of the degree of intensity of this dream consciousness as being much greater than in human dreaming, and we must realize that we are concerned not with unreal dream pictures surging up and down, but with dream pictures that have an actual relationship to the play of light on Saturn. — Within this reciprocal activity taking place between the Spirits of Fire and the Saturn heat bodies, the germinal human organs of sense are started on the path of evolution.

The organs through which the human being at present perceives the physical world flash up in their first etheric inception. Human phantoms, as yet manifesting nothing but the primal light images of the sense organs, can be recognized within Saturn by means of clairvoyant perception. — These sense organs thus are the fruit of the activity of the Spirits of Fire, but the Spirits of Fire are not the only beings who participate in the formation of these organs. Together with these Spirits of Fire, other beings enter the field of Saturn, beings who are so far advanced in their evolution as to be able to employ these germinal senses to perceive the cosmic processes taking place in the life of Saturn. These beings may be called "Spirits of Love," (in Christian esotericism, "Seraphim").

Were they not present, the Spirits of Fire could not have the consciousness described above. They behold the Saturn processes with a consciousness enabling them to convey these processes to the Spirits of Fire in the form of images. They forego all benefit they themselves might reap by perceiving the Saturn events; they renounce all enjoyment, all pleasure; they sacrifice all this in order that the Spirits of Fire might have it.

A new Saturn period follows these occurrences. Something else is added to the play of light. It may seem madness to many when we speak of what here presents itself to supersensible cognition. The interior of Saturn appears like a billowing and surging of sensations of taste; sweet, bitter, sour may be observed at various points within Saturn, and outwardly, into cosmic space, this all appears as tone, as a kind of music. — Within these processes certain beings again find the possibility of developing an activity upon Saturn. They may be called the "Sons of Twilight, or Life," (in Christian Esotericism, "Angeloi," "Angels").

They enter into reciprocal activity with the surging forces of taste present within Saturn, and through it their ether or life body takes on an activity somewhat similar to metabolism. They bring life into the interior of Saturn. As a result, processes of nutrition and elimination take place. They do not directly produce these processes, but through their activities the processes indirectly come into existence.

This internal life makes it possible for still other beings to enter the sphere of this cosmic body, beings who may be designated "Spirits of Harmony," (in Christian Esotericism, "Cherubim"). They bestow

upon the Sons of Life a dull kind of consciousness, duller and vaguer than the dream consciousness of the present-day human being, a consciousness similar to that he possesses in dreamless sleep. This consciousness is of such a low order that man is not aware of it. It is present, however, and differs from day consciousness in degree and also in kind.

Plant life at present also has this "dreamless sleep consciousness." Even though this consciousness does not excite perceptions of an outer world as they are understood today, nevertheless, it regulates the life-processes and brings them into harmony with the outer cosmic processes. At the Saturn stage under consideration, the Sons of Life cannot perceive this regulating process; the Spirits of Harmony, however, perceive it and are therefore the actual regulators. — All this life-activity takes place in the human phantoms, already characterized.

These phantoms therefore appear to spiritual perception as though endowed with life, but their life is only a semblance. It is actually the life of the Sons of Life. These Sons of Life make use of the human phantoms, in order, as it were, to unfold themselves.

Now let us consider these human phantoms with their semblance of life. During the Saturn period described, these phantoms have ever-changing forms, sometimes resembling this shape, sometimes that. During the further course of evolution these forms become more defined; occasionally they become permanent. The reason for this is that they are now permeated by the activities of the spirits who have to be taken into account already at the beginning of Saturn evolution, namely, the Spirits of Will (Thrones). As a result, the human phantom itself appears with the simplest, duldest form of consciousness. We must picture this form of consciousness as duller than that of dreamless sleep. Under present conditions, the minerals have this consciousness.

It brings the inner being into harmony with the outer physical world. Upon Saturn, the Spirits of Will are the regulators of this harmony, and the human being appears like a small counterpart of the life of Saturn itself. What constitutes the Saturn life on a large scale, constitutes man, at this stage, on a small scale. This is the primary nucleus of what even in the modern human being exists only in a germinal state, namely, spirit man (atma).

Within Saturn, this dull human will manifests itself to supersensible perception through effects that may be compared with "scents," or "odors." Toward the outside, toward celestial space, something is to be perceived like the manifestation of a personality that is, however, not controlled by an inner ego, but is regulated from without like a machine. The regulators are the Spirits of Will.

If we survey the preceding description, it becomes apparent that, starting from the middle stage of Saturn evolution described at the very beginning, the stages of this evolution might be characterized by comparing their various effects with sense-impressions of the present. It was said that the Saturn evolution manifests as heat, then a play of light begins, followed by a play of taste and tone; finally, something arises that manifests within the interior of Saturn like the sensation of smell, and externally like a mechanically acting human ego.

One might ask what the manifestations of the Saturn evolution prior to this state of heat are. What existed before cannot in any way be compared with anything that is accessible to an outer sense-



impression. Prior to the state of heat, a state existed that the human being can experience at the present time only in his inner nature.

If he gives himself up to ideas that he himself forms in his soul without the impelling impulse of an external impression, he has something within himself that physical senses cannot perceive; on the contrary, it is only accessible to higher perception. The manifestations that preceded the state of heat of Saturn can be present only for him who possesses supersensible perception.

Three such states may be mentioned: pure soul heat, which is outwardly imperceptible; pure spiritual light, which is external darkness; finally, a spiritual state of being that is complete within itself and needs no external being in order to become conscious of itself. Pure inner heat accompanies the appearance of the Spirits of Motion; pure spiritual light, that of the Spirits of Wisdom; pure inner being is bound up with the first emanation of the Spirits of Will.

With the appearance of the Saturn heat, our evolution for the first time passes over from a purely spiritual, inner existence into one manifesting externally. It will be especially difficult for the present-day consciousness to accept the statement that with the Saturn state of heat what is called "time" first makes its appearance, for the preceding states are not at all temporal. They belong to the region that in spiritual science may be called "duration." For this reason it must be understood that in all that is said in this work about such states in the "region of duration," expressions referring to temporal relationships are only used by way of comparison and explanation.

What precedes "time," as it were, can only be characterized in human language by expressions containing the idea of time, for we must also be conscious of the fact that although the first, second, and third states of Saturn did not take place one after the other in the present sense of the word, we cannot do otherwise than describe them one after the other. Indeed, in spite of their duration or simultaneity, they are so inter-dependent that this dependence may be compared with a sequence in time.

By thus pointing to these earliest evolutionary states of Saturn, light is also thrown upon all other questions about the "whence" of these states. From the purely intellectual standpoint it is naturally quite possible, in regard to any origin, to continue asking about the "origin of this origin." But this is not permissible in the face of facts. We only need to make this clear by a comparison. If we find traces in a road, we may ask what has caused them.

The answer may be: a wagon. We can then ask further: whence came the wagon and whither has it gone? An answer founded upon facts is again possible. We might then ask further: who was sitting in it? What was the intention of the person who was using it? What was he doing? Finally, however, we shall come to a point where the questioning through the very facts comes to an end. Whoever continues to question, deviates from the original intention of the question.

He continues the questioning mechanically. We can easily see in cases like the one just cited for the sake of comparison where the nature of facts brings an end to the questioning. In respect of the great questions of the cosmos this is not so easily seen. By really exact observation, however, we shall notice that all questions concerning the "whence" must end at the above described Saturn states. For

we have come to a sphere in which the beings and processes no longer justify themselves through their origin, but through themselves.

The result of Saturn evolution is the development of the human germ to a certain stage; it has reached that low, dim consciousness spoken of above. It must not be imagined that the latter's development begins only in the last stage of Saturn. The Spirits of Will are active throughout all conditions of Saturn, but to supersensible perception the result in the last stage is most conspicuous.

There exists no definite boundary line between the activities of the individual groups of beings. If it is said that in the beginning the Spirits of Will are active, then the Spirits of Wisdom, then another group of spiritual beings, it is not intended to mean that they were only active at that time. They are active throughout the whole of the Saturn evolution, but in the periods mentioned their activity can best be observed. The individual beings have then, as it were, the leadership.

Thus the whole of the Saturn evolution appears like a fashioning, a working over of what has streamed out of the Spirits of Will by the Spirits of Wisdom, Motion, Form, and so forth. At the same time, these spiritual beings themselves undergo an evolution. For example, after having received their life reflected back to them from Saturn, the Spirits of Wisdom stand at a different stage from that at which they previously stood.

The fruit of this activity enhances the capacities of their own being. The result is that after the completion of such activity something happens to them similar to what happens to man in sleep. After their periods of activity on Saturn follow other periods during which they live, so to speak, in other worlds. Their activity is then turned away from Saturn. Therefore, clairvoyant perception observes in the described evolution of Saturn an ascent and a descent. The ascent continues until the formation of the state of heat; then with the play of light an ebb tide sets in, and when the human phantoms have assumed a form through the activity of the Spirits of Will, the spiritual beings have gradually withdrawn. The Saturn evolution slowly dies and as such disappears.

A period of rest then occurs. The germinal human being passes over into a condition of dissolution, not, however, one in which it entirely disappears, but one that is similar to that of a plant seed resting in the earth, preparing to grow into a new plant. In a similar manner the human germ rests in the bosom of the cosmos, awaiting a new awakening, and when the moment of this awakening comes, the above described spiritual beings have acquired, under other conditions, capacities for working further upon the germinal human being. The Spirits of Wisdom have acquired the capacity in their ether bodies not only of enjoying the reflection of life, as they did on Saturn, but also the ability of letting life stream forth from themselves and of endowing other beings with it.

The Spirits of Motion are now as far advanced as were the Spirits of Wisdom on Saturn. The lowest principle of their being was then the astral body; now they possess an ether or life body. The other spiritual beings have correspondingly advanced to a higher stage of their evolution. All these spiritual beings, therefore, are able to work upon the further evolution of the germinal human being in another way than on Saturn. — But at the end of the Saturn evolution the germinal human being was dissolved.

In order that the more evolved spiritual beings may continue from the point where they ended their previous activities, this germinal human being has briefly to recapitulate the stages through which it passed on Saturn. This is to be seen by supersensible perception. The germinal human being emerges from its concealment and, through the forces that have been implanted within it on Saturn, it begins to develop through its own power.

It emerges out of the darkness as a being of will; it advances itself to a being possessed of a semblance of life, of a soul-like nature and other characteristics, until it reaches the stage of automatic manifestation of personality that it possessed at the end of the Saturn evolution.

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### **Footnotes:**

Instead of saying, "Saturn was surrounded by an atmosphere," a precise mode of speech, in order to express exactly the inner experience of spiritual research, would have to say, "In becoming conscious of Saturn by means of supersensible cognition, this consciousness is confronted by a Saturn atmosphere," or, "by beings of this or that sort." The use of the expression: "this or that is present," must be permitted, for this is also the usage employed for the actual soul experience in sensory perception, but we are obliged to keep this in mind in the following exposition; it already follows from the context.

### **Part 4**

The second of the great evolutionary periods alluded to, the "Sun stage," effects the raising of man to a condition of consciousness higher than that which he attained on Saturn. Compared with the present consciousness of man, this Sun stage could, to be sure, be designated as "unconsciousness," for it closely approximates the state in which the human being now exists during completely dreamless sleep. It might also be compared with the low degree of consciousness in which our plant world is at present slumbering. For supersensible perception there is no such thing as "unconsciousness," but only varying degrees of consciousness.

Everything in the world possesses consciousness. — The human being attains a higher degree of consciousness in the course of the Sun evolution because at that time his nature is invested with the etheric or life body. Before this can occur, however, the Saturn conditions must be recapitulated, as described above. This recapitulation has a quite definite significance. When the period of rest, of which we have spoken in the previous description, has come to an end, what was formerly Saturn issues forth out of "cosmic sleep" as a new cosmic being, the Sun.

But as a result, the conditions of evolution are changed. The spiritual beings, whose activities on Saturn have been described, have now advanced to other conditions. The germinal human being, however, first appears on the newly formed Sun just as it was at the end of the Saturn evolution. It must first transform the various evolutionary stages that it had reached on Saturn, so that they conform with the conditions on the Sun.

The Sun epoch, therefore, begins with a recapitulation of the occurrences on Saturn, but adjusted to the changed conditions of the life of the Sun. When the human being has developed to the point where the stage of his evolution acquired on Saturn conforms to the conditions of the Sun, the already mentioned Spirits of Wisdom, the Kyriotetes, begin to let the ether or life body flow into the human physical body.

The more advanced stage that man attains on the Sun may be characterized by saying that the physical body, germinally formed already on Saturn, is raised to a second stage of perfection by becoming the bearer of an ether or life body. This ether or life body itself attains the first degree of its perfection during the Sun evolution. In order, however, that this second degree of perfection of the physical body and the first degree of perfection of the life body be attained, it is necessary in the further course of the life of the Sun that yet other spiritual beings interpose themselves in a way similar to what was already described for the Saturn stage.

When the Spirits of Wisdom begin to pour the life body into man, the Sun, previously dark, now begins to radiate. At the same time the first signs of an inner activity appear in the germinal human being; life begins. What on Saturn had to be characterized as an appearance of life, now becomes actual life. This pouring in of the life body continues for a certain length of time, after which an important change takes place in the human germ, namely, it divides into two parts. Whereas previously the physical body and life body formed one closely-bound whole, the physical body now begins to detach itself as a separate part.

This detached physical body, however, continues also to be permeated by the life body. We have now before us a twofold human being. One part is a physical body worked upon by a life body, the other part is pure life body. This separation takes place during an interval of rest in the life of the Sun. During this interval, the radiation that had already begun is again extinguished. The separation takes place, as it were, during a "cosmic night."

This interval of rest is much shorter than the interval of rest between the Saturn and Sun evolutions, of which we have spoken previously. After the expiration of this interval, the Spirits of Wisdom continue to work for a time upon the twofold human being just as they had worked before on the single-membered human being. The Spirits of Motion then begin their activity. They let their own astral body surge through the human life body. As a result, it acquires the capacity to carry on certain inner movements within the physical body. These movements may be likened to the movements of sap in our present-day plants.

The Saturn body consisted solely of heat substance. During the Sun evolution this heat substance condenses to a state that may be compared with the present state of gas or vapor. It is the state that may be designated by the word "air." The first appearance of such a state manifests itself after the Spirits of Motion have begun their activity. The following spectacle presents itself to supersensible consciousness. Within the heat substance something appears like delicate structures that are set into regular motion by means of the forces of the life body. These structures represent the human physical body at that stage of evolution.

They are completely permeated by heat and enclosed by a mantle of heat. Physically speaking, this

human being may be said to consist of heat structures into which air forms are articulated that are in regular motion. If we wish to keep to the above comparison with the plants of the present day, we must remain conscious of the fact that we are not dealing with a compact plant formation, but with a gaseous or aeroform structure, the movements of which may be compared with the movements of the sap in present-day plants. The gas appears to supersensible consciousness through the effect of light, which the gas permits to stream forth from itself.

We might thus also speak of light structures that are perceptible to spiritual vision. This evolution then proceeds further. After a certain length of time a pause again ensues, after which the Spirits of Motion continue their activities until these are supplemented by the activities of the Spirits of Form, the effect of which produces permanency in the previously continuously changing gaseous forms. This, too, takes place through the fact that the Spirits of Form permit their forces to flow in and out of the human life body. Previously, when only the Spirits of Motion were acting upon them, these gaseous structures were in ceaseless motion, holding their form only momentarily.

Now, however, they assume temporarily distinguishable shapes. — Again after a certain length of time there ensues a period of rest, at the end of which the Spirits of Form continue their activities. Then entirely new conditions arise within the Sun evolution.

We have reached the point where the Sun evolution has arrived at the central stage of its development. It is at this time that the Spirits of Personality — who had reached their human stage on Saturn — rise to a still higher stage of perfection. They surpass their human stage and acquire a consciousness that our present earthly humanity has not yet attained in the regular course of its evolution.

It will reach this stage of consciousness when the Earth — that is to say, the fourth planetary evolutionary stage — shall have reached its goal and passed over into the subsequent planetary period. Man will then not only be able to perceive in his environment what at present is transmitted to him by the physical senses, but he will be able to observe in pictorial images the inner soul states of the beings in his environment. He will possess a picture consciousness; but at the same time retain full self-consciousness. His pictorial perception will not be dreamy and dull. He will perceive the soul pictorially, yet at the same time these soul pictures will be the expression of realities just as now physical colors and tones are expressions of realities.

At the present time, a human being can only develop such perception in himself through spiritual-scientific training. The nature of this training will be dealt with in a later part of this book. — During the Sun stage, the Spirits of Personality acquire this perception as a normal part of their evolution. Because of this they become, during the Sun evolution, capable of working upon the newly formed human life body just as they worked upon the physical body on Saturn. Just as at that time heat reflected back to them their own personality, so now the gaseous shapes reflect back to them in resplendent light the pictures of their perceiving consciousness.

They behold supersensibly what takes place upon the Sun, and this perception is by no means mere observation. It is as though something of the force that on earth is called love were making itself felt in the images that stream forth from the Sun. If we observe more closely with our soul powers, the reason for this phenomenon may be discovered. Exalted beings are now working actively in the light

radiating from the Sun.

These beings are the already designated Spirits of Love — Seraphim. They work, henceforth, on the human ether or life body in co-operation with the Spirits of Personality. By means of this activity, the life body itself advances a stage on its evolutionary journey. It acquires the capacity, not only to transform the gaseous structures within it, but to fashion them in such a way that the first indications of a reproduction of the living human being appear. Exudations are driven out, sweated out of these gaseous structures, which assume shapes similar to their maternal forms.

In order to characterize the further evolution of the Sun, it is necessary to draw attention to the important fact of cosmic history, that in the course of an epoch all the beings involved do not by any means reach the goal of their evolution. There are some who fall short of it. Thus during the Saturn evolution not all of the Spirits of Personality actually reach the human stage for which they were originally destined in the manner described.

Likewise, not all of the human physical bodies, formed on Saturn, attain the degree of maturity that would have made them capable of becoming bearers of an independent life body on the Sun. The result is that upon the Sun there exist beings and formations that do not fit into its conditions. These have to retrieve, during the Sun evolution, what they failed to attain upon Saturn. Hence, during the Sun stage the following can be observed. When the Spirits of Wisdom begin to pour in the life body, the body of the Sun, as it were, becomes turbid — darkened.

Structures are mingled with it that in reality would belong to Saturn. These are heat structures that are unable to condense properly to air. These are the human beings who have remained behind at the Saturn stage. They are unable to become bearers of a regularly developed life body. — The heat substance of Saturn, which remained behind in this way, divides itself into two sections on the Sun. One section is absorbed, as it were, by the human bodies and forms a kind of lower nature within the human being.

This human being at the Sun stage thus takes into his corporeality something actually corresponding to the Saturn stage. Just as the human body of Saturn made it possible for the Spirits of Personality to rise to their human stage, so now this Saturn part of the human being performs on the Sun the same task for the Spirits of Fire. These Spirits of Fire rise to the human stage by allowing their forces to surge in and out of this Saturn part of the human being, just as this was performed by the Spirits of Personality on Saturn.

This, too, happens at the central stage of the Sun evolution. At that time the Saturn part of the human being is so far matured that with its help the Spirits of Fire — Archangels — are able to pass through their human stage. — Another section of the Saturn heat substance acquires an independent existence alongside and in the midst of the human beings on the Sun. This then forms a second kingdom alongside the human kingdom, a kingdom that develops upon the Sun a fully independent, but purely physical, body, a body of heat. The result is that the fully developed Spirits of Personality cannot exert their activity upon an independent life body in the manner described.

There are, however, certain Spirits of Personality who have remained behind at the Saturn stage. These

had not at that time reached the human stage. Between them and the second kingdom, which became independent on the Sun, there exists a bond of attraction. Their behavior toward the retarded kingdom on the Sun must now be similar to the behavior of their advanced companions toward the human beings on Saturn. On the latter, the human physical body was alone developed. Upon the Sun itself, however, there is no possibility of a similar activity by the retarded Spirits of Personality.

They, therefore, withdraw from the main body of the Sun and form an independent cosmic body outside of it. From it the retarded Spirits of Personality work back upon the beings of the Sun's second kingdom already described. Thus two cosmic bodies are formed out of the one that was formerly Saturn. The Sun has now in its environment a second cosmic body, one that represents a kind of rebirth of Saturn, a new Saturn. From this new Saturn, the character of personality is bestowed upon the second kingdom of the Sun.

Hence in this second kingdom we are concerned with beings who have no personality of their own upon the Sun itself, but who reflect back to the retarded Spirits of Personality on new Saturn these spirits' own personality. By means of supersensible consciousness it is possible to observe the play of heat forces among the human beings on the Sun; these heat forces send their influence into the regular Sun evolution; in them may be seen the sway of the designated spirits of new Saturn.

During the middle part of the Sun evolution the human being is organized into a physical body and a life body. Within him there takes place the activity of the advanced Spirits of Personality and the Spirits of Love. A part of the retarded Saturn nature is mixed with the physical body, within which the Spirits of Fire are active.

In the effects of the activity of the Spirits of Fire upon the retarded Saturn nature the precursors of the sense organs of the present earth man can be seen. It has been shown how even on Saturn the Spirits of Fire were at work forming germinal sense organs in the heat substance. In what is accomplished by the Spirits of Personality in co-operation with the Spirits of Love we can discern the germinal beginnings of the present human glandular system. — The work of the Spirits of Personality dwelling upon the new Saturn is not exhausted in what has been described above.

They extend their activity not only to the above-mentioned second Sun kingdom, but they effect a kind of connection between this kingdom and the human senses. The heat substances of this kingdom flow in and out through the germinal human sense organs. Through this fact the human being on the Sun acquires a mode of perceiving the lower kingdom existing outside himself. This perception is, of course, only a dull perception, corresponding wholly to the dull Saturn consciousness of which we have spoken above, and it consists essentially of various heat effects.

Everything that has been described as existing in the middle of the Sun evolution lasts for a certain time. Then another period of rest begins, following which evolution goes on for a time in the same way until it reaches a stage when the human ether body is sufficiently matured to permit the beginning of a united activity of the Sons of Life, Angels — and the Spirits of Harmony — Cherubim.

To supersensible consciousness, manifestations appear within the human being that may be likened to the perceptions of taste, which express themselves outwardly as tones. Something similar had to be

described already for the Saturn evolution. Only here on the Sun everything, within the human being is more individual, fuller of independent life. — The Sons of Life acquire, as a result, the dull picture consciousness that the Spirits of Fire had attained on Saturn. In this the Spirits of Harmony are their helpers.

The Cherubim actually perceive spiritually what is now taking place within the Sun evolution, but they renounce all the fruits of this perception; they forego the feelings produced by these wisdom-filled images that arise there; they allow these to flow into the dreamy consciousness of the Sons of Life as magnificent, magic visions. These Sons of Life in turn work the imagery of their visions into the human ether body, thus enabling it to reach ever higher stages of evolution. — Again a pause sets in; again the whole cosmos arises out of a "universal sleep," and after a time the human being becomes mature enough to employ his own forces.

These are the forces that streamed into him through the activity of the Thrones during the last part of the Saturn period. This human being now develops an inward life that manifests itself to consciousness in a way comparable to an inner perception of smell. Outwardly, however, toward cosmic space, this human being presents himself as a personality, yet as a personality not directed by an inner ego. It appears more like a plant giving the impression of personality.

We have seen already at the end of the Saturn evolution that personality manifests itself like a machine. Just as at that time the first germ of spirit man (atma) was developed, which is still today only germinally present in man, so similarly here in the Sun period the primary nucleus of life spirit (buddhi) is formed. — At a certain time after this has occurred, another period of rest ensues; at its end, as in previous similar instances, human activity proceeds for a time. Then conditions arise that prove to be a new intervention of the Spirits of Wisdom, through which the human being becomes capable of experiencing the first traces of sympathy and antipathy toward his surroundings.

In all this there is no actual sensation present, yet it is a forerunner of it, for the inner life-activity, which in its manifestation might be characterized as perceptions of smell, expresses itself outwardly as a kind of primitive language. If a pleasant scent, or taste, or glimmer of light is perceived inwardly, the human being expresses this outwardly by means of a tone, and this also occurs in regard to an inwardly antipathetic perception. — In fact, the actual meaning of the Sun evolution for the human being is gained by means of all the processes that have been described. This human being has now reached a higher stage of consciousness than on Saturn. This is the dreamless consciousness of sleep.

After a time, the point of evolution is also reached when the higher beings bound up with the Sun stage must pass on to other spheres in order to assimilate what they have acquired for themselves through their activities on the being of man. A major period of rest ensues, similar to that that took place between the Saturn and Sun evolutions.

Everything that was fashioned on the Sun passes over into a condition that may be likened to that of the plant when its powers of growth lie dormant in the seed. But just as these forces of growth come to the light of day in a new plant, so, after the rest period, all life upon the Sun comes forth again out of the cosmic womb and a new planetary existence begins. The significance of such a pause, such a cosmic sleep, can be well understood if we direct our spiritual gaze toward one of the orders of beings



mentioned, for instance, toward the Spirits of Wisdom.

On Saturn, they were not yet far enough advanced to be able to let an ether body flow out of themselves. Only through the experiences they passed through upon Saturn have they been prepared for this. During the pause, they transform into actual capacities what previously had only been prepared in their inner being. Thus upon the Sun they are so far advanced that they can let life flow out of themselves and endow the human entity with a life body of its own.

## **Part 5**

Following the pause in outer activity, what was previously the Sun emerges again out of cosmic sleep, becoming once more perceptible to the powers of spiritual observation. It was previously perceptible to these powers, but had disappeared from view during the period of rest. A twofold element now appears within the newly emerging planetary being that shall be called the Moon. This Moon, however, must not be confused with the part of it that is at present the earth's moon. The first thing to be noted is that that part of the world mass which, during the Sun period, had detached itself as a new Saturn, is once more within the totality of the new planetary organism.

During the pause, this new Saturn had again united itself with the Sun. Everything that was within the original Saturn reappears at first as one cosmic formation. The second thing to be noted is that the human life bodies formed upon the Sun were absorbed during the pause by what, in a certain sense, forms the spiritual sheath of the planet. Thus these life bodies do not appear at this time as something united with the corresponding physical human bodies, but these latter appear at first by themselves. They bear within their inner nature all that has been worked into them on both Saturn and Sun, but they lack an ether or life body.

Moreover, they are unable to incorporate this ether body immediately into themselves, for during the pause the ether body itself has passed through a development to which the physical bodies are not yet adapted. — In order that this adjustment may be achieved, once more a recapitulation of the Saturn activities occurs at the beginning of the Moon evolution. The physical life of man recapitulates the stages of the Saturn evolution, but under quite changed conditions. On Saturn, only the forces of a heat body were active within the physical human being; now the forces of the acquired gaseous body are also active within him.

The latter, however, do not appear at once at the beginning of the Moon evolution. At that time it is as though the human being consisted only of heat substance, while within the latter the gaseous forces slumbered. Then comes a time when the first indications of these gaseous forces make their appearance, and finally, in the last period of the Moon recapitulation of Saturn activities, the human being reappears as he was during his life-endowed state of the Sun. At this time, however, all life still appears as a semblance of life.

Then a pause occurs similar to the short pauses occurring during the Sun evolution, after which the instreaming of the life body, for which the physical body has now become ripe, begins again. As in the case of the Saturn recapitulation, this influx takes place again in three distinctly separate epochs. During the second of these, the human being is so far adjusted to the new Moon conditions that the

Spirits of Motion are able to employ their acquired ability. It consists in allowing the astral body to flow forth from their own essential nature into the human being.

They prepared themselves for this task during the Sun evolution and, during the pause between the Sun and Moon evolutions, they transformed what had thus been prepared into the ability alluded to above. This influx of the astral body lasts again for a time, then one of the shorter pauses ensues, after which the instreaming of the astral body of the Spirits of Motion continues until the Spirits of Form begin their activity. Because the Spirits of Motion allow their astral body to flow into the human being, he acquires his first soul qualities.

As a result, he now begins to accompany the processes, which occur in him through the possession of a life body and which during the Sun evolution were still plant-like, with sensations and to feel pleasure and displeasure through them; this remains a changing inner ebb and flow of pleasure and displeasure, until the intervention of the Spirits of Form. Then these changing feelings become transformed in such a way that the first traces of longing and desire appear in the human being. He seeks to repeat what has caused pleasure and strives to avoid what has caused sensations of antipathy. Since, however, the Spirits of Form do not give up their own nature to him, but only allow their forces to flow in and out of him, the impulse of desire lacks inwardness and independence. It is guided by the Spirits of Form and bears an instinctive character.

On Saturn, the human physical body was composed of heat, which on the Sun was condensed to a gaseous state, or air. During the Moon evolution, when the astral flows into the physical body, the latter attains a further degree of condensation at a definite time and reaches a state that may be compared with the density of a present-day fluid. This state may be called "water." We do not mean by this, however, our present water, but any fluid form of existence. The human physical body now gradually takes on a form composed of three substantial organisms. The densest is a water body. This is permeated by air currents, and all this is permeated by the activities of heat.

During the Sun stage, too, not all organisms attain their full and proper maturity. As a result, on the Moon there are organisms that stand only at the Saturn stage, while others have only attained the Sun stage. Because of this, two other kingdoms arise alongside the regularly developed human kingdom. One of these consists of beings who have remained behind at the Saturn stage and therefore possess only a physical body, which, even on the Moon, is unable to become the bearer of an independent life body. This is the lowest of the Moon kingdoms.

A second kingdom consists of beings who have remained behind at the Sun stage and who, therefore, on the Moon are too immature to incorporate into themselves an independent astral body. These form a kingdom intermediate between the one just mentioned and the regularly advanced human kingdom. — But something else takes place. The substances composed merely of the forces of heat, and those composed merely of air also permeate the human beings.

Thus it happens that on the Moon the latter bear within themselves a Saturn and a Sun nature. As a result, a kind of cleavage arises in human nature, and through this cleavage, after the Spirits of Form begin their activity, some thing significant is called into existence within the Moon evolution. A cleavage begins in the cosmic Moon body. A part of the Moon's substances and beings separates from

the rest. Two cosmic bodies are thus formed from one. Certain higher beings who, prior to this, were closely linked with the unitary cosmic body, now take up their abode on one of these parts. The remaining part, in contrast, is occupied by the human beings, by the two lower kingdoms just characterized, and by certain higher beings who did not go over to the first cosmic body.

This latter cosmic body, occupied by higher beings, appears like a reborn, but refined sun; the other is now the actually new formation, the ancient Moon, the third planetary embodiment of our Earth that follows after the Saturn and Sun evolutions. The separating, reborn sun carries away with it, from the substances arising on the Moon, only heat and air. Besides these two substances, the liquid, watery state is to be found on what remains over as Moon. The result of this separation is that the beings, departed with the reemerging sun, are unhampered in their further development by the denser Moon beings. They are thus able to advance unhindered in their evolution.

As a result they acquire a still greater degree of power with which to work down upon the Moon beings from their sun. These Moon beings likewise acquire new possibilities of evolution. The Spirits of Form, in particular, have remained united with them and have solidified the nature of passion and desire. This expresses itself gradually by a further condensation of the human physical body also. The former purely watery element of this body now takes on a viscous fluidic form, and the aeriform and heat formations condense correspondingly. Similar processes take place also in the two lower kingdoms.

In consequence of the separation of the Moon from the sun body, the former has the same relationship to the latter that the Saturn body once had to the entire surrounding cosmic evolution. The Saturn body was formed from the body of the Spirits of Will — Thrones. From this Saturn substance everything was radiated back into cosmic space that the above-mentioned spiritual beings, living in the environment, experienced, and by means of the succeeding events, the reflecting radiation gradually awoke to independent life.

The whole of evolution depends first upon the severance of independent being from surrounding life; the environment then imprints itself upon this severed being as though by reflection, and then this separated entity develops further independently. — In this way the Moon body severed itself from the sun body and then reflected back its life. Had nothing else happened, the following cosmic process would have to be described. There would be a sun body in which spiritual beings, adapted to it, would have their experiences in the heat and air element. Opposite this sun body there would be a Moon body in which other beings would evolve with heat, air, and water life.

The progress from the Sun to the Moon embodiment would consist in the fact that the sun beings would have their own life before them, like a reflection, mirrored back to them from the Moon processes, and they would be able to enjoy it — an experience that during the Sun embodiment was still impossible for them. — But the processes of evolution did not stop here. Something occurred that was of the deepest significance for all subsequent evolution. Certain beings, who were adapted to the Moon body, seized upon the will element — the heritage of the Thrones — that was then at their disposal, and by means of it developed their own life, which shaped itself independent of the life of the sun.

Alongside the experiences of the Moon, which stand only under the sun influence, other independent Moon experiences occur — revolts or rebellions, as it were, against the sun beings. The various kingdoms that had come into existence on the sun and Moon, especially the kingdom of our human forebears, were drawn into these conditions. Thus the Moon body contained within itself, spiritually and materially, a twofold life: one that stood in close union with the life of the sun, and one that deserted it and went its own independent way. This division into a twofold life expresses itself in all subsequent events of the Moon embodiment.

What this evolutionary period presents to supersensible consciousness may be characterized in the following pictures. The entire fundamental mass of the Moon is fashioned out of a half-living substance that is at times in sluggish, at times in animated movement. A mineral mass of rocks and earth elements, like that upon which the present human being treads, does not yet exist. We might speak of a kingdom of plant-minerals, only we must imagine that the entire foundational mass of the Moon is composed of this plant-mineral substance, just as the earth today consists of rocks, soil, and other matter.

Just as at present we have towering masses of rocks, so at that time harder portions were embedded in the Moon's mass. These may be compared with hard, woody structures, or with horny forms. Just as plants spring up at present out of the mineral soil, so on the Moon the second kingdom — a sort of plant-animal — sprang up, covering and permeating the Moon ground. The substance of this kingdom was softer than the ground mass and more mobile in itself. This kingdom spread itself out over the other like a viscous sea.

The human being himself may be called a kind of animal — man. His nature contained the essential elements of the other two kingdoms, but his being was completely permeated by an ether and an astral body, upon which the forces of the higher beings emanating from the severed sun were active. His form was thus ennobled. Whereas the Spirits of Form gave him a shape through which he was adapted to Moon life, the sun spirits made of him a being lifted above that life. By means of the capacities bestowed upon him by these spirits he had the power to ennoble his own nature, indeed, to lift to a higher stage that part of it that was related to the lower kingdoms.

The processes that have to be taken into consideration here, perceived spiritually, may be described in the following manner. The human forebear had been ennobled by beings who had deserted the sun kingdom. This ennobling extended especially to everything that could be experienced in the water element. The sun beings, who were rulers of the elements of heat and air, had less influence upon this water element, with the result that two kinds of beings were active in the organism of the human ancestor.

One part of this organism was wholly permeated by the activities of the sun beings; in the other part, the seceded Moon beings were active. Through this fact, the latter part was more independent than the former. In the sun-part, only states of consciousness could arise in which the sun beings lived. In the Moon-part there existed a sort of cosmic consciousness, similar to the ancient Saturn state, only now at a higher stage. The human ancestor thus beheld himself as a copy of the cosmos, while his sun-part felt itself only as a copy of the sun. — These two kinds of beings began a sort of conflict within human nature, and through the influence of the sun beings an adjustment of this conflict was brought about by rendering the material organism, which made an independent cosmic consciousness possible,

frail and perishable.

It was necessary now for this part of the organism to be eliminated from time to time. During this elimination and for a certain time thereafter, the human ancestor was a being dependent only upon the influence of the sun. His consciousness became less independent; he lived in it in complete surrender to the life of the sun. The independent Moon part was then renewed. After a certain length of time, this process was repeated again and again. The human ancestor on the Moon thus lived in alternating conditions of clearer and duller consciousness, and this alternation was accompanied by a metamorphosis of the material aspect of his being. From time to time he discarded his Moon body and renewed it again later.

Seen physically, a great variation appears in the kingdoms of the Moon described here. The mineral-plants, the plant-animals, and the animal-men are differentiated according to groups. This will be understood if we bear in mind that, because certain organisms have remained behind at each of the earlier stages of evolution, these organisms have been embodied, endowed with the most varied qualities. There are organisms that still display the characteristics of the first epochs of the Saturn evolution, some those of the middle periods, and some those of its end. This is also true of all the stages of the Sun evolution.

Just as organisms connected with the progressively evolving cosmic body remain behind, so is this also the case with certain beings connected with this evolution. In the progressive development up to the appearance of the ancient Moon, several grades of such beings have already come into existence. There are, for instance, Spirits of Personality who, even on the Sun, have not yet attained their human stage; there are, however, others who, on the Sun, have retrieved their failure to rise to this stage.

Many Fire Spirits, too, who should have become human on the Sun, have remained behind. Just as certain retarded Spirits of Personality withdrew during the Sun evolution from the body of the Sun and caused Saturn to arise again as a special cosmic body, so also in the course of the Moon evolution the beings described above withdrew to special cosmic bodies. Thus far we have spoken only of the separation into sun and Moon, but for the reasons given above, still other cosmic bodies detach themselves from the cosmic Moon body that made its appearance after the long pause between Sun and Moon evolutions.

After a lapse of time there comes into existence a system of cosmic bodies, the most advanced of which, as may be easily seen, is the new sun. In much the same way that during the Sun evolution — as has already been described above — a bond of attraction was formed between the retarded Saturn kingdom and the Spirits of Personality on the new Saturn, now during the Moon evolution a bond is also formed between every such cosmic body and the corresponding Moon beings. It would carry us much too far to follow up in detail all the cosmic bodies that come into existence. It must suffice to have indicated the reason why a series of cosmic bodies is detached by degrees from the undivided cosmic organism that appeared in the beginning of mankind's evolution as Saturn.

After the intervention of the Spirits of Form on the Moon, evolution proceeds for a time in the manner described. After this, another pause in outer activity ensues, during which the coarser parts of the three Moon kingdoms remain in a state of rest, but the finer parts — chiefly the human astral bodies —

detach themselves from these coarser organisms. They enter a state in which the higher powers of the exalted sun beings can work upon them with special force. — After the rest period, they again permeate the parts of the human being composed of coarser substances. Through the fact that, during the pause, they have absorbed powerful forces in a free state, they are able to prepare these coarser substances for the influences that the regularly advanced Spirits of Personality and Spirits of Fire must, after a certain time, bring to bear upon them.

These Spirits of Personality have attained a stage at which they possess the consciousness of inspiration. Not only are they able to perceive the inner state of other beings in pictures — as was the case in their former picture consciousness — but they are able to perceive the inner nature of these beings as a spiritual tone language. The Spirits of Fire, however, have risen to the degree of consciousness possessed by the Spirits of Personality on the Sun. As a result, both kinds of spirits are able to intervene in the matured life of the human being.

The Spirits of Personality work upon his astral body, the Fire Spirits upon his ether body. The astral body thus receives the character of personality. It experiences henceforth not only pleasure and pain within itself, but it relates them to itself. It has not yet attained a full ego consciousness that says to itself, "I exist," but it feels itself borne and sheltered by other beings in its environment. Looking up to them, as it were, it can say, "This, my environment, gives me existence." The Fire Spirits work henceforth upon the ether body. Under their influence the movement of forces in this body becomes more and more an inner life activity.

What thus comes into existence finds physical expression in a circulation of fluids and in phenomena of growth. The gaseous substances have condensed to a fluid. We can speak of a kind of nutrition in the sense that what is absorbed from without is transformed and worked over within. If we think perhaps of something midway between nutrition and breathing in the present day sense, then we shall have some idea of what happened at that time in this respect. The human being drew nutritive substances from the kingdom of the animal-plants.

These animal-plants must be thought of as floating, swimming in — or even lightly attached to — a surrounding element in much the same way the present-day lower animals live in water or the land animals in the air. This element, however, is neither water nor air in the present sense of the word, but something midway between the two — a kind of thick vapor in which the most varied substances, as though dissolved, move hither and thither in the most varied currents. The animal-plants appear only as condensed, regular forms of this element, often differing physically very little from their environment. The process of respiration exists alongside the process of nutrition.

It is not like what occurs on earth, but it is like an insucking and outpouring of heat. For supersensible observation it is as though, during these processes, organs opened and closed through which a warming stream flowed in and out. Through these organs the airy and watery substances are also drawn in and expelled, and because the human being at this stage of his evolution already possesses an astral body, this breathing and nutrition are accompanied by feelings, so that a kind of pleasure occurs when substances that are beneficial for the building up of the human being are drawn in from outside. Displeasure is excited when injurious substances flow in or even when they only approach the human being. — During the Moon evolution there was a kinship between the processes of breathing and nutrition, as described. Similarly the process of visualization was in close correspondence with the

process of reproduction.

Objects and beings in the environment of the humanity of the Moon did not produce immediate effects on any kind of senses. Visualization was of such a character that images were evoked in the dull dim consciousness by the presence of the things and beings in its neighborhood. These pictures had a much more intimate relationship with the actual nature of the environment than present-day sense perceptions which, through color, tone, and odor, only indicate the external aspects of things and beings. In order to have a clearer concept of this consciousness of the Moon humanity, let us imagine this humanity as being embedded in the above described vaporous environment.

The most manifold processes occur within this mist-like element. Substances now unite, now separate. Certain parts condense, others become rarefied. All of this occurs in such a way that the human beings neither see nor hear it directly, but images are called forth by it in their consciousness. These may be compared to the images of present-day dream consciousness. For example, when an outer object falls to the ground and a sleeping man does not perceive the actual event itself, but instead experiences the rise of some kind of picture, he might, let us say, believe a shot was fired. The only difference is that the pictures of the Moon consciousness are not arbitrary as are the dream pictures of the present day. Although they are symbols, not copies, they correspond, nevertheless, to the outer events.

A definite picture appears with a definite outer event. The Moon humanity is thus in the position to direct its actions in accordance with these pictures, just as present-day humanity directs its actions according to its perceptions. Notice, however, must be taken of the fact that conduct based on perception admits of freedom of choice, while action under the influence of the pictures indicated is impelled by a dull urge. — This picture consciousness is by no means one by which only outer physical processes are visualized, but through them the spiritual beings ruling behind the physical facts as well as their activities are imaginatively perceived.

Thus the Spirits of Personality become, as it were, visible in the objects of the animal-plant kingdom; behind and within the mineral-plant beings the Fire Spirits appear. The Sons of Life appear as beings that the human being is able to picture mentally without connection with anything physical; he perceives them, as it were, as etheric soul forms. — Although these mental pictures of the Moon consciousness were not copies, but only symbols of the outer world, they did have a much more important effect upon the inner nature of the human being than the present visualizations of man transmitted through outer perception. They had the power to set the whole inner being in motion and activity.

The inner processes shaped themselves in accordance with them. They were genuine formative forces. The human being took on the shape these formative forces gave him; he became, as it were, a copy of his processes of consciousness.

The further that evolution continues in this manner, the deeper and more incisive is the change that in consequence takes place in the human entity. The power that proceeds from these consciousness-images is gradually no longer able to extend over the entire human corporeality. The latter divides into two parts, two natures. Members are fashioned that are subject to the formative effect of the picture consciousness, and to a great degree they become a copy of the life of mental images in the sense of

the above description. Other organs, however, withdraw from this influence.

The human being, in one part of his nature is, as it were, too dense, too much determined by other laws to be able to conduct himself according to the consciousness-pictures. These withdraw from human influence, but they become subject to the influence of the exalted sun beings themselves. A rest period precedes this stage of evolution, during which the sun spirits gather the power to work upon the Moon beings under wholly new conditions. — After this pause the human being is distinctly split into two natures.

One of these natures, not subject to the independent activity of the picture consciousness, takes on a more definite form and comes under the influence of forces that, to be sure, proceed from the Moon body, but within which they arise only through the influence of the sun beings. This part of the human being participates increasingly in the life that is inspired by the sun. The other part rises out of the former like a kind of head. It is in itself mobile, plastic, and becomes the expression and bearer of the dull life of consciousness of the human being. Yet the two parts are closely bound together. They send their fluids into one another, and their members stretch from one into the other.

A significant harmony is now achieved through the fact that, during the time in which all this happened, a relationship between sun and Moon has been developed that is in accord with the direction of this evolution. — It has already been pointed out in a previous paragraph (see page 150) how, as a result of their stage of evolution, the advancing beings sever their cosmic bodies from the general cosmic mass. They radiate the forces in accordance with which the substances form themselves.

Sun and Moon have thus separated from one another in accordance with the necessity of establishing proper dwelling places for the corresponding beings. This conditioning of substance and its forces by means of the spirit, however, extends further. The beings themselves determine certain movements of cosmic bodies and their definite revolution around each other. In this way these bodies come into varying positions in, relation to each other. If the location or position of one cosmic body in relation to another is changed, then the effects of their corresponding beings upon one another are also changed. This happened with the sun and the Moon.

Through the movement begun by the Moon around the sun, the human beings come now under the influence of the sun activity, now they turn away from this influence and are then more dependent upon themselves. The movement is a result of the secession of certain Moon beings already described and the adjustment of the conflict brought about by it. It is only the physical expression of the spiritual relationship of forces created by this secession.

The revolution of one body around the other resulted in the previously described changing states of consciousness in the beings dwelling on the cosmic bodies. It can be said that the Moon alternately turns its life toward and away from the sun. There is a sun period and a Moon period; during the latter, the Moon beings develop on the side of the Moon that is turned away from the sun. For the Moon, however, something else was added to the movement of the heavenly bodies.

The retrospective supersensible consciousness is able to see how the Moon beings themselves revolve



around their own cosmic body in quite regular periods. At certain times they seek out the places where they can expose themselves to the influence of the sun. At other epochs they migrate to the regions where they are not exposed to this influence and where they can, as it were, reflect upon themselves.

In order to complete the picture of these processes, we have also to consider that at this time the Sons of Life reach their human stage. The human being on the Moon cannot yet use his senses, the primal indications of which had come into existence already on Saturn, for his own perception of external objects. At the Moon stage of evolution, however, these senses become the instruments of the Sons of Life. The latter make use of these senses in order to perceive by means of them. These senses, which belong to the physical human body, enter in this way into reciprocal relationship with the Sons of Life, who not only make use of them, but perfect them as well.

Through the changing relationships to the sun a change occurs, as described, in the conditions of life within the human being himself. Things shape themselves in such a way that each time the human being comes under the influence of the sun, he devotes himself more to the life of the sun and its phenomena than to himself. At such times he experiences the grandeur and majesty of the universe as this is expressed in the sun existence. He absorbs this.

The exalted beings who have their habitation upon the sun exercise their power upon the Moon, which in turn has its effect upon the being of man. This effect does not extend to the entire human being; it affects particularly those parts of him that have withdrawn from the influence of his own picture consciousness. Thus the physical and ether bodies especially attain a certain size and form, but in order that this may occur, the phenomena of consciousness withdraw. When, now, the life of the human being is removed from the influence of the sun, he is occupied with his own nature.

An inner vivacity begins chiefly in the astral body, but the external shape becomes less conspicuous, less perfect in form. — Thus during the Moon evolution there are these two clearly distinguishable, alternating states of consciousness — a duller state during the sun period and a clearer state during the period in which life is more dependent upon itself. The first state is, indeed duller, but it is for that reason also more selfless.

Man surrenders himself more to the outer world, to the universe mirrored in the sun. There is an alternation in the states of consciousness that may be compared with the alternation of sleeping and waking in the present human being, as well as with his life between birth and death on the one hand, and with the more spiritual existence between death and a new birth, on the other. The awakening on the Moon, when the sun period gradually ceases, should be characterized as a state intermediate between our present waking every morning and our being born. Likewise, the gradual dimming of consciousness at the approach of the sun period may be likened to an intermediate state between going to sleep and dying, for a consciousness of birth and death similar to the one belonging to present-day man did not yet exist on the ancient Moon. In a kind of sun-life the human being surrendered himself to the enjoyment of this life.

He was, during this time, withdrawn from his own life. He lived more spiritually. Only an approximate and comparative description of what the human entity experienced in these periods can be attempted. He felt as though the causative forces of the cosmos streamed into him, pulsated through

him. He felt as though intoxicated with the harmonies of the universe of which he partook. At such times his astral body was as though freed from the physical body, and a part of the life body was likewise withdrawn from it.

This organism composed of astral body and life body was like a marvelous, delicate musical instrument upon whose strings the mysteries of the universe resounded, and the members of that part of the human being upon which consciousness had but little influence took on forms in response to the universal harmonies, for in these harmonies the sun beings were active. Thus, through spiritual cosmic tones this human part was given form.

The alternation between the brighter state of consciousness and this duller one during the sun period was not as abrupt as is the alternation between waking and a completely dreamless sleep for man today. The picture consciousness, to be sure, was not as clear as the present waking consciousness; the other consciousness, in turn, was not as dull as the dreamless sleep of today. Thus the human being had a vague notion of the play of universal harmonies in his physical body and in that part of the ether body that had remained united with it.

At the time during which the sun was not shining, as it were, for the human being, the imaginative thought pictures pervaded his consciousness instead of harmonies. Especially those members of the physical and ether bodies that were under the direct power of consciousness were then vivified. In contrast, however, the other parts of the human being, upon which the formative forces from the sun now had no influence, passed through a kind of hardening and drying out process. When the sun period again drew near, these old bodies disintegrated; they severed themselves from the human being and then, as though from the grave of his old corporeality, he arose, inwardly newly formed, although he was still insignificant in this new shape.

A renewal of the life-processes had taken place. Through the activity of the sun beings and their harmonies the new-born body again reached its perfection and the process described above repeated itself. Man experienced this renewal as the donning of a new garment. The kernel of his being had not passed through an actual birth or death, it only had shed its skin, as it were, by passing over from a spiritual tone-consciousness in which it yielded itself up to the external world, to one in which it was turned more toward the inner life. The old body had become unusable; it was cast off and then renewed. This characterizes more exactly what was described above as a kind of reproduction, and of which it was said that it is closely related to visualizing activity.

The human being has generated his kind with respect to certain parts of the physical and ether bodies. Yet there is no engendering of a daughter being completely distinguished from its parent, but the essential kernel of the latter passes over into the former. This kernel does not produce a new being, but brings itself forth in a new form. Thus the Moon human being experiences a change of consciousness. When the sun epoch approaches, his visualizations become duller and duller, and a state of blissful surrender pervades him. Within his quiet inner being resound cosmic harmonies. Toward the end of this period the images in the astral body begin to revive.

Man begins to feel and experience himself. He experiences something like an awakening from the blissfulness and quiet into which he was immersed during the sun period. In this connection yet

another important experience occurs. With the new awakening of the picture consciousness the individual man perceives himself as though enveloped in a cloud that had descended upon him like a being from the cosmos. He feels this being as something belonging to him, as a completion of his own nature. He feels it as something that gives him his own existence; he feels it as his ego.

This being is one of the Sons of Life. He feels toward this being somewhat as follows, "I lived in this being even during the sun period of the Moon when I had surrendered myself to the glory of the cosmos, but at that time it was invisible to me. Now, however, it becomes visible to me." It is also from this same Son of Life that the power proceeds that produces the activity performed by man upon his own bodily nature during the sunless period. Then when the sun period again approaches, man feels as if he himself became one with the Son of Life. Even though he may not behold him, nevertheless he feels himself intimately united with the Son of Life.

The relationship to the Sons of Life was of such a character that not each individual human being had a Son of Life for himself, but a whole group of human beings felt that one of these beings belonged to it. Thus on the Moon the inhabitants lived divided into such groups, and every group looked up to a Son of Life as the common group ego. The difference between the groups became apparent through each group having a different form, especially in its ether bodies. But since the physical bodies are formed in accordance with the ether bodies, the differences in the latter were imprinted upon the former, and the various human groups appeared as so many different types of men.

When the Sons of Life looked down upon the human groups belonging to them, they saw themselves, as it were, manifolded in the individual human beings. In this way they experienced their own egohood. They mirrored themselves in the human beings. This was also the task of the human senses at that time. We have seen that these did not yet transmit any external objective perceptions. But they reflected the being of the Sons of Life. What these Sons of Life perceived through this reflection gave to them their ego consciousness. It was, however, the images of the dull, vague Moon consciousness that were aroused in the human astral body by this reflection. — The effect of this activity of man, achieved in reciprocal relationship with the Sons of Life, brought into existence the first traces of the nervous system in the physical body. The nerves represent a sort of extension of the senses into the inner nature of the human body.

From this description it can be seen how the three categories of spirits, the Spirits of Personality, the Fire Spirits, and the Sons of Life, are active upon the Moon man. If the main period of the Moon evolution — the middle evolutionary period — is considered, we may say that it was then that the Spirits of Personality implanted independence, the character of personality, in the human astral body. It is due to this fact that during the time when the sun does not shine on the human being, as it were, he can turn in upon himself, is able to fashion himself.

The Fire Spirits manifest themselves in the ether body to the degree that this body imprints upon itself the independent human structure. It is because of them that the human being feels himself to be again the same being each time after the renewal of his body. A kind of memory is thus given to the ether body through the Fire Spirits. The Sons of Life work upon the physical body in such a way that it is able to become the expression of the now independent astral body. They thus make it possible for this physical body to become a physiognomic copy of its astral body. On the other hand, higher spiritual beings, especially the Spirits of Form and the Spirits of Movement, intervene in the formation of

physical and ether bodies insofar as these develop in the sun periods independent of the autonomous astral body. It is from the sun that their intervention occurs in the manner described above.

Under the influence of such facts the human being gradually matures in order to develop in itself the germ of spirit self, just as in the second half of the Saturn evolution the human being developed the germ of spirit man, and on the Sun the germ of life spirit. Through this, all relationships on the Moon change. Through the successive changes and renewals human beings have become ever more noble and delicate. They have also gained in strength. As a result, the picture consciousness was increasingly preserved also during the sun cycles.

In this way it acquires an influence over the formation of the physical and ether bodies that formerly happened only through the activity of the sun beings. What happened on the Moon through the human beings and the spirits united with them became more and more like the former achievements of the sun with its higher beings. As a result, these sun beings could increasingly apply their forces for the sake of their own evolution and because of this the Moon became ready, after a certain length of time, to be reunited with the sun. — Spiritually perceived, these processes appear as follows.

The revolting Moon beings have been gradually overcome by the sun beings and must now adjust themselves by becoming subject to them, so that the functions of both are in mutual harmony. — This happened only after long preceding epochs in which the Moon cycles became shorter and shorter and the sun cycles longer and longer. A cycle of evolution now begins during which sun and Moon are again a single cosmic organism.

At this time the physical human body has become wholly etheric. — When this is said, it must not be imagined that under such conditions we cannot speak of a physical body. What has been formed as physical body during the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions still remains present. It is important to recognize the physical not only where it manifests outwardly physically. The physical can also be present in such a way that it can show externally the form of the etheric, and indeed, even show the form of the astral. It is important to differentiate between external appearances and inner laws. A physical body can become etherized or astralized, yet at the same time retain its physical laws. This is the case when the human physical body on the Moon has reached a certain degree of perfection.

It becomes ether-like. When, however, supersensible consciousness — able to observe things of this kind — turns its attention to such an ether-like body, it appears to it permeated not by the laws of the etheric but by the laws of the physical. The physical is taken up into the etheric in order to rest there and be fostered as in a maternal womb. Later it appears again in physical form but at a higher stage. Were the human Moon being to keep its physical body in the grossly physical form, the Moon would never be able to reunite itself with the sun.

By the acquisition of an etheric form, the physical body becomes more related to the ether body and it can, moreover, be permeated again more inwardly by those parts of the ether and astral bodies that, during the sun periods of the Moon evolution, had to withdraw from it. The human entity, which appeared like a double being during the separation of sun and Moon, becomes again a unified being.

The physical becomes more soul-like, and the soul in turn more closely united with the physical. —

The sun spirits, into whose direct sphere this unitary human being has now come, are able to work upon him quite differently from the time when they worked from without, downward upon the Moon. The human being is now more in a soul and spirit environment. Through this fact the Spirits of Wisdom can achieve a significant effect. They imprint wisdom in him. They ensoul him with wisdom. He becomes in this way in a certain sense an independent soul. To the influence of these beings is added that of the Spirits of Motion.

They act especially upon the astral body in such a way that, under the influence of the beings described, it evolves a soul activity and a life of ether body filled with wisdom. The wisdom-filled ether body is the first germinal nucleus of what has been described in an earlier chapter as the intellectual soul in present-day humanity, whereas the astral body stimulated by the Spirits of Motion contains the germinal nucleus of the sentient soul. Because all this is brought about within the human entity in its increased state of independence, these germinal nuclei of the intellectual and sentient souls appear as the expression of spirit self. The mistake must not be made of thinking that, at this period of evolution, spirit self is something special, independent of the intellectual and sentient souls. These latter are only the expression of spirit self that signifies their higher unity and harmony.

It is of special significance that during this epoch the Spirits of Wisdom intervene in the manner described. They do this not alone in respect of the human being but also of the other kingdoms that have developed upon the Moon. When the sun and Moon again become united, these lower kingdoms are drawn within the sphere of the sun. All that was physical in them becomes etherized. Thus, just as human beings are to be found on the sun, so there are also to be found mineral-plants and plant-animals.

These other creatures, however, remain endowed with their own laws. They feel, therefore, like strangers in their new surroundings. They appear with a nature that has little in common with that of their environment. But since they have an etheric form, the activity of the Spirits of Wisdom can extend to them also. All that has come from the Moon into the sun is now permeated with the forces of the Spirits of Wisdom. Therefore what is fashioned from the sun-Moon organism within this evolutionary period may be called the "Cosmos of Wisdom." — When our Earth system, as a descendant of this Cosmos of Wisdom, appears after a rest period, all the beings coming to life again upon the Earth, springing forth from their Moon nuclei, show themselves filled with wisdom.

Thus we see the reason why the present earth man, looking attentively at the things about him, can discover wisdom in the nature of their being. We can marvel at the wisdom in each plant leaf, in each animal and human bone, in the miraculous structure of the brain and heart. When man needs wisdom in order to understand things, that is, when he extracts wisdom from them, it shows that wisdom exists in the things themselves. For however much the human being might try to understand the things by means of ideas filled with wisdom, he would be unable to extract any wisdom from them were it not already embodied in the things themselves.

Anyone who wishes by means of wisdom to comprehend things that, as he thinks, have not first received wisdom, may also imagine that he can take water out of a glass into which none has previously been poured. The Earth, as will be seen later on in this book, is the resurrected ancient Moon. It appears as a wisdom-filled organism because in the epoch described it has become permeated by the forces of the Spirits of Wisdom.

It will, it is hoped, appear comprehensible that in this description of the Moon conditions only certain transitory forms of evolution could be concentrated upon. Certain things in the progress of events had to be selected and emphasized for the description. This kind of description offers, to be sure, only single pictures, and the preceding descriptions of evolution may therefore seem lacking through not being woven into a web of definitely fixed concepts. In regard to such an objection attention may perhaps be drawn to the fact that the description has intentionally been given in less concise concepts.

For it is not so much a question here of the construction of speculative concepts and ideas, but rather of a mental picture of what can present itself to the spiritual eye through supersensible perception directed to these facts. These facts do not appear in such sharp and definite outlines in the Moon evolution as is the case with the perceptions on our earth. In the Moon epoch we are concerned with vacillating, changing impressions, with fluctuating, mobile pictures, and with their transitions. Besides this, we must consider the fact that we are concerned with an evolution covering long, long periods of time and that in describing this, only momentary pictures can be seized on and fixed.

At the point of time when the astral body implanted in the human being has advanced him so far in his evolution that his physical body gives the Sons of Life the possibility of attaining their human stage, the actual climax of the Moon epoch is reached. At that time the human being also has attained all that this epoch can give him for his inner development on the forward path. The following cycle, that is, the second part of the Moon evolution, can be designated as one of ebb-tide. But it can be seen that with respect to the human environment and also to man himself something most important transpires just at this period. It is then that wisdom is implanted within the sun-Moon body.

We have seen that during this ebb-tide the nuclei of the intellectual and sentient souls are engendered. Yet it is not until the Earth period that their unfolding and that of the consciousness soul occurs together with the birth of the ego, of independent self-consciousness. At the Moon stage, the intellectual and sentient souls do not yet appear as though the human being himself were able to express himself through them, but as though they were instruments for the Sons of Life belonging to the human being. If we wish to characterize the feeling that man had on the Moon in regard to this, we would have to say that he felt as follows. "The Son of Life lives in and through me; he beholds the Moon environment through me; he thinks in me about the things and beings in this environment."

The Moon man feels overshadowed by his Son of Life, he experiences himself as the instrument of this higher being, and during the separation of sun and Moon, when the Moon was turned away from the sun, he had a feeling of greater independence. At the same time he also felt as if the ego belonging to him, which had disappeared from his picture-consciousness during the sun cycles, now became visible to him. This was for the Moon human being what we might call alternation in the states of consciousness. This gave him the feeling, "In the sun period my ego soars away with me up into higher regions to sublime beings, and, when the sun disappears, it descends with me into lower worlds."

A preparatory period preceded the actual Moon evolution. A kind of repetition of the Saturn and Sun evolution occurred at that time. Then, after the reunion of the sun and Moon in the ebb-tide period, two epochs can likewise be distinguished during which there take place, to a certain degree, even

physical condensations. The psycho-spiritual states of the sun-Moon organism alternate with physical states. In these physical epochs the human beings, and likewise the beings of the lower kingdoms, appear in stiff forms, lacking independence, forms that were forecasts of what they were to become as more independent shapes later on in the Earth evolution.

Thus we can speak of two preparatory periods of the Moon evolution and of two others during the time of ebb-tide. Such epochs can be called cycles. In what follows the two preparatory cycles, and that precedes the two cycles of ebb-tide — that is, in the time of the Moon separation — three epochs can also be distinguished. It is in the middle epoch of these three that the Sons of Life reach their human status. Prior to this there is an epoch during which all conditions lead to a concentration on achieving this main event. Then another epoch follows that can be described as a condition in which the beings become familiar with and develop the new creations. Thus the middle period of the Moon evolution is divided into three epochs. Together with the two preparatory and the two ebb-tide epochs, they make seven Moon cycles. It may thus be said that the entire Moon evolution runs its course in seven cycles.

Between these cycles lie rest periods that have been mentioned previously. We shall arrive at a true conception of the situation only if we do not imagine abrupt transitions between periods of activity and those of rest. The sun beings, for example, withdraw, little by little, from their activity on the Moon. A time begins for them that, outwardly observed, appears like their period of rest, while upon the Moon itself, animated, independent activity reigns. Thus the period of activity of one kind of being extends into the rest period of other beings.

If we take these things into account we can speak of a rhythmic rising and falling of forces in cycles. Indeed, similar divisions can also be observed within the seven Moon cycles described. We can then call the whole Moon evolution a great cycle, a planetary cycle; the seven divisions within one of these cycles, small cycles, and the divisions of these last again still smaller sub-cycles. This membering into seven times seven sections is already observable in the Sun evolution and is indicated also during the Saturn epoch. Yet we must consider the boundaries between the divisions as being blurred on the Sun and as being still more vague on Saturn. The boundary lines become more and more clearly defined the farther evolution proceeds toward Earth.

## **Part 6**

After the conclusion of the Moon evolution described in the foregoing sketch, all beings and forces concerned appear in a more spiritual form of existence, a form that stands at a quite different level from that of the Moon period and also from that of the subsequent Earth evolution. A being who possessed such highly developed capacities of cognition that he could perceive all the details of the Moon and Earth evolutions would not necessarily be able also to perceive what happens between the two evolutions. For such an individual, the beings and forces at the end of the Moon period would disappear as though into nothingness and after the lapse of an interim make their appearance again out of the dim darkness of the cosmic womb. Only a being possessing still higher faculties could follow up the spiritual events that occur in this interim.

At the end of the interval of rest from outer activity, the beings who had taken part in the evolutionary

processes on Saturn, Sun, and Moon appear with new abilities and faculties. The beings standing above men have acquired, through their previous acts, the capacity to develop the human being to such a point that, during the Earth period following the Moon period, he can unfold in himself a degree of consciousness that stands one stage higher than the picture-consciousness possessed by him during the Moon period.

Man, however, must first be prepared to receive what is to be bestowed upon him. During the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions he invested his being with a physical, life, and astral body, but these members of his being have received only the capacities and forces that enable them to live in a picture-consciousness; they still lack the organs and structure enabling them to perceive a world of outer sense objects as it is required for the Earth stage.

Just as the new plant only develops what is inherent in the seed coming from the old plant, so in the beginning of the new stage of evolution the three members of human nature appear with structures and organs that make possible the development of picture-consciousness only. They must first be prepared for the development of a higher stage of consciousness. — This takes place in three preliminary stages. In the first stage, the physical body is raised to a level where it is possible to make the necessary transformation that can be the basis for an objective consciousness.

This is a preliminary stage of the Earth evolution, which may be termed a repetition of Saturn at a higher level, for during this period, just as during the Saturn evolution, higher beings work only upon the physical body. When the physical body has progressed far enough in its evolution, all beings must again pass over into a higher form of existence before the life or ether body can also advance.

The physical body must be remodeled, as it were, in order to be able, when it unfolds again, to receive the more highly developed life body. After this intermediate period devoted to a higher form of existence, something like a repetition of the Sun evolution takes place on a higher level for the purpose of developing the life body. Again after an intermediate period something similar happens for the astral body in a repetition of the Moon evolution.

Let us now turn to the events of evolution after the completion of the third of the recapitulation periods just described. All beings and forces have again become spiritualized. During this spiritualization they have ascended into sublime worlds. The lowest of these worlds in which something of these beings and forces can still be perceived during this period of spiritualization, is the same world in which the present human being dwells between death and re-birth. These are the regions of the land of spirits. The beings and forces then gradually descend again to lower worlds. Before the physical Earth evolution begins, they have descended so far that their lowest manifestations are to be perceived in the astral or soul world.

Everything human existing at this period still possesses its astral form. In order to understand this state of humanity, special attention should be given to the fact that man possesses a physical body, a life body, and an astral body, but that the physical body as well as the life body do not yet exist in a physical or etheric form, but in an astral form. What at that time makes the physical body physical is not its physical form but the physical laws that are present in it, although it has an astral form. It is a being ruled by physical laws appearing in soul form. This is also true of the life body.



At this stage of evolution the Earth stands before the spiritual eye as a cosmic being that is wholly soul and spirit, and in which the physical and life forces still appear in soul form. Within this cosmic structure everything that is to be transformed later into the creatures of the physical earth is contained in a germinal state. This cosmic Earth being is luminous, but its light is not one that physical eyes could perceive, even were they present, for it gleams with soul radiance only for the opened eye of the seer.

In this cosmic being something now takes place that may be called a condensation, which after a time results in a fire form appearing in the midst of this soul structure, a form similar to Saturn in its densest condition. This fire form is interwoven with the activities of the various beings who participate in evolution. What may be observed as a reciprocal activity between these beings and the celestial body is like an emerging from the Earth fire-ball and a reimmersing in it. Therefore the Earth fire-ball is by no means a uniform substance, but something like an organism permeated with soul and spirit. The beings who are destined to become human beings in our present form on the Earth are still in a condition in which they participate the least in the activity of immersion in the fire-body.

They still remain almost wholly in the non-condensed environment. They still are within the bosom of the higher spiritual beings. At this stage they touch the fire Earth only with one point of their soul form, with the result that the heat causes a part of their astral form to condense. Through this fact, Earth life is enkindled within them, but the largest part of their being still belongs to the world of soul and spirit. Only through the contact with the Earth fire does the warmth of life play around them.

If we wish to form a sensible-supersensible picture of this human being in the beginning of the physical Earth period, we must imagine an egg-shaped soul form, existing in the surroundings of the Earth enclosed by a cup at its lower end like an acorn. But the substance of the cup consists purely of heat or fire. The enkindling of life within the human being was not the only result of this enclosure in heat, but simultaneously with it a change in the astral body occurred. Inserted into it is the primal nucleus of what later becomes the sentient soul. Therefore, it may be said that at this stage of his existence man consists of sentient soul, astral body, life body, and physical body woven of fire. The spiritual beings who take part in human existence surge up and down in the astral body; through the sentient soul man feels himself bound to the body of the Earth.

At this time, therefore, he has a preponderant picture-consciousness in which the spiritual beings manifest themselves. He lies within their bosom, and the sensation of his own bodily existence appears only as a point within this consciousness. From the spiritual world he looks down, as it were, upon an earthly possession about which he feels, "That is mine." — The condensation of the Earth advances further and further and with it the characterized organizing of man becomes ever more distinct. At a definite point of time in its evolution the Earth becomes condensed to such a degree that only a part remains fiery. Another part has taken on a substantial form that may be represented as gas or air. A change now takes place also in man.

Not only the Earth heat touches his organism, but air substance is drawn into his fire body. Just as heat has enkindled life in him, so air playing about him produces an effect that may be likened to spiritual tone; his life body resounds. At the same time the astral body detaches a part of itself; this becomes the primal nucleus of what appears later as the intellectual soul. — In order to form a picture of what

is taking place at this time within the human soul, we must realize that beings higher than men surge up and down within the air-fire body of the Earth. In the fire Earth we have first the Spirits of Personality who are of importance to man, and when the latter is aroused to life by the Earth heat, his sentient soul says to itself, "These are the Spirits of Personality." Likewise, the beings who have been called Archangels — in the sense of Christian esotericism — proclaim themselves in the air body, and when the air plays about the human being it is their activities that he experiences in himself as tone; the intellectual soul says to itself, "These are the Archangels."

Thus, at this stage man does not yet perceive through his connection with the Earth what might be called an aggregation of physical objects, but he lives in sensations of heat arising in him and in sounding tone; in these heat streams and tone waves he perceives the Spirits of Personality and the Archangels. He cannot, however, perceive these beings directly; he can only sense them through the veil of heat and tone. While these perceptions coming from the Earth penetrate his soul, still rising and falling within it are the images of the higher beings in whose bosom he feels his existence.

The evolution of the Earth now advances further and its continuation expresses itself again in condensing. The Earth receives the watery substance into its body, which now consists of three members — the fiery, the airy, and the watery elements. Prior to this an important event takes place. An independent cosmic body severs itself from the fire-air Earth. This becomes in its subsequent evolution the present sun.<sup>1</sup> Previously, Earth and sun were one body. After the separation of the sun, the Earth<sup>2</sup> still contains within it all that comprises the present moon.

The separation of the sun takes place because exalted beings can no longer endure the matter now condensed to water in their own evolution and in their task for the advancement of the Earth. They extract from the general Earth mass the substance alone suited to their purposes and withdraw in order to establish a new habitation in the present sun. They now send down their activities from the sun to the Earth. Man, however, needs for his further development a place of action in which substance continues to condense.

The incorporation of the watery substance into the Earth body is accompanied by a change in the human being. Not only does fire stream into him and air play about him, but watery substance is incorporated into his physical body. At the same time his etheric part undergoes a change and he perceives it now as a delicate body of light. Previously he felt the streams of heat arising from the Earth, he experienced air pressing upon him through tones.

Now the watery element also penetrates his fire-air body, and he perceives its instreaming and outstreaming as a flashing up and dimming of light. In his soul also a change has taken place. To the germs of the sentient and intellectual souls is now added that of the consciousness soul. In the water element the Angels are active; they are also the actual producers of light.

The human being feels as though they appeared to him in light. — Certain higher beings who were previously within the Earth body now work down upon it from the sun; through all this there is a change in the effects on the Earth. Man chained to the Earth would no longer be able to sense the effects of the sun beings within himself if his soul were constantly turned toward the Earth from which he has received his physical body. An alternation now takes place in the states of human

consciousness.

The sun beings tear the human soul away from the physical body at certain times so that man now lives alternately within the bosom of the sun beings, purely as a soul, and at other times in a condition where he is united with the body and receives the influences of the Earth. If he is in the physical body, the streams of heat surge up to him; the air masses sound around him; the waters flow in and out of him. If he is outside his body, his soul is then permeated by the images of the higher beings in whose bosom he lives. — At this stage of its evolution the Earth experiences two alternating periods. During the one, it is permitted to weave its substances around the human souls and invest them with bodies; during the other, the souls desert it and only the bodies remain.

It, together with the human beings, is in a sleeping state. It is entirely possible to say that at this time of the far distant past the Earth passes through a day and a night period. (This expresses itself physically and spatially in the movement of the Earth in relation to the sun as a result of the mutual action of the sun and Earth beings. In this way the alternation in the characterized day and night period is effected. The day period occurs when the Earth surface upon which man is evolving is turned toward the sun. The night period, that is, the time during which man leads a purely soul existence, occurs when this surface is turned away from the sun. It should not, however, be imagined that in that primeval epoch the Earth's movement around the sun was at all like that of the present.

The conditions were then quite different. It is, however, useful to realize here that the movements of the heavenly bodies arise as a result of the relationships the spiritual beings inhabiting them bear to one another. The heavenly bodies are brought into such positions and movements through soul and spirit causes that the spiritual states are enabled to unfold themselves in the physical world.)

Were we to turn our glance toward the Earth during its night period we would see its body in a corpse-like state, for it consists in large part of the decaying bodies of human beings whose souls dwell in another state of existence. The organic, watery, and aeriform structures constituting the human bodies fall into decay and resolve themselves into the rest of the Earth mass. Only that part of the human body, which at the very beginning of the Earth evolution took form through the co-activity of fire and the human soul, and in consequence became continually denser, remains in existence like an outwardly inconspicuous germinal nucleus.

What is said here about day and night should, therefore, not be taken to be at all similar to what is indicated by these terms at the present earth stage. If at the beginning of the day period the Earth again is a participant in the direct effect of the sun, then the human souls penetrate into the realm of physical life. They come in contact with the nuclei mentioned above and cause them to germinate so that the latter assume an external form that appears like a copy of the human soul nature.

It is something like a gentle fructification that occurs between the human soul and the germinal human body. These souls thus embodied now begin also to draw in the surrounding air and water masses and to incorporate them into their bodies. The air is expelled from the organized body and then drawn in again; this is the first indication of what is later to become the breathing process.

The water is also drawn in and then expelled; this is the origin of the process of nutrition. These

processes are not yet externally perceived. A kind of outer perception occurs through the soul only in the already mentioned fructifying process. Then the soul feels dully its awakening into physical existence by coming in contact with the germinal body the Earth offers it. It hears something that may be expressed in the words, "That is my form!" and this feeling, which might also be called a dawning of the ego-feeling, remains in the soul during its entire connection with the physical body. The process of assimilating air, however, is felt by the soul as something entirely of a soul-spirit nature, entirely pictorial.

It appears in the form of an up and down undulating tone-configuration that gives shape to the developing embryonic body. The soul feels itself surrounded completely by undulating tone, and it is conscious of how it fashions its own body according to these tone forces. Thus, at that stage, human forms took shape that are not observable by present-day human consciousness in an external world. They fashion themselves in plant and flowerlike structures of delicate substance that are inwardly mobile, appearing like fluttering flowers, and during the Earth period the human being experiences the blissful feeling of being fashioned into such forms.

The absorption of the watery parts is felt in the soul as a source of power, as an inner strengthening. Seen from without it appears as growth of the physical human structure. With the waning of the direct effect of the sun the human soul also loses the power to control these processes. By degrees they are discarded. Only those parts remain that permit the above characterized germinal nucleus to ripen.

The human being, however, forsakes his body and returns to the spiritual state of existence. (Since not all parts of the Earth body are used in fashioning human bodies, it should not be imagined that during the night period the Earth consists solely of decaying corpses and germinal nuclei awaiting to be wakened. All of these are embedded in other forms that take shape from the substances of the Earth. The condition of these will be shown later.)

The process of Earth-substance condensation now continues. The solid element, which may be called "earthy," is added to the watery element. With this the human being also begins to invest his body with the earthy element during his sojourn on Earth. As soon as this investing process begins, the forces that the soul brings with it from the time it is freed from the body no longer have the same power as previously. Formerly, the soul fashioned the body for itself from the fiery, airy, and watery element according to the tones sounding around it and the light shapes playing about it. The soul is unable to do this with the solidified form.

Other powers now intervene in the fashioning process. In the part of the human being that remains when the soul abandons the body, now not only a germinal nucleus is present, which is quickened by the returning soul, but an organism is present that contains also the vivifying force itself. By its severance, the soul does not leave behind on Earth merely a likeness of itself, but It also implants a part of its vivifying power into the likeness. When the soul reappears on Earth, it can no longer only awaken the likeness to life, but the quickening must take place in the likeness itself.

The spiritual beings who affect the Earth from the sun sustain the quickening force in the human body although man himself is not on Earth. By incarnating, the soul feels not only the resounding tones and light shapes in which it senses the presence of the beings standing next above it, but through the intake

of the Earth element it feels the influence of the still higher beings who have established their field of activity on the sun. Previously man felt himself belonging to the beings of soul and spirit with whom he was united when body-free.

His ego still existed within their bosom. This ego now confronts him during physical embodiment while at the same time the surrounding world encompasses him. Independent likenesses of the soul-spirit nature of the human being were now on Earth, likenesses that, when compared with the present human bodies, were structures composed of delicate substantiality, for the earthy parts mingled with them only in the finest state, in a way comparable to the modern human being's absorption of the finely diffused substances of an object with his organ of smell.

Human bodies were like shadows. Since they were distributed over the whole Earth, however, they became subject to the Earth influences, which varied at different points of its surface. While previously the bodily likenesses corresponded to the soul-men who animated them and, for that reason, were essentially similar to one another over the whole Earth, now variations appear among human forms. In this way what later emerged as race differentiation was prepared. — Coincident with the growing independence of the human bodily being there was a loosening of the previous close connection between the earth man and the soul-spirit world.

When the soul now left the body, the latter lived on in a sort of continuation of life. — If evolution had continued in this way, the Earth would have had to harden under the influence of its solid element. Supersensible knowledge, looking back upon these conditions, perceives how the human bodies abandoned by their souls solidify more and more. After a time the souls returning to Earth would have found no usable material with which they might unite. All the substances suitable for the human being would have been employed in filling the Earth with the woodlike remains of incarnations.

An event then occurred that gave a different direction to the whole process of evolution. Everything was eliminated that could contribute to permanent induration in the solid Earth substance. At that time our present moon<sup>3</sup> withdrew from the Earth, and what had previously contributed directly to the fashioning of permanent forms in the Earth worked now indirectly in a diminished way from the moon.

The higher beings upon whom this fashioning of form depends had decided no longer to bestow their effects upon the Earth from within it, but to bestow them upon it from the outside. As a result there appeared a variation in the bodily human structure that must be regarded as the beginning of the separation into two sexes, male and female. The human structures composed of fine substance that previously inhabited the Earth, permitted — through the co-operation within themselves of both these forces, the germinal and the engendering force — the new human form, their descendant, to come into existence. These descendants now transformed themselves.

In the one group of such descendants, the soul-spirit germ force was more effective; in the other group it was the life-giving, engendering force that was more effective. This was caused by the weakening of the power of the Earth element through the withdrawal of the moon from the Earth. The interworking of both forces became more delicate than it was previously when it occurred in a single living individual.

As a result the descendant, too, was more delicate, finer. He entered the earth<sup>4</sup> existence in a delicately formed structure and only by degrees did the more solid substances pervade it. This gave the possibility for the soul — returning to earth — to unite itself again with the body. Now the soul quickened the body no longer from without, for this quickening occurred on the earth itself, but it united itself with it and caused it to grow.

A certain limit, however, was set to this growth. As a result of the moon separation, the body had for a time become flexible, but the longer it continued to grow on the earth, the more the solidifying forces gained the upper hand. Finally, the soul was less and less able to participate in the organization of the body. The latter decomposed as the soul ascended to soul-spirit existence.

It is possible to trace how the forces that man gradually appropriated during the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions participate by degrees in human advancement during the fashioning of the earth just described. First, it is the astral body — which also contains both the life or ether body and physical body in a condition of dissolution within itself that is enkindled by the earth fire. Then this astral body is organized into a rarefied astral part, the sentient soul, and into a coarser part, the etheric, which is now affected by the earth element. With this the previously formed ether or life body makes its appearance.

While the intellectual and consciousness souls fashion themselves within the astral human being, the coarser parts of the ether body, which are susceptible to tone and light, organize themselves within it. It is at the time when the ether body condenses itself still further, so that it is transformed from a light body into a fire or heat body, that the stage of evolution is reached in which, as described above, the parts of the solid earth element are incorporated into the human being. Because the ether body has condensed itself to the density of fire, it is now able through the forces of the physical body previously implanted in it to unite itself with the substances of the physical earth that have become attenuated to a condition of fire.

It would, however, be unable by itself to infuse the body, which has become more dense in the meantime, also with the airy substances. Here, as indicated above, the higher beings dwelling on the sun interpose and breathe the air into it. Whereas man, by virtue of his past, has thus the power to infuse himself with earthly fire, higher beings guide the instreaming breath of air into his body. Before solidification, the human life body, as a receiver of tone, was the guide of the air stream. It permeated its physical body with life.

This physical body now receives life from without. In consequence of this, this life becomes independent of the soul part of the human being who, by leaving the earth, not only leaves his germinal form behind, but also a living likeness of himself. The Spirits of Form remain united with this likeness; they lead the life bestowed by them upon the individual over to the descendants also after the human soul has left the body.

Thus, what may be called heredity is developed. When the human soul appears again on earth, it feels itself in a body, the life of which has been transferred to it from the ancestors. It feels itself especially attracted to just such a body. As a result something is formed like a memory about the ancestor with whom the soul feels itself at one. Such a memory passes like a common consciousness through the

line of descendants. The ego flows down through the generations.

At this stage of evolution, man felt himself during his earth existence as an independent being. He felt the inner fire of his life body united with the external fire of the earth. He was able to feel the heat streaming through him as his own ego. In these currents of heat, interwoven with life, the first tendency to form a blood circulation is to be found. The human being did not, however, quite feel his own being in what streamed into him as air.

In this air the forces of the already described higher beings were active. But that part of the effective forces within the air streaming through him, which belonged to him already by virtue of his previously created ether forces, had remained. He was ruler in one part of these air currents and to the degree that this was so, not only did the higher beings operate in fashioning him, but he himself also assisted in his own formation. According to the images of his astral body he fashioned the air portions.

While air thus streamed into the human being from without, becoming the basis of his breathing, a part of the air he contained developed into an organism that was then impressed into him; this became the foundation of the later nervous system. Thus man of that time was connected with the external world of the earth by warmth and air. On the other hand, he was unconscious of the introduction into his organism of the solid element of the earth; this element co-operated in bringing about his incarnation on earth, yet he was unable to perceive directly its infusion into himself, but could only perceive it in a dull state of consciousness in the pictures of higher beings who were active in this element.

In such a picture form — as an expression of beings standing above him — man had previously perceived the introduction of the liquid earth elements into himself. As a result of the densification of his earth form, these pictures have now undergone a transformation in his consciousness. The liquid is admixed with the solid element. The infusion of this latter element also must thus be felt as something proceeding from higher beings acting from without.

The human soul no longer possesses the power to infuse this element into itself, for this power must now serve the human body, which is built up from outside. Man would spoil its form were he to direct the introduction himself. What he infuses into himself from outside appears to him to be directed by the command of the higher beings who work on the fashioning of his bodily structure. Man feels himself as an ego, he has his intellectual soul within himself as a part of the astral body, through which he experiences inwardly in pictures what is taking place externally, and which permeates his delicate nervous system. He feels himself as the descendant of ancestors by virtue of the life flowing, through generations. He breathes and feels it as the effect of the higher beings, described as Spirits of Form, and he accepts what is brought to him through their impulses from the external world as nourishment.

What is most obscure to him is his own origin as an individual. In regard to this he is only aware of having experienced an influence from the Spirits of Form expressing themselves in the forces of the earth. He was directed and guided in his relationship to the external world. This is expressed by his possession of a consciousness of the activities of spirit and soul taking place behind his physical environment. He does not perceive the spiritual beings in their own form, but in his soul he feels the presence of tone, of color, and other manifestations, and he knows that the deeds of spiritual beings live in this world of mental images. What these beings communicate to him, resounds to him; their

manifestations are revealed to him in pictures of light.

Through mental images received from fire and heat the earth man is most inwardly conscious of himself. He already distinguishes between his inner heat and the heat radiations of the earthly environment. In the latter the Spirits of Personality manifest themselves. The human being, however, has only a dim consciousness of what exists behind the radiating outer heat. He feels in these radiations the influence of the Spirits of Form. When powerful heat effects appear in the human environment, the soul feels within itself: "Now spiritual beings are sending their glow around the earth; from this a spark has been liberated, warming my inner being through and through." — In the phenomena of light, the human being does not yet differentiate in the same way between the outer and inner worlds.

When light images arise in the surroundings, they do not always produce the same feeling in his soul. There were times when he felt these pictures of light as something external. This was at the time when he had just descended from the body-free state into incarnation. It was his period of growth upon the earth. When the time approached for the fashioning of the germ for the new earth man, these pictures faded, and the human being only retained something like memory pictures of them. In these light pictures the deeds of the Fire Spirits, the Archangels, were contained. The latter appeared to man as the servants of the beings of heat who introduced a spark into his inner nature. When their external manifestations were extinguished, he felt them as memory pictures in his inner nature. He felt himself united with their forces, and this was indeed the fact.

For he was able to act upon the surrounding atmosphere through what he had received from them. The atmosphere began to shine through this influence. This was a time when nature forces and human forces were not yet separated as they were later. What occurred on the earth proceeded to a large degree from the forces of man himself. Anyone who might have observed the processes of nature on the earth from the outside would not have seen in them merely something that was independent of the human being; he would have perceived in them the effects of human activity. The perceptions of tone took place in a different way for the earth man. From the beginning of earth life they were perceived as outer tones. Whereas the air images were perceived from without right up to the middle period of human earth existence, the outer tones could still be heard after this middle period.

Only toward the end of life was the earth man no longer sensitive to them. The tone memories remained with him. In them were contained the revelations of the Sons of Life, the Angels. If the human being toward the end of his life felt himself united inwardly with these forces, then he was able by means of imitation of these forces to produce powerful effects on the water element of the earth. The waters surged in and over the earth under his influence.

The human being had notions of taste only during the first quarter of his life, and even then they appeared to the soul like a memory of the experiences passed through in the body-free state. As long as he possessed this memory, the solidification of his body through absorption of outer substances continued. In the second quarter of earth life growth continued, although man's form was already completely developed. At this time he could perceive other living beings beside him only through their warmth, light, and tone effects, for he was not yet capable of visualizing the solid element. Only from the liquid element he obtained, in the first quarter of his life, the described effects of taste.



The external bodily form was an image of this inner soul condition of man. The parts that contained tendencies toward the subsequent head form were developed most perfectly. The other organs gave the impression of appendages. They were shadowy and unclear. The earth men, however, were varied in regard to form. In some the appendages were more or less developed according to the earthly conditions under which they lived.

They were varied according to the earthly dwelling places of the human beings. Wherever the latter were entangled in the earth world to a greater degree, the appendages appeared more in the foreground. Those human beings who, as a result of their previous development, were the most mature at the beginning of physical earthly evolution, who right at the beginning — before the Earth had condensed to air — experienced the contact with the fire element, could now develop the head capacities most perfectly. These were the human beings who were most harmonious in their nature. Others were ready to come into contact with the element of fire only when the Earth had already developed the air element.

These human beings were more dependent upon outer conditions than those described above who were able to feel the Spirits of Form clearly by means of heat and who during their earth life felt — as though preserved in a memory — that they belonged to these spirits and were united with them in their body-free condition. The second type of human being had only a slight memory of the body-free state; this type felt its relationship to the spiritual world chiefly through the light activity of the Fire Spirits, the Archangels.

A third type of human being was still more entangled in earth existence; it was the type that could be affected by the fire element only when the Earth was separated from the sun and had received the watery element into its composition. The feeling of relationship to the spiritual world was especially weak in human beings of this type at the beginning of earth life. Only when the effect of the activity of the Archangels, and chiefly of the Angels, made itself evident in the inner mental life, did they feel this connection. On the other hand, at the commencement of the earth epoch they were full of active impulses for deeds that can be carried out in earthly conditions. These human beings were especially strongly developed in their appended organs.

Prior to the separation of the moon from the Earth, when the latter, through the presence of the moon forces, tended more and more toward solidification, it happened that because of these forces there were some among the descendants of the abandoned germinal human beings left behind on earth, in which the human souls, returning from the body-free state of existence, could no longer incarnate. The form of such descendants was too solidified, and, because of the moon forces, had become too dissimilar to the human form to be able to receive a human soul.

Certain human souls, therefore, found it no longer possible under such circumstances to return to the Earth. Only the ripest and strongest souls were able to feel themselves equal to the task of remodeling the Earth body during its growth so that it blossomed forth bearing the form of a human being. Only a part of the bodily human descendants attained the ability to bear the earthly man. Another part, on account of the solidified form, was only able to receive souls of an order lower than the human being. A number of the human souls were compelled to forego Earth evolution at that time. They were, therefore, led to another course of life.

There were souls who had been unable, even at the time when the sun separated from the Earth, to find a place in the latter. In order to develop further they were removed to a planet that, under the guidance of cosmic beings, had been severed from the common universal substance that at the beginning of physical Earth evolution was bound up with it, and from which the sun also had detached itself. This planet is the one whose physical expression is known to modern science as Jupiter. (We speak here of the celestial bodies, planets, and their names in exactly the same way as was the custom of a more ancient science. What is meant becomes clear from the context. Just as the physical earth is only the physical expression of a soul-spirit organism, so is that the case with every other celestial body.)

The supersensible observer does not intend to designate merely the physical planet by the name earth, not merely the physical fixed star by sun, but he has in mind a much wider spiritual connotation; this is also true when he speaks of Jupiter, Mars, and the other planets. The celestial bodies have changed essentially in regard to their configuration and task since the time spoken of here; in a certain respect, even their location in heavenly space has changed. Only someone who has traced back, with the penetration of supersensible knowledge, the evolution of these heavenly bodies right into the distant primeval past is capable of recognizing the connection between the present-day planets and their ancestors.)

The souls described evolved further on Jupiter, and later on, as the earth showed an increasing tendency to become more solidified, still another dwelling place had to be fashioned for souls who, although they found it possible to inhabit these solidifying bodies for a certain length of time, could no longer do so when the solidification had advanced too far. For these a place on Mars was provided for their further evolution. Even at the time when the Earth was still bound to the sun and its air element had been inserted into its constitution, it became evident that certain souls proved to be unfit to participate in Earth evolution.

They were too strongly affected by the earthly body configuration. Thus even at that time they had to be withdrawn from the direct influence of the sun forces. The latter had to act on them from without. For these souls, a place on Saturn was created for their further development. Thus in the course of Earth evolution the number of human shapes diminished; configurations appeared in whom human souls did not incarnate. They could receive only astral bodies in the same way the human physical and life bodies had received them on the ancient Moon.

While the earth became a waste in regard to its human inhabitants, these beings colonized it. All human souls would have been compelled to forsake the earth finally, had not the withdrawal of the moon from the earth made it possible for the human forms — in which human souls at that time were still able to incarnate — to withdraw the germinal human being during their earth life from the influence of the moon forces that came directly from the earth and to let it mature within themselves as long as necessary until it could be surrendered to these moon forces.

As long as the germinal human being then shaped itself within the inner human nature, it came under the influence of the beings who had, under the guidance of their mightiest companion, separated the moon from the earth in order to carry the evolution of the latter over a critical point.

After the Earth had developed the air element within itself, there were astral beings, as described

above, left over from the ancient Moon, who were greater laggards in evolution than the lowest human souls. These became the souls of the forms that had to be forsaken by human beings even before the separation of the sun from the Earth. These beings are the ancestors of the present animal kingdom. In the course of time, they developed the organs especially that were present in the human being only as appendages.

Their astral body had to affect the physical and ether bodies in the same way that this was the case for human beings on the ancient Moon. The animals thus created had souls that could not reside in the individual animal. The soul extended its nature upon the inheritors of the forebear's form. The animals originating from a single configuration have a common soul. Only when the descendant under especial influences departs from the form of its forebear does a new animal soul commence its embodiment. We may speak in this sense in spiritual science in regard to animal souls of a species or group soul.

Something similar occurred at the time of the separation of the sun from the Earth. Forms emerged from the watery element that were no further evolved than the human being prior to evolution on the ancient Moon. They were able to receive the effect of the activity of an astral element only when this influenced them from outside. That could only occur after the separation of the sun from the Earth.

With every repetition of the sun period of the Earth, the sun's astral element animated these forms in such a way that they constructed their life bodies from the Earth's etheric element. When the sun again turned away from the Earth, this life body dissolved into the common body of the Earth. As a result of the co-operation of the astral element of the sun with the ether element of the Earth there emerged from the watery element the physical structures that formed the ancestors of the present-day plant kingdom.

Upon the earth the human being has become an individualized soul-being. The astral body, which had flowed into him through the Spirits of Motion during the Moon evolution, became tripartite as sentient soul, intellectual soul, and consciousness soul upon the earth. When his consciousness soul had advanced far enough so that during earth life it could form a body fit to receive it, the Spirits of Form endowed the human being with a spark of their own fire. The ego, the I, was enkindled within him.

Every time the human being left the physical body he found himself in the spirit world in which he encountered beings who had given him his physical body, his life or ether body, and his astral body during the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions and had brought them up to the level of the Earth evolution. Since the enkindling of the fire spark of the ego during earth life, a change had taken place also for the body-free life. Prior to this point in the evolution of his nature, man had no independence in regard to the spirit world.

Within this spirit world he did not feel himself as an individual, but as a member of an exalted organism composed of the beings standing above him. The ego experience on earth now extends itself also into the spirit world. Man feels himself now to a certain degree as a unity in this world, but he feels also that he is constantly united with the same world. In the body-free state he finds again in a higher configuration the Spirits of Form whom he had perceived on earth in their manifestation through the spark of the ego.

With the separation of the moon from the earth, experiences that were connected with that separation developed also for the body-free soul in the spirit world. Only because a part of the shaping forces had been transferred from the earth to the moon was it possible to reproduce, on the earth, the human shapes that were able to receive the individuality of the soul. Through this fact the human individuality entered the sphere of the moon beings.

The reflection of the earth individuality could only be effective in the body-free state through the fact that in this state also the soul remained in the sphere of the mighty spirits who had caused the moon separation. The process took place in such a way that immediately after the soul had forsaken the earth body it could perceive the exalted sun beings only in the reflected splendor of the moon beings. It was only after gazing at this splendor for a considerable length of time that the soul was sufficiently prepared to behold the sublime sun beings themselves.

The earth's mineral kingdom also came into existence through having been expelled from the general evolution of mankind. Its structures are what remained solidified when the moon separated from the earth. Only that part of soul nature felt itself attracted to these forms that had remained on the Saturn stage and is thus fit only to fashion physical forms. All events under consideration here and in the following pages occurred in the course of vast lengths of time. We cannot, however, enter here into a discussion of chronology.

The events described here present Earth evolution from the external side. When observed spiritually it can be said that the spiritual beings who withdrew the moon from the earth and united their own existence with it, thus becoming earth-moon beings, caused a certain configuration of the human organism to take place by sending forces from this cosmic body down upon the earth. Their activity was directed upon the ego acquired by the human being. This activity made itself felt in the interplay between this ego and the astral body, ether body, and physical body.

As a result it became possible for man to reflect within himself consciously the wisely fashioned configuration of the world, to reflect it as though in a mirror of knowledge. It may be remembered in our description how, during the ancient Moon period, the human being acquired through the separation of the sun at that time a certain independence in his organism and a less restricted degree of consciousness than could be derived directly from the sun beings. This free, independent consciousness reappeared during the characterized period of Earth evolution as a heritage of the ancient Moon evolution. But this very consciousness, brought again into harmony with the cosmos through the influence of the earth-moon beings referred to above, could be made into a copy of it.

This would have happened had no other influence made itself felt. Without such an influence man would have become a being in whom the content of consciousness would not have reflected the cosmos in the images of cognitional life through his own free volition, but as a necessity of nature. This did not occur. Certain spiritual beings took an active part in the evolution of mankind just at the time of the moon separation, beings who had retained so much of their Moon nature that they could not participate in the separation of the sun from the earth; they were excluded also from the activity of the beings who, from the earth-moon, directed their activity upon the earth.

These beings with the ancient Moon nature were confined with their irregular development to the

earth. In their Moon nature lay the cause of their rebellion during the ancient Moon evolution against the sun spirits, a rebellion that was at that time beneficial to the human being by its having led him to an independent state of consciousness. The consequences of the peculiar development of these beings during the Earth epoch entailed their becoming — during that time — enemies of the beings who, from the moon, wished to turn human consciousness into a universal mirror of knowledge under the compulsion of necessity.

What on the ancient Moon had helped man to a higher state proved to be in opposition to the possibilities that had developed through Earth evolution. The opposing powers had brought with them, out of their Moon nature, the force to work on the human astral body, namely, in the sense of the above descriptions, to make it independent. They exercised this force by giving the astral body a certain independence now also for the earth period — in contrast to the compelled (unfree) state of consciousness that was caused by the beings of the earth-moon.

It is difficult to express in current language how the activity of the characterized spiritual beings affected human beings in the indicated primeval period. We may neither think of this activity as something like a present-day nature force, nor as something like the action of one man upon another when with words the first man calls forth in the second inner forces of consciousness, through which the second learns to understand something or is stirred to perform a moral or immoral deed.

The effect described as taking place in the primeval age was not a nature effect but a spiritual influence, having spiritual effects, transferring itself spiritually from the higher beings to the human being in accordance with his state of consciousness at that time. If we think of this matter as a nature activity then we miss entirely its true, essential character. If we say, on the other hand, the beings endowed with the ancient Moon nature approached the human being in order to "seduce" him for their own ends, we employ a symbolic expression that is good as long as we remain conscious of its symbolical character and are at the same time clear in our own minds that behind the symbol stands a spiritual fact, a spiritual reality.

The effect that proceeded from the spiritual beings who had remained behind in their ancient Moon state had a twofold consequence for man. His consciousness was divested of the character of a mere reflector of the cosmos, because the possibility was aroused in the human astral body to regulate and control, by means of it, the images arising in the consciousness. Man became the master of his knowledge.

On the other hand, it was just the astral body that became the starting point of this control, and the ego, set above this body, became thus steadily dependent upon it. As a result the future human being was exposed to the continuous influences of a lower element in his nature. It was possible for him during his life to sink below the height at which he had been placed by the earth-moon beings in the course of world events. The continuous influence of the characterized irregularly developed Moon beings remained with him throughout the subsequent periods. These moon beings, in contrast to the others who from the earth-moon satellite fashioned human consciousness into a cosmic mirror but gave no independent will, may be called Luciferic spirits. These spirits brought to the human being the possibility of unfolding a free activity in his consciousness, but at the same time also the possibility of error, of evil.

The consequence of these processes was that man came into quite a different relationship with the sun spirits from the one for which he was predestined by the earth-moon spirits. The latter wished to develop the mirror of his consciousness in such a way that the influence of the sun spirits would be the dominant one in the whole of human soul life. These processes were thwarted, and in the human being the contrast was created between the sun spirit influence and the influence of the spirits with an irregular Moon evolution. Through this contrast the human being became unable to recognize the physical sun activity as such; it remained concealed behind the earthly impressions of the outer world. The astral nature of man filled by these impressions was drawn into the sphere of the ego.

This ego, which otherwise would have felt only the spark of fire bestowed on it by the Spirits of Form, and in everything that concerned the outer fire would have subordinated itself to the commands of these spirits, this ego now — because of the astral element injected into it — exerted its influence also upon the outer heat phenomena. Through creating a bond of attraction between itself and the earth fire, the ego entangled man in earthly matter more than was predestined for him. Whereas previously he had a physical body, which in its principal parts consisted of fire, air, and water, and to which was added only something like a shadowy semblance of earth substance, now the body became denser because of the presence of earth substance. Whereas man existed previously like a finely organized being swimming, hovering over the solid earth surface, he was compelled now to descend from the earth's environment down upon such parts of the earth as were already more or less solidified.

That such physical effects could result from the above described spiritual influences becomes comprehensible through the fact of their being of the sort described above. They were neither nature influences nor soul influences acting from one human being upon another. The latter do not extend their effects as far into the bodily nature as do the spiritual forces that are here under consideration. Because the human being exposed himself to the influences of the outer world through his own visualizations subject to error, because he lived under the impulsion of desire and passion that did not permit of regulation by higher spiritual influences, the possibility of disease appeared.

A special effect of the Luciferic influence, however, was that man could now no longer feel his single earth life as a continuation of the body-free existence. He received now earth impressions that could be experienced through the inoculated astral element and that united themselves with the forces destroying the physical body. Man felt this as the dying out of his earth life, and through it death, caused by human nature itself, made its appearance. With this a significant mystery in human nature is indicated, namely, the connection of the human astral body with sickness and death.

Special relationships now appeared for the human life body. It was placed in a relationship to the physical and astral bodies that, in a certain sense, deprived it of the faculties the human being had acquired through the Luciferic influence. A part of this life body remained outside the physical body, so that it could not be controlled by the human ego, but only by higher beings. These higher beings were the same who, at the time of the sun separation, had forsaken the earth under the leadership of one of their exalted companions in order to take up another dwelling place.

If the characterized part of the life body had remained united with the astral body, man would have put supersensible forces to his own use that formerly were his own. He would have extended the Luciferic influence also to these forces. As a result man would have thus gradually separated himself entirely

from the sun beings, and his ego would have become completely an earth-ego. Consequently, after the death of the physical body — indeed even during its deterioration — this earth-ego would have been obliged to inhabit another physical body — the body of a descendant — without going through a union with higher spiritual beings in a body-free condition.

Man would have become conscious of his ego, but only as an earth-ego. This was averted by the above-mentioned event, involving the life body, caused by the earth-moon beings. The actual individual ego was released from the mere earth-ego to such a degree that man felt himself only partially as his own ego during earth life; at the same time he felt that his own earth-ego was an extension of the earth-ego of his forebears throughout the generations.

In earth life the soul felt the existence of a sort of group ego right back to the earliest ancestor and man felt himself as a member of the group. Only in the body-free state was the individual ego able to feel itself as an independent being. But this state of separateness was impaired because the ego was afflicted with the memory of the earth consciousness, the earth-ego. This darkened the vision of the spirit world, which began to cover itself with a veil between death and birth as was the case for physical vision on earth.

The physical expression of all the changes that occurred in the spirit world while human evolution went through the described conditions was the gradual regulation of the reciprocal relationships of sun, moon, and earth, and in a broader sense also of the other heavenly bodies. The alternation of day and night can be emphasized as being one consequence of these relationships. (The movements of the heavenly bodies are regulated by the beings inhabiting them. The movement of the earth through which day and night occur was caused by the reciprocal relationships of the various spirits standing above man.

In like manner also the movement of the moon was caused, in order that after its separation from and the revolving around the earth the Spirits of Form could act in the right way, with the right rhythm, upon the physical human body.) During the day the human ego and astral body worked in the physical and life bodies.

At night this activity ceased. The ego and astral body left the physical and life bodies. They entered during this period entirely into the realm of the Sons of Life (the Angels), of the Spirits of Fire (the Archangels), of the Spirits of Personality, and the Spirits of Form. Besides the Spirits of Form, the Spirits of Motion, the Spirits of Wisdom, and the Thrones included at that time the physical and life bodies in their sphere of action. It was thus possible that the injurious influences, which during the day were exercised upon the human being through the errors of the astral body, could be repaired.

As the human beings now multiplied again on earth, there was no longer any reason why human souls should not have incarnated in their descendants. The influence of the earth-moon forces of that time permitted human bodies to develop, that were thoroughly fit to embody human souls. The souls who previously were removed to Mars, to Jupiter, and to other planets, were led to the earth. There was in consequence a soul present for every human descendant born within the cycle of generations. This continued through long periods, so that the soul migrations to the earth corresponded to the increase in the number of human beings.

The souls who left the body at death retained in the body-free state the echo of the earthly individuality like a memory. This memory acted in such a way that when bodies corresponding to the souls were born on earth, they reincarnated in them. As time went on, there were among, the human offspring human beings who had souls coming from the outside, who had for the first time since the earliest ages of the Earth appeared again upon it, and there were others having earthly-reincarnated souls. In the subsequent period of the Earth evolution, there were fewer and fewer of the young souls appearing for the first time and more and more of the reincarnated souls.

Nevertheless, for long ages the human race consisted of the two kinds of human beings resulting from these facts. On earth, man felt more united by a common group-ego with his forebears. The experience of the individual ego was, however, all the stronger in the body-free state between death and a new birth. The souls who came from celestial space and entered human bodies were in a different position from those who already had one or more earth lives behind them. The former brought along with them for the physical earth life only the conditions to which they were subjected by the higher spiritual world and by their experiences made outside the earth region.

The others had themselves in previous lives added new conditions. The destiny of the former souls was determined only by facts that lay outside the new earth relationships. The destiny of the reincarnated souls was also determined by what they themselves had done in previous lives under earthly conditions. With reincarnation there appeared at the same time individual human karma. — Through the fact that the human life body was withdrawn from the influence of the astral body, in the manner indicated above, the conditions of reproduction also were not within the scope of human consciousness, but were subject to the dominion of the spiritual world.

If a soul was to sink down to the sphere of the earth, the reproductive impulses of the human earth being appeared. To earthly consciousness the entire process was to a certain degree enveloped in a mysterious obscurity. — But the consequences of this partial separation of the life body from the physical appeared also during earth life. The capabilities of this life body could be easily increased by means of spiritual influence. In the life of the soul this expressed itself through an especial perfection of memory.

Independent, logical thinking was at this period only in its very beginnings. The capacity of memory was, on the other hand, almost limitless. Externally, it was evident that the human being had direct knowledge — tinged with feeling of the active forces of every living thing. He was able to employ in his service the forces of life and reproduction of animal nature, and chiefly those of plant nature. He could extract, for example, the force that causes plant growth and employ it in much the same way that the forces of inanimate nature are used at the present time, for example, the way the forces slumbering in coal are extracted and employed to set machines in motion. — Also the inner soul life of man was changed through the Luciferic influence in the most manifold way.

Many examples of feelings and sensations due to it could be given. Only a few instances, however, will be described. Prior to the advent of the Luciferic influence, the human soul carried out all its activities in line with the intentions of higher spiritual beings. The plan of all that should be accomplished was determined from the beginning, and to the degree that human consciousness was developed it could foresee how, in the future, evolution would be compelled to proceed in accordance



with the preconceived plan. This prophesying consciousness was lost when the veil of earthly perceptions was woven over the manifestation of higher spiritual beings and the real forces of the sun nature concealed themselves in these perceptions. The future now became uncertain.

With this uncertainty, the possibility of the sense of fear implanted itself in the soul. Fear is the direct result of error. — But we also see how under the Luciferic influence man became independent of certain forces to which he previously submitted himself without will. Now he could make decisions by himself. Freedom is the result of this influence, and fear and similar feelings are only the accompanying phenomena of the progress of man to freedom.

Seen spiritually, the way fear appears indicates that within the earth forces — under the influence of which the human being had come through the Luciferic powers — other powers were active that had followed an irregular course in evolution much earlier than the Luciferic powers. With the earth forces man absorbed the influence of these powers into his being. They gave the character of fear to feelings that would have manifested quite differently without the presence of these powers. These beings may be called "Ahrimanic." They belong to the category called, in the Goethean sense, "Mephistophelian."

Although the Luciferic influence made itself felt at first only in the most advanced individuals, it soon spread out also to others. The descendants of these advanced human beings intermingled with the less advanced described above. By this means the Luciferic power injected itself also into the latter. But the ether body of the souls returning from the planets could not receive the same degree of protection enjoyed by the ether body of the descendants of those who had remained on earth. The protection of these latter life bodies came from an exalted Being in whose hands rested the leadership of the cosmos at the time the sun withdrew from the Earth. This Being appears in the realm here under consideration as ruler of the kingdom of the sun. With Him exalted spirits who through their cosmic evolution had attained the necessary maturity migrated to the sun abode.

There were, however, other beings who had not, at the time of the sun separation, attained such heights. They were compelled to seek other abodes. It was through these very beings that Jupiter and the other planets broke loose from the common world substance that originally composed the physical Earth organism. Jupiter became the dwelling place of the beings who had not reached maturity enough to attain the heights of the sun.

The most advanced of these became the leader of Jupiter. In just the same way that the leader of the sun development became the higher ego that was active in the life body of the descendants of the human beings who had remained on earth, this Jupiter leader became the higher ego that permeated, as a common consciousness, the human beings who had originated from an interbreeding of the offspring of those who had remained on the earth and those other human beings who, in the way described above, had appeared upon the Earth only at the time of the advent of the air element and who had then gone over to Jupiter as a dwelling place. These human beings are designated by spiritual science as "Jupiter men."

They were human descendants who in that ancient time still had received human souls into their nature, but who at the beginning of Earth evolution were not mature enough to come in contact with the fire. They were souls standing at the stage midway between the realm of human and animal souls.

There were also beings who under the leadership of one of their most exalted members had separated Mars from the common world substance as a suitable dwelling place.

They exerted their influence upon a third kind of man, who had come into existence through interbreeding, the "Mars man." (From this knowledge a light is thrown upon the origin of the planets of our solar system. For, all bodies of this system have originated through the various stages of maturity of the beings dwelling on them. It is, however, not possible here to enter into a discussion of all the details of cosmic organization.) The human beings who, in their life body, perceived the presence of the lofty Sun Being Himself may be designated "sun men."

The Being Who lived in them as "Higher Ego" — naturally only in the whole race, not in the individual — is the One to Whom later, when man acquired a conscious knowledge of Him, various names were given. He is the Being in Whom the relationship that the Christ has to the cosmos manifests itself to the human beings of our time. We can, in addition, distinguish "Saturn men." With them there appeared a being as higher ego who with his associates had been compelled to forsake the common world substance prior to the sun separation. In this species of human being not only the life body had remained partly untouched by the Luciferic influence, but also the physical body.

In the case of the inferior kinds of human beings, however, the life body was not sufficiently protected to enable it to withstand the Luciferic influence. These human beings could extend the unruly power of their ego's fire spark to such a degree that they were able to call forth in their environment powerful, destructive fire effects. The consequence was a tremendous terrestrial catastrophe.

The fire storms caused a large part of the inhabited earth of that time to perish and with it the human beings who had lapsed into error. Only the smallest part who had remained partly untouched by error was able to escape to a district of the earth that had remained until then protected from corrupting human influence. Such a dwelling place, which was especially appropriate for the new mankind, appeared in the land that existed on the spot of the earth now covered by the Atlantic Ocean. It was to this place those human beings withdrew who were most untouched by error.

Only scattered human groups inhabited other regions of the earth. The earth region existing at that time, situated between modern Europe, Africa, and America, is called "Atlantis" by spiritual science. (In the corresponding literature reference is made, in a certain way, to the phase of human evolution characterized above that precedes the Atlantean period. The name "Lemurian age" is given to the period of the earth that preceded the Atlantean age. On the other hand, the age in which the moon forces had not yet unfolded their chief activity is designated the "Hyperborean.")

Preceding this age there was still another that coincides with the very first period of the physical Earth evolution. In the biblical tradition, the period before the influence of the Luciferic beings was active is described as the age of Paradise, and the descent of the human being out of this region to the earth, and his subsequent entanglement in the world of the senses, as the expulsion from Paradise.)

Evolution on Atlantis is the time of the actual separation of mankind into the Saturn, Sun, Jupiter, and Mars men. Before that, there had been only the predisposition toward this separation. The division into waking and sleeping states had special consequences for the human being that appeared especially in

Atlantean humanity. During the night, man's astral body and ego were in the realm of the beings standing above him — right up to the realm of the Spirits of Personality. By means of that portion of the life body not united with the physical body, the human being was able to have a perception of the Sons of Life (the Angels), and the Spirits of Fire (the Archangels).

For he was able to remain united during sleep with the part of the life body not permeated by the physical body. The perception of the Spirits of Personality remained indistinct because of the Luciferic influence. Beside the Angels and Archangels, other beings also became visible to man when in the state described above, beings who, having remained behind on the sun and moon, could not enter earth existence. They had to remain in the world of soul and spirit. Man, however, drew them — by means of the Luciferic nature — into the realm of his soul that was separated from the physical body. Thus he came in contact with beings who worked upon him in a corrupting way. They increased the urge toward error in his soul, especially the urge toward the misuse of the forces of growth and reproduction that were under his control through the separation of the physical and life body.

It was possible, however, for individual men of the Atlantean period to entangle themselves to a small degree in the realm of the senses. Through them the Luciferic influence was transformed from an obstacle to human evolution into an instrument of higher advancement. Through this Luciferic influence they were in the position of unfolding the knowledge of earthly things earlier than would otherwise have been possible.

In doing so, these human beings sought to remove erroneous ideas from their thought life, and through the phenomena of the world to fathom the original purposes of spirit beings. They kept themselves free from the impulses and desires of the astral body, which were only inclined toward the world of the senses. In this way they became ever freer from the errors of the astral body. This produced conditions in them by means of which they perceived only with that part of the ether body that was separated from the physical body in the manner described. In these conditions the physical body's power of perception was practically extinguished and the body itself was as though dead.

These human beings were then completely united through the ether body with the realm of the Spirits of Form and were able through them to learn how they were being led and guided by the exalted Being Who held the leadership at the time of separation of sun and Earth. Later, through this exalted Being an understanding of the Christ unfolded itself in human beings. Such men were initiates. But since the individuality of man had, as already described above, entered the region of the moon spirits, these initiates also remained, as a rule, untouched directly by the Spirit of the Sun. He could be shown to them only by the moon spirits as though in a reflection.

Thus they did not see the Being of the Sun directly, but saw only His splendor. They became the leaders of the other portion of mankind to whom they could communicate the mysteries they beheld. They trained disciples to whom they indicated the paths leading to the state resulting in initiation. The knowledge, previously revealed through Christ, could be attained by human beings only who belonged — in the way described — to the order of "sun men." They cultivated their mysterious wisdom and the functions leading to it in a special place on the earth, which will be called here the Christ or Sun oracle-oraculum meaning the place where the purposes of spiritual beings are heard.

What is said here about the Christ will only be understood if we keep in mind the fact that supersensible knowledge perceives in His appearance on earth an event that was foreseen for ages by wise men as taking place at some future time, wise men who were familiar, long before this event, with the meaning of Earth evolution. We would be in error were we to presuppose in the case of these initiates a connection with the Christ that was made possible only through this event. But they could comprehend prophetically and make their disciples understand that whoever is touched by the power of the Sun Being sees the Christ approaching the earth.

Other oracles came into being through the members of the Saturn, Mars, and Jupiter humanities; their initiates directed their vision only up to the beings who could reveal themselves in their ether bodies as the corresponding higher egos. There thus arose adherents of Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars wisdom. Besides these methods of initiation, there were others for human beings who had acquired too much of the Luciferic nature to allow as large a portion of their ether body to be separated from the physical body as was the case with the sun men.

Their astral body retained a greater part of the life body in the physical body, nor could they be brought, by means of the described state of initiation, to a prophetic revelation of the Christ. On account of their astral body, which was considerably influenced by the Luciferic principle, they were compelled to go through more complicated preparations, and then, in a less body-free state than the others, they were unable to behold the manifestation of the Christ Himself, but only that of other higher beings. There were certain spiritual beings who at the time of the sun separation had forsaken the Earth, but who had not yet attained a sufficiently high development to enable them to participate permanently in the sun evolution. After the separation of sun and Earth they withdrew a portion of the sun as a dwelling place.

This we know as Venus. The leader of these spiritual beings became the higher ego of the above described initiates and their adherents. Something similar occurred in regard to the leading spirit of Mercury for another kind of human being. In this way the Venus and Mercury oracles had their origin. Certain human individuals who were affected most by the Luciferic influence were able to reach up only to a certain being who, with his associates, had been the earliest to be expelled from the sun development. This being has not a special planet in the cosmos, but lives in the environment of the earth itself, with which he has been again united since his return from the sun.

The human beings to whom this being manifested himself as higher ego may be called members of the "Vulcan oracle." Their eyes were turned more toward earth phenomena than was the case with the other initiates. They laid the first foundation for what appeared later on among human beings as "science" and "art." The Mercury initiates, on the other hand, laid the basis for the knowledge of the more supersensory things, and to a still higher degree, this was done by the Venus initiates.

The Vulcan, Mercury, and Venus initiates distinguished themselves from the Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars initiates through the fact that the latter received their mysteries more as a revelation from above, in a more finished state, whereas the former received their knowledge revealed more in the form of their own thoughts, of their own ideas. In the middle stood the Christ initiates. They received, together with the direct revelation, the ability to clothe their mysteries in the form of human concepts. The Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars initiates had to express themselves by way of symbols; The Christ, Venus, Mercury, and Vulcan initiates were able to make their communications in the form of definite concepts.

What was attained in this manner by the Atlantean humanity came about in an indirect way through the initiates. But the rest of humanity also gained special abilities through the Luciferic principle, because through the lofty cosmic beings certain faculties, which might otherwise have led to disaster, were transformed into a blessing. One such faculty is speech. It was bestowed upon man through his solidification within physical matter and through the separation of a part of his ether body from the physical body. During the time after the moon separation the human being felt himself at first united to his physical forebears through the group ego.

This common consciousness, however, which united descendants with forefathers, was gradually lost in the course of generations. The later descendants had then an inner memory reaching back only to a not very distant ancestor, not any longer to the earlier forebears. Only in a state similar to sleep, in which the human beings came in touch with the spiritual world, did the picture of this or that ancestor emerge again in memory. Human beings, in certain instances, then felt themselves at one with this ancestor whom they believed had reappeared in them. This was an erroneous concept of reincarnation, which emerged chiefly in the last part of the Atlantean period. The true teaching about reincarnation could only be learned in the schools of the initiates. These latter perceived how, in the disembodied state, the human soul passes from one incarnation to another, and they alone could impart the truth about it to their disciples.

The physical form of man was, in the primeval past that is under discussion here, still widely different from the present human shape. It was to a high degree still the expression of soul faculties. The human being consisted of a finer, softer substance than the one he acquired later. What today is solidified was in the limbs soft, supple, and easily molded. A human being who expressed more intensely his soul and spiritual nature had a delicate, active and expressive body structure. Another with less spiritual development had crude, immobile, less easily molded bodily forms. Advancement in soul qualities contracted the limbs; the figure remained small.

Retardation in soul development and entanglement in the world of the senses expressed itself in gigantic size. While man was in the period of growth, the body, in accordance with what occurred in the soul, assumed forms of a certain kind that to the present-day human mind must appear fabulous, indeed, fantastic. Moral corruption through passions, impulses, and instincts resulted in an enormous increase in the material substance in man. The present-day human physical form has come into existence through contraction, condensation, and solidification of the Atlantean; whereas before the Atlantean age the human being was a faithful copy of his soul nature, the processes of the Atlantean evolution bore the causes in themselves that led to the post-Atlantean human being who in his physical shape is solid and little dependent on soul qualities. (The animal kingdom became denser in its forms at much earlier periods of the earth than the human being.) The laws that lie at present at the foundation of form-fashioning in the kingdoms of nature are not valid under any circumstances for the more distant past.

Toward the middle of the Atlantean period of evolution a great evil gradually began to manifest itself within mankind. The mysteries of the initiates ought to have been carefully guarded from individuals who had not purified their astral bodies of error through preparation. When such human beings acquire a certain insight into mystery knowledge, into the laws by which the higher beings guide the forces of nature, they then place these laws at the service of their perverted needs and passions. The danger was

all the greater, since human beings, as already described, came into the realm of lower spiritual beings who, unable to carry out the regular Earth evolution, acted contrary to it.

These spiritual beings influenced human beings constantly by arousing in them interests that were, in truth, directed against the welfare of mankind. But human beings had still the ability to use the forces of growth and reproduction of animal and human nature for their own purposes. — Not only ordinary human beings, but also a number of the initiates succumbed to the temptations of lower spiritual beings. They went so far as to use the described supersensible forces in a way that ran counter to the development of mankind, and for this activity they sought associates who were not initiated and who — for lower ends — seized upon the mysteries of the supersensible working of nature.

The consequence was a great corruption of mankind. The evil spread further and further, and since the forces of growth and reproduction, when diverted from their natural functions and used independently, stand in a mysterious connection with certain forces that work in air and water, mighty, destructive nature forces were unfettered by human deeds. This led to the gradual destruction of the Atlantean region through terrestrial catastrophes of air and water. The Atlantean humanity — insofar as it did not perish in the storms — was compelled to emigrate.

At that time the earth received through these storms a new face. On the one side, Europe, Asia, and Africa received gradually the shapes they bear today. On the other side, America. To these lands went great migrations. For our present day the most important of these migrations were those that went eastward from Atlantis. What is now Europe, Asia, Africa, became gradually colonized by the descendants of the Atlanteans. Various folk established their abode in these continents. They stood at varying degrees of development, but also at varying degrees of depravity. In the midst of these migrating peoples marched the initiates, the guardians of the oracle mysteries.

These guardians founded in various regions of the earth institutions in which the services of Jupiter, Venus, and other oracles were cultivated in a good, but also in an evil manner. The betrayal of the Vulcan mysteries exercised an especially adverse influence, because the attention of their adherents was chiefly directed toward earthly matters. Mankind, through this betrayal, was made dependent upon spiritual beings who, in consequence of their previous development, held a negative attitude toward everything that came from the spiritual world, which had evolved through the separation of the Earth from the sun. According to the capacity thus developed, they acted in the element that was formed in the human being through his having perceptions of the sense world, behind which the spirit is concealed.

These beings acquired henceforth a great influence over many human inhabitants of the earth, and this influence made itself evident through the fact that the human being was more and more deprived of the feeling for the spirit. Since in these times the size, form and flexibility of the human physical body was still affected to a large degree by the qualities of the soul, the consequence of this betrayal of the mysteries came to light in changes in the human race in this respect also.

Where the corruption of the human beings became especially evident through the placing of supersensible forces at the service of lower impulses, desires, and passions, grotesque human shapes were created, monstrous in size and structure. These were not able to continue in existence beyond the

Atlantean period. They died out. The post-Atlantean humanity has fashioned itself physically after the model of the Atlantean ancestors in whom already such a solidifying of the bodily shape had taken place that this did not surrender to the influence of soul forces that had become contrary to nature. — There was a certain period of time in the Atlantean evolution in which, through the laws holding sway in and around the earth, conditions prevailed for the human form under which it had to solidify itself.

To be sure, the human racial forms that had solidified prior to this period were able to reproduce themselves for a long time; nevertheless, the souls incarnating in them gradually became so narrowly confined that such races had to die out. Many of these racial forms, however, continued in existence on into the post-Atlantean period; certain forms that had remained sufficiently supple continued to exist in a modified form for a long time. Human forms that had remained flexible beyond the characterized period now became chiefly the bodies for souls that experienced intensively the detrimental influence of the betrayal of the Vulcan mysteries as already indicated. They were destined to die out quickly.

Thus, since the middle of the Atlantean period of evolution, beings had asserted themselves within the realm of human development whose activity affected mankind in such a way that it became acquainted with the physical sense world in a non-spiritual manner. In certain instances this went so far that instead of the true shape of this world manifesting itself, it appeared to the human being in phantoms, chimeras and illusions of all sorts.

Not only was man exposed to the Luciferic influence, but also to the influence of the other beings about whom we have spoken above, and whose leader may be called Ahriman in accordance with the designation he received later on in the Persian cultural period. (Mephistopheles is the same being.) After death man came through this influence under powers that allowed him to appear also in that realm only as a being who is inclined toward earthly-sensory conditions. The free view into the processes of the spiritual world was by degrees taken away from him. He was obliged to feel himself in the power of Ahriman and to a certain degree had to be excluded from union with the spiritual world.

Of special significance was one oracle sanctuary that in the universal decline had preserved the ancient cultus in its purest form. It belonged to the Christ oracles, and on account of this it was able to preserve not only the Christ mystery itself, but also the mysteries of the other oracles. For through the manifestation of the most exalted Sun Spirit, the regents of Saturn, Jupiter, and other oracles, were also revealed. The sun oracle knew the secret of producing, for this or that individual, the kind of human ether bodies that were possessed by the highest initiates of Jupiter, Mercury, and other oracles.

With the means at their disposal, which are not to be discussed any further here, counterparts of the most perfect ether bodies of the ancient initiates were preserved and later implanted into the individuals best fitted for the purpose. Through the Venus, Mercury, and Vulcan initiates, such processes could take place also for the astral bodies. There came a time when the leader of the Christ initiates found himself isolated with some of his associates to whom he was able to communicate the mysteries of the world only to a very limited degree. For the associates were the kind of human beings upon whom nature had bestowed physical and etheric bodies with the least degree of separation between them. Such men were the best suited, in this epoch, for the further advancement of mankind.

Gradually they had fewer and fewer experiences in the realm of sleep. The spiritual world had become more and more closed for them. But they were also lacking the understanding for all that had unveiled itself in ancient times when man was not in his physical but only in his ether body. The human beings in the immediate neighborhood of this leader of the Christ oracle were the most advanced in regard to the union of the physical body with that part of the ether body that previously had been separated from it. This union appeared by degrees in mankind in consequence of the transformation of Atlantis and the earth generally. The physical and ether bodies of human beings coincided more and more with one another. As a result, the previous unlimited faculty of memory was lost and human thought life began.

The part of the ether body bound to the physical body transformed the physical brain into the actual organ of thought, and only from that time onward did the human being feel his ego in the physical body. Only then did self-consciousness awake. At the outset, this was the case with a small portion of mankind only, chiefly with the immediate companions of the leader of the Christ oracle. The other groups of human beings who were scattered over Europe, Asia, and Africa, preserved in the most varied degrees the remnants of the ancient states of consciousness.

They, therefore, experienced the supersensible world directly. — The companions of the Christ initiate were human beings with highly developed intelligence, but of all human beings of that time their experiences in the realm of the supersensible were the least. With them, this Christ initiate migrated from west to east, toward a certain region in inner Asia. He wished to protect them from coming in contact with the people of less advanced states of consciousness. He educated these companions in accordance with the mysteries revealed to him, and chiefly worked in this way upon their descendants. Thus he trained a host of human beings who had received into their hearts the impulses that corresponded to the mysteries of the Christ initiation.

From this host he chose the seven best in order that they might have ether and astral bodies corresponding to the counterparts of the ether bodies of the seven greatest Atlantean initiates. He thus trained initiates to be the successors of the Christ initiate, of the Saturn, of the Jupiter, and of the other oracle initiates. These seven initiates became the teachers and leaders of the people who in the post-Atlantean epoch had settled in the south of Asia, chiefly in ancient India.

Since these great teachers were endowed with the counterparts of the ether bodies of their spiritual ancestors, what was contained in their astral bodies, that is to say, their own self-wrought knowledge and understanding, did not extend to what was revealed to them through their ether body. They had to silence their own knowledge and understanding when these revelations strove to manifest in them. Then out of them and by means of them the high beings spoke who had spoken also for their spiritual ancestors. Except during the periods when these high beings spoke through them, they were simple men gifted with the degree of understanding and sympathy that they themselves had acquired.

In India there lived at that time a kind of human being which had preserved chiefly a living memory of the ancient soul state of the Atlanteans, a state which permitted experiences in the spiritual world. In a large number of these human beings there was also present a tremendous urge of the heart and mind to experience this supersensible world. Through the wise guidance of destiny the main body of this kind of men, representing the best sections of the Atlanteans, had reached South Asia. Besides this main body, other sections had settled there at various times.



The Christ initiate already mentioned appointed his seven great disciples as teachers for this assemblage of human beings. They gave their wisdom and their laws to this people. For many of these ancient Indians little preparation was needed to arouse in them the scarcely extinct faculties that led to a perception of the supersensible world. For the longing for this world was a fundamental mood of the Indian soul. The Indian felt that in this supersensible world was the primeval home of mankind. From it he was removed into a world that is revealed only through the perceptions of the outer senses and grasped by the intellect bound to these perceptions.

He felt the supersensible world as the true one and the sensory world as a deception of human perception, an illusion (Maya). By all possible means the human being strove to gain insight into the true world. He was unable to develop any interest in the illusory sense world, or at least only insofar as it proved to be a veil over the supersensible world. It was a mighty power that the seven great teachers exercised upon such people. What could be revealed through this power penetrated deeply into the Indian souls. Since the possession of the transmitted life and astral bodies endowed these teachers with sublime powers, they were able to act magically upon their disciples. They did not actually teach. They produced their effects from person to person as though through magic powers. Thus a culture arose that was completely permeated by supersensible wisdom.

What is contained in the books of wisdom of India — in the Vedas — is not the original form of the exalted wisdom, which in the most primeval ages was fostered by the great teachers; it is but a feeble echo of this wisdom. Only supersensible retrospection can discover an unwritten primeval wisdom behind the written records. A particular characteristic of this primeval wisdom is the harmonious concordance of the wisdom of the various oracles of the Atlantean age. For each of these great teachers was able to unveil the wisdom of one of these oracles, and the different aspects of wisdom produced a perfect concordance because behind them stood the fundamental wisdom of the prophetic Christ initiation.

The teacher, however, who was the spiritual successor of the Christ initiate did not present what this Christ initiate himself was able to reveal. The latter had remained in the background of evolution. At the outset, he could not transmit his high office to any member of the post-Atlantean civilization. The difference between the Christ initiate of the seven great Indian teachers and the Christ initiate of the Atlantean sun oracle was that the latter had been able to transform completely his perception of the Christ mystery into human concepts, whereas the Indian Christ initiate could only represent a reflection of this mystery in signs and symbols.

This was so because his humanly acquired conceptual life did not extend to this mystery. But the result of the union of the seven teachers was a knowledge of the supersensible world, presented in a great panorama of wisdom, of which in the ancient Atlantean oracles only the various parts could be proclaimed. Now the great regencies of the cosmic world were revealed, and the one great Sun Spirit, the "Concealed One," was gently alluded to — He Who was enthroned above those other regents who were revealed by the seven teachers.

What is meant here by the "ancient Indians," is not what is usually understood by the use of that term. There are no external documents of that period of which we are speaking here. The people usually designated as Indian corresponds to an evolutionary stage of history that came into existence a long

time after the period under discussion here. We are able to recognize a primal post-Atlantean epoch in which the characterized Indian culture was dominant.

Then a second post-Atlantean epoch began in which the dominant culture, as spoken of in this book, was the ancient Persian; still later, the Egypto-Chaldean culture evolved; both of these have still to be described. During the unfolding of these second and third post-Atlantean cultural epochs, ancient India also experienced a second and a third cultural period. What is usually spoken of as ancient India originated in this third epoch. Therefore, what is presented here should not be confused with the ancient India of history.

Another aspect of this ancient Indian culture is what later led to a division of men into castes. The inhabitants of India were the descendants of Atlanteans who belonged to various human races: Saturn men, Jupiter men, and other planetary men. By means of supersensible teaching it was understood by these ancient Indians that it was not by accident that a soul was placed in this or that caste, but rather by self-determination.

Such a comprehension of the supersensible teaching was facilitated especially through the fact that many human beings could arouse the above characterized inner remembrance of their ancestors, which, however, led easily to an erroneous idea of reincarnation. Just as in the Atlantean period the true idea of reincarnation could be acquired only by coming in contact with the initiates, in the most ancient India it could be obtained only by becoming in direct contact with the great teachers. The above-mentioned erroneous idea of reincarnation was spread most widely among the peoples who, as a result of the submergence of Atlantis, were scattered over Europe, Asia, and Africa, and because certain initiates, who during the Atlantean evolution had followed false paths, had also communicated this mystery to immature disciples, human beings mistook more and more the false doctrine for the true.

In many instances these human beings retained a sort of dreamlike clairvoyance as an inheritance of the Atlantean period. Just as the Atlanteans entered the region of the spiritual world during sleep, so their descendants experienced this spiritual world in an abnormal intermediate state between waking and sleeping. Then there arose in them images of an ancient time to which their ancestors had belonged. They considered themselves reincarnations of human beings who had lived in such an age. Teachings about reincarnation that were in contradiction to the true ideas of the initiates spread over the whole earth.

In the regions of the Middle East a community of people had settled as a result of the long continued migrations that had spread from the west eastward since the beginning of the destruction of Atlantis. History knows the descendants of these people as the Persians and their related tribal branches. Supersensible knowledge, however, must go back much further than the historical periods of these people.

At the outset we have to consider the earliest ancestors of the later Persians, from whom — after the Indian — the second great cultural period of the post-Atlantean evolution arose. The peoples of this second period had a different task from the Indian. In their longings and inclinations they did not turn merely toward the supersensible; they were eminently fitted for the physical-sensory world. They

grew fond of the earth. They valued what the human being could conquer on the earth and what he could win through its forces.

What they accomplished as warriors and also what they invented as a means of gaining the earth's treasures is related to this peculiarity of their nature. Their danger did not lie in the fact that because of their love of the supersensible they might turn completely away from the "illusion" of the physical-sensory world, but because of their strong inclination toward the latter they were more likely to lose their soul connection with the supersensible world.

Also the oracle establishments that had been transplanted into this region from their homeland, ancient Atlantis, carried in their methods the general character of the Persians. By means of forces, which man had been able to acquire through his experiences in the supersensible regions and which he was still able to control in certain lower forms, the phenomena of nature were employed to serve personal human interests.

This ancient people still possessed, at that time, a great power with which it controlled certain nature forces that later were withdrawn from all connection with the human will. The guardians of the oracles controlled inner powers that were connected with fire and other elements. They may be called Magi. What they had preserved for themselves from ancient times as heritage of supersensible knowledge and power was, to be sure, insignificant in comparison with what the human being had once been able to do in the far distant past.

It took on, nevertheless, all sorts of forms, from the noble arts whose purpose was only the welfare of mankind, to the most abominable practices. In these people the Luciferic nature ruled in a special manner. It had brought them into connection with everything that led the human being away from the intentions of higher beings who, without the Luciferic influence, would have simply advanced human evolution. Those sections of this people who were still endowed with the remnants of ancient clairvoyance — that is to say, with the remnants of the above described intermediate state between waking and sleeping — felt themselves also much attracted to the lower beings of the spiritual world. To this people a special spiritual impetus had to be given that counteracted these characteristics. A leadership was given to this people from the same source from which the ancient Indian spiritual life had also sprung, that is, from the guardian of the mysteries of the sun oracle.

The leader of the ancient Persian spiritual culture who was chosen by the guardian of the sun oracle for the people now under consideration may be called by the same name that history knows as Zarathustra or Zoroaster. But it must be emphasized that the personality designated here belongs to a much earlier age than the historical bearer of this name.

It is not a question here of outer historical research but of spiritual science, and whoever must think of a later age in connection with the bearer of the name Zarathustra, may reconcile this fact with spiritual science by realizing that the historical character represents a successor to the first great Zarathustra whose name he assumed and in the spirit of whose teaching he worked. — Zarathustra gave his people an impulse by pointing out that the physical world of the senses is not merely something devoid of spirit that confronts man when he comes under the exclusive influence of the Luciferic being. Man owes to this being his personal independence and his sense of freedom, but this Luciferic being should

work within him in harmony with the opposing spiritual being.

It was important for the prehistoric Persian to be aware of the presence of this spiritual being. Because of the Persian's inclination toward the physical sense world he was threatened by a complete amalgamation with the Luciferic beings. Zarathustra, however, had been initiated by the guardian of the sun oracle and through this initiation the revelations of the exalted sun beings could be imparted to him. In exceptional states of consciousness, into which his training had brought him, he was able to perceive the leader of the sun beings who had taken under his protection the human ether body in the previously described manner.

He knew that this Being directs human evolution, but also that He could descend to the earth from cosmic space only at a certain point in time. In order that this might come about it was necessary that He should affect the astral body of a human being to the same degree that He affected the human ether body since the beginning of the interference of the Luciferic being. For that purpose a human being had to appear on earth who had retransformed the astral body to a condition to which this body, without Lucifer, would have attained in the middle of the Atlantean evolution. Had Lucifer not appeared, the human being would have attained this same condition much earlier, but without personal independence and without the possibility of freedom.

Now, however, despite these characteristics the human being was to regain this same high condition. Zarathustra was able to foresee by means of his clairvoyance that in the future of mankind's evolution it would be possible for a definite human personality to possess such a required astral body. He knew also that it would be impossible to find the spiritual sun powers on earth prior to this future age, but that it was possible for supersensible perception to behold them in the region of the spiritual sun.

He was able to behold these powers when he directed his clairvoyant glance toward the sun, and he divulged to his people the nature of these powers that, for the time being, were to be found only in the spiritual world and that later were to descend to the earth. This was the proclamation of the sublime Sun or Light Spirit — the Sun Aura, Ahura Mazdao, Ormuzd. This Spirit of Light reveals Himself to Zarathustra and his followers as the Spirit who turns His countenance from the spiritual world toward mankind and who prepares the future within mankind. It is the Spirit who points to the Christ before His advent on earth, whom Zarathustra proclaims as the Spirit of Light. On the other hand, Zarathustra represents in Ahriman — Angra Mainju — a power whose influence upon the life of the human soul causes the latter's deterioration when it surrenders itself one-sidedly to it.

This power is none other than the one previously characterized who, since the betrayal of the Vulcan mysteries, had gained especial domination over the earth. Besides the evangel concerning the Spirit of Light, Zarathustra also proclaimed the doctrine of the spiritual beings who become manifest to the purified sense of the seer as the companions of the Spirit of Light and to whom a contrast was formed by the tempters who appeared to the unpurified remnants of clairvoyance that was retained from the Atlantean period.

Zarathustra strove to make clear to the prehistoric Persian how the human soul, as far as it was engaged in the activities and strivings of the physical-sensory world, was the field of battle between the power of the Light God and His adversary and how the human being must conduct himself so as

not to be led into the abyss by this adversary but whose influence might be turned to good by the power of the Light God.

A third post-Atlantean cultural period began with the peoples who, by participation in the migrations from Atlantis, had finally assembled in the Middle East and North Africa. Among the Chaldeans, Babylonians, Assyrians on the one hand and the Egyptians on the other, this culture was developed. Among these peoples the understanding for the physical world of the senses was evolved in a way different from that of the prehistoric Persians.

They had developed, much more than others, the spiritual capacity that is the foundation for the ability to think, for intellectual endowment, which had come into existence since the last Atlantean epochs. It was the task of the post-Atlantean humanity to unfold in itself the soul faculties that could be gained through the awakened powers of thought and feeling that are not directly stimulated by the spiritual world, but come into existence by man's observation of the sense world, by becoming familiar with it, transforming it.

The conquest of this physical-sensory world by means of these human faculties must be considered the mission of post-Atlantean humanity. From stage to stage this conquest advances. Although in ancient India the human being was directed toward this world by means of his soul state, he still considered this world an illusion and his spirit was turned toward the supersensible world. In contrast to this, there arose in the prehistorical Persian people the desire to conquer the physical world of the senses, but this was attempted, to a large measure, with the powers of soul that had remained as heritage of a time when man could still reach up directly into the supersensible world.

In the peoples of the third cultural epoch the soul had lost to a large degree its supersensible faculties. It had to investigate the revelations of the spirit in the sensory surroundings and by means of discovery and invention of the cultural means, springing from this world, develop itself. Human sciences arose by means of research within the physical sense world into the spiritual laws standing behind it; human technique and artistic activities and the tools and instruments used to advance them were developed by recognizing the forces of this world and the need of employing them. For the human being of ancient Chaldea and Babylonia the sense world was no longer an illusion, but with its nature kingdoms, its mountains and seas, its air and water, it was a revelation of the spiritual deeds of powers standing behind these phenomena, whose laws he endeavored to discover.

To the Egyptian the earth was a field of activity given to him in a condition which he had to transform through his own intellectual capacity, so that it bore the imprint of human power. Oracle establishments of Atlantis, originating chiefly from the Mercury oracle, had been transplanted into Egypt. There were, however, others also, for example, the Venus oracle. A new cultural germ was planted into what could thus be fostered in the Egyptian people through these oracle establishments. It originated with a great leader who had undergone his training within the Persian Zarathustra mysteries. He was the reincarnation of a personality who had been a disciple of the great Zarathustra himself. If we wish to adhere to a historical name, he may be called "Hermes." By absorbing the Zarathustra mysteries he could find the right path on which to guide the Egyptian people.

This folk, in earth life between birth and death, directed its mind to the physical sense world in such a

way that although it could behold the spiritual world behind the physical only to a limited degree, it recognized in the physical world the laws of the spiritual world. Thus the Egyptian could not be taught that the spiritual world was a world with which he could become familiar on earth. But he could be shown how the human being would live in a body-free condition after death with the world of the spirits who during the earth period appear through their imprint in the realm of the physical-sensory.

Hermes taught that to the degree the human being employs his forces on earth in order to act within it according to the aims of spiritual powers, it is possible for him to be united after death with these powers. Especially those who have been most zealously active in this direction during life between birth and death will become united with the exalted Sun Being — with Osiris. On the Chaldean-Babylonian side of this cultural stream the directing of the human mind to the physical-sensory was more marked than on the Egyptian side.

The laws of this world were investigated and from the sensory counterparts perception was directed to the spiritual archetypes. The people, nevertheless, remained stuck fast in the world of the senses in many respects. Instead of the spirit of the star, the star itself, and instead of other spiritual beings, their earthly counterparts were pushed into the foreground. Only the leaders acquired really deep knowledge of the laws of the supersensible world and their interaction with the sense world. Here a contrast between the knowledge of the initiates and the erroneous beliefs of the people came into evidence more strongly than anywhere else.

Quite different conditions prevailed in Southern Europe and Western Asia where the fourth post-Atlantean cultural epoch flourished. We may call this the Greco-Latin cultural epoch. In these countries the descendants of human beings of the most varied regions of the ancient world had gathered. There were oracle establishments that followed the example of the various Atlantean oracles. There were men who possessed, as a natural faculty, the heritage of ancient clairvoyance, and there were some who were able to attain to it with comparatively little training. In special places the traditions of the ancient initiates were not only preserved, but there arose worthy successors who trained pupils capable of raising themselves to exalted stages of spiritual perception.

Simultaneously, these people bore the impulse in themselves to create a realm within the sense world that expressed in perfect form the spiritual within the physical. Beside much else, Greek art is a consequence of this impulse. One need only penetrate into the Greek temple with spiritual vision to recognize that in such a marvel of art the physical material is transformed by the human being in such a way that every detail is an expression of the spiritual. The Greek temple is the "dwelling place of the spirit." In its forms is to be seen what otherwise only the spiritual vision of supersensible perception can recognize. A Zeus or Jupiter temple is shaped in such a way that for the physical eye it represents a worthy abode for what the guardian of the Zeus or Jupiter initiation perceived with the spiritual eye.

Thus it is with all Greek art. In mysterious ways the wisdom of the initiates poured into poets, artists, and thinkers. In the cosmogonies of the ancient Greek philosophers we find again the mysteries of the initiates in the form of concepts and ideas. The influence of spiritual life and the mysteries of the Asiatic and African centers of initiation flowed into these peoples and their leaders.

The great Indian teachers, the companions of Zarathustra, and the adherents of Hermes had trained

their pupils. These or their successors now founded initiation centers in which the ancient knowledge was revived in a new form. These are the mysteries of antiquity. Here the pupils were prepared to reach states of consciousness through which they were able to attain a perception of the spirit world.<sup>5</sup> From these initiation centers wisdom flowed to those who fostered spiritual impulses in Asia Minor, in Greece, and Italy. (In the Greek world the important initiation centers of the Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries arose.)

In the Pythagorean school of wisdom the after-effects of the great doctrines and methods of the wisdom of primeval ages appeared. In his wide journeying Pythagoras had been initiated into the secrets of the most varied mysteries.)

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### **Footnotes:**

1. The early stage of our present sun, now spelt with small s. (Tr.)
2. Earth spelt thus, with a capital E, means the cosmic body containing the moon and other planets after the sun separation. (Tr.)
3. The early stage of our present moon, hereafter spelt with small m. (Tr.)
4. The early stage of our present earth, hereafter spelt with a small e. (Tr.)
5. More detailed descriptions of these mysteries of antiquity are to be found in my book, *Christianity as Mystical Fact*. More on this subject is given in the last chapter of this book.

### **Part 7**

The life of man between birth and death — in the post-Atlantean age — had, however, its influence also upon the body-free state after death. The more the human being turned his interest toward the physical-sensory world, the greater was the possibility of Ahriman penetrating into the soul during earth life and of his retaining power beyond death. Among the peoples of ancient India this danger was still insignificant, because they had, during earth life, felt the physical world of the senses to be an illusion. As a result, they were able to elude the power of Ahriman.

The danger of the prehistoric Persian people was much greater, because in the life between birth and death they had turned their interest toward the physical world of the senses. They would have fallen prey to Ahriman to a high degree, had Zarathustra not through his teaching about the God of Light drawn attention in an impressive manner to the fact that behind the physical-sensory world there exists the world of the Spirits of Light. In proportion to the absorption into the soul of this visualized world by the people of the Persian culture did they escape from the clutches of Ahriman during earth life and likewise during the life after death, when they prepared for a new earth life.

During earth life the power of Ahriman leads to the consideration of physical-sensory existence as the

only one, thus barring all outlook into the spiritual world. In the spiritual world this power leads the human being to complete isolation, to concentration of all interests only upon himself. Human beings who at death are in the power of Ahriman are reborn as egotists.

At present we are able in spiritual science to describe life between death and a new birth as it is when the Ahrimanic influence has been overcome to a certain degree. In this way it has been described by the writer of this book in other writings and in the first chapters of this book, and thus it must be described in order to make plausible what the human being can experience in this state of existence when he has gained the true spiritual perception of what really exists. Whether the individual experiences it to a greater or lesser degree depends on his victory over the Ahrimanic influence. Man approaches more and more what is possible for him to be in the spiritual world. How this degree of attainment can be impaired by other influences must here be held clearly in mind in considering the path of human evolution.

It was the task of Hermes to see that the Egyptians prepared themselves during earth life for companionship with the Spirit of Light. Since, however, during that time human interests between birth and death were already shaped in such a way that it was possible only to a slight degree to penetrate the veil of the physical-sensory, the spiritual perception of the soul remained also clouded after death.

The perception of the world of light remained dim. — The veiling over of the spiritual world after death reached a climax for the souls who entered the body-free state from an incarnation in the Greco-Latin culture. During earth life they had brought the culture of the sensory-physical existence to full flower, and they had thus doomed themselves to a shadow existence after death. The Greek, therefore, felt that his life after death was only a shadow-like existence; and it was not mere empty talk but the feeling for truth when the hero of that age, turning toward the sense world, says, "Rather a beggar on earth than a king in the realm of the shades."

This was still more evident among those Asiatic peoples who also in their reverence and adoration had only directed their gaze toward the sensory counterparts instead of toward the spiritual archetypes. During the time of the Greco-Latin cultural period a large part of mankind was in the condition here described. We can see how the mission of man in the post-Atlantean epoch, which consisted of his mastery of the physical sense world, had to lead of necessity to an estrangement from the spiritual world. Thus what is great on the one hand is of necessity connected with what is decadent on the other. — In the mysteries, the connection of the human being with the spiritual world was fostered.

The initiates of these mysteries were able, in special states of the soul, to receive the revelations of this world. They were more or less the successors of the Atlantean guardians of the oracles. What was concealed through the impulses of Lucifer and Ahriman was unveiled to them. Lucifer concealed from the human being that part of the spiritual world that, without his cooperation, had poured into his astral body right up to the middle of the Atlantean epoch. If the ether body had not been partially separated from the physical, man would have been able to experience this region of the spirit world as an inner soul revelation. Because of the Luciferic impulse he could only experience it in special states of the soul.



Then a spiritual world appeared to him in the vesture of the astral. The corresponding beings revealed themselves in shapes that bore only the higher members of human nature, and in these members they carried the astrally visible symbols of their special spiritual powers. Superhuman forms manifested themselves in this way. After the encroachment of Ahriman another kind of initiation was added to this one. Ahriman has concealed all that part of the spiritual world that would have appeared behind physical sense-perception, if his encroachment had not occurred after the middle of the Atlantean epoch. The initiates owed the revelation of this part of the spiritual world to the fact that they practiced in their souls all those faculties that the human being had acquired since that time to a degree far greater than the one required in order to gain the impressions of sensory-physical existence.

Through it the spiritual powers lying behind the forces of nature were revealed to them. They were able to speak of the spiritual beings behind nature. The creative powers of the forces active in nature below the human being revealed themselves to them. What had continued to be active from the Saturn, Sun and the ancient Moon evolutions and had formed the human physical, ether, and astral bodies, as well as the mineral, plant, and animal kingdoms, formed the content of one type of mysteries. These mysteries were under Ahriman's influence. What had led to the development of sentient, intellectual, and consciousness soul was revealed in a second type of mystery.

What, however, was only possible to be prophesied by the mysteries was that in the course of time a human being would appear with an astral body in which, despite Lucifer, the light world of the Sun Spirit would become conscious through the ether body without special soul states. And the physical body of this human being must be of such a nature that that part of the spiritual world would be manifest to him that Ahriman is able to conceal up to the time of physical death. Physical death cannot change anything for this human being during life; that is to say, physical death cannot have any power over him. In such a human being the ego manifests in such a way that the physical life contains at the same time the whole spiritual life.

Such a being is the bearer of the Spirit of Light, to Whom the initiate lifts himself in a twofold way, either by being led to the spirit of the super-human or to the being of the powers of nature in special states of the soul. Since the initiates of the mysteries predicted that such a human being would appear in the course of time, they were the prophets of Christ.

As special prophet in this sense, a personality arose in a people that through natural heritage bore within itself the characteristics of the peoples of the Middle East and, through education, the teachings of the Egyptians; these people were the Israelites. The prophet was Moses.. So many influences of initiation had entered the soul of Moses that in special states of consciousness the spiritual being who had assumed, in the normal course of Earth evolution, the role of molding human consciousness from the moon, manifested himself to him. In thunder and lightning Moses recognized not only the physical phenomena, but the manifestations of the spirit just described.

At the same time, however, the other kind of mysteries had affected his soul to such a degree that he perceived in astral visions how the super-human spirit becomes human through the ego. Thus the Being Who had to come revealed Himself to Moses from two directions as the highest form of the Ego.

With Christ there appeared in human form what the high Sun Being had prepared as the exalted paragon of earthly man. With this appearance all mystery wisdom had in a certain regard to assume a new form. Previously this wisdom existed exclusively in order to enable the human being to bring himself to a soul state that allowed him to behold the kingdom of the Sun Spirit outside of earthly evolution. Now mystery wisdom was allotted the task of making the human being capable of recognizing the Christ Who had become man, and from this center of all wisdom to understand the natural and spiritual world.

At the moment in the life of Christ Jesus, when His astral body contained everything that the Luciferic impulse can conceal, He assumed His mission as teacher of mankind. From this moment onward the aptitude was implanted in human earth evolution for receiving the wisdom through which the physical earthly goal can by degrees be attained. At the moment when the event of Golgotha was accomplished, the other aptitude was injected into mankind by which it is possible to turn the influence of Ahriman to good. Henceforth the human being is able to carry with him out of life through the portals of death what releases him from isolation in the spiritual world.

The event of Palestine is not only the center of the physical evolution of mankind, but it is also the center of the other worlds to which the human being belongs. When the "Mystery of Golgotha" was accomplished, when "Death on the Cross" was suffered, the Christ appeared in the world in which souls tarry after death, and in that region He set bounds to the power of Ahriman. From this moment the realm that was named by the Greeks the "kingdom of the shades" was illuminated by that spiritual lightning flash that showed its inhabitants that henceforth light would again appear in it. What was attained through the Mystery of Golgotha for the physical world threw its light into the spiritual world. — Thus the post-Atlantean human evolution was, up to this event, an ascent for the physical world of the senses, but it was at the same time a descent for the spiritual.

Everything that flowed into the world of the senses poured forth from what had already existed in the spiritual world from primeval ages. Since the Christ event, human beings who elevate themselves to the Christ mystery are able to carry with them into the spiritual world what they have acquired in the sense world. It flows back again from the spiritual world into the earthly-sensory world by human beings bringing back with them into reincarnation what the Christ impulse has become for them in the world of spirit between death and rebirth.

What the Christ event bestowed upon mankind's evolution acted within it like a seed. The seed can ripen only gradually. Only the very smallest part of the new wisdom's profundity has penetrated physical existence up to the present. This existence stands just at the beginning of Christian evolution. During the succeeding centuries that have elapsed since that event, Christian evolution has been able to unveil only as much of Its inner nature as human beings, peoples, were capable of receiving, were capable of absorbing with their mental capacities.

The first form into which this knowledge could be poured may be described as an all-encompassing ideal of life. As such it opposed what in the post-Atlantean humanity had fashioned itself as modes of life. We have already described the conditions that prevailed in the evolution of mankind since the repopulation of the earth in the Lemurian age. The human beings, as to their soul nature, may thus be traced back to various beings who, returning from other worlds, incarnated in the bodily descendants of the ancient Lemurians. The various human races are a result of this fact, and, in consequence of

their karma, the most varied life-interests appeared in the reincarnated souls.

As long as the after-effects of all this prevailed, the ideal of a "common humanity" could not exist. Mankind proceeded from a unity, but Earth evolution up to the present has led to differentiation. In the Christ-concept an ideal is given that counteracts all differentiation, for in the human being Who bears the name of Christ live also the forces of the exalted Sun Being in Whom every human ego finds its origin.

The Israelites felt themselves still as a folk, the human being as a member of this folk. At the outset the fact that in the Christ Jesus lives the ideal man Who is not touched by the conditions of separation was only comprehended in thought, and Christianity became the ideal of an all-encompassing brotherhood. Disregarding all separate interests and separate relationships, the feeling arose that the inmost ego of every human being has the same origin. (Alongside all earthly forefathers the common father of all human beings appears. "I and the Father are One.")

In Europe in the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries A.D. a cultural age was prepared that began in the fifteenth century and still continues today. It was gradually to replace the fourth, Greco-Latin, period. It is the fifth post-Atlantean culture period. The peoples, which after various migrations and most manifold destinies had made themselves pillars of this age, were descendants of those Atlanteans who had had the least contact with what had occurred in the meantime in the four preceding cultural epochs.

They had not penetrated into the regions in which the cultures in question took root, but they had in their way continued the Atlantean cultures. There were among them many people who had preserved to a high degree the heritage of the ancient dreamlike clairvoyance, the intermediate state between waking and sleeping already described. Such individuals were acquainted with the spiritual world through their own experience and were able to communicate what takes place in that world to their fellow-men.

A treasure house of narrative about spiritual beings and spiritual events was built up. The treasures of folk fairy tales and myths arose originally from such spiritual experiences. For the dreamlike clairvoyance of many people lasted right on into times not far removed from our present day. There were other human individuals who had lost their clairvoyance but who acquired the faculties of perception in the sensory-physical world through feelings and sensations that corresponded to these clairvoyant experiences.

Here, also, the Atlantean oracles had their successors. There were mysteries everywhere. In these mysteries, however, the kinds of secrets of initiation were predominantly developed that led to the revelation of the region of the spirit world that Ahriman keeps concealed. It is the spiritual powers behind the forces of nature that were revealed in these mysteries. In the mythologies of the European nations are contained the remnants of what the initiates of these mysteries were able to communicate to human beings.

These mythologies, however, contained also the other concealed wisdom, although in less complete form than it was contained in the Southern and Eastern mysteries. Superhuman beings were also

known in Europe. Yet they appeared in a state of constant strife with the companions of Lucifer. The God of Light was proclaimed, but in such a form that it was impossible to say whether He would overcome Lucifer. But as a compensation for this, the future Christ form shone also into these mysteries. It was proclaimed that His kingdom would replace the kingdom of the other God of Light. (All myths about the Twilight of the Gods — the Gotterdammerung — and similar events have their origin in this knowledge of the European mysteries. Such influences caused a cleavage in the soul of the human beings of the fifth cultural epoch that still continues on into the present and shows itself in the most manifold phenomena of life.

The soul did not preserve from ancient times the urge toward the spirit so strongly that it would have been able to retain the connection between the spirit and sense worlds. It retained it merely in the development of its feelings and sensations, but not, however, as a direct perception of the supersensible world. On the other hand, the attention of the human being was directed more and more toward the world of the senses and its control. The powers of the intellect that awoke in the last part of the Atlantean epoch, all the forces in the human being of which the physical brain is the instrument were developed for the sense world and for its knowledge and control.

Two worlds, so to speak, developed in the human breast. One is turned toward sensory-physical existence, the other is receptive to the revelation of the spiritual in order to penetrate it through feeling and sensation, but without perceiving it. The tendencies toward this cleavage of the soul were already present when the teaching of Christ streamed into the regions of Europe. This evangel of the spirit was received into human hearts, penetrated sensation and feeling, but could not find the connection with what the intellect, directed toward the senses, explored in the physical-sensory existence. What we know today as the contrast of outer science and spiritual knowledge is but a consequence of this fact.

The Christian mysticism of Eckhardt, Tauler, and others, is a result of the permeation of feeling and sensation with Christianity. The science of the sense world and its results in life are the consequences of the other side of the soul's capacities. We owe the progress in the field of outer material culture entirely to this separation of capacities. Because the human faculties that have the brain as their instrument turned one-sidedly to physical life, they were able to attain to the increase in power that made possible modern science and technology.

This material culture could originate only among the nations of Europe, for they are the descendants of Atlantean ancestors who developed the tendency for the physical sense world into faculties only when this tendency had attained a certain maturity. Previously these descendants let it slumber, and they were nourished by the heritage of Atlantean clairvoyance and the communications of their initiates. While outwardly spiritual culture had yielded only to these influences, the sense for the material domination of the world gradually matured.

At present, however, the dawn of the sixth post-Atlantean cultural period already proclaims itself. For what is to arise in human evolution at a certain time begins to ripen in the preceding age. What is already able to show its beginnings at present is the discovery of the link that unites the two impulses in the human breast: material culture and life in the world of the spirit. For this purpose it is necessary that the results of spiritual perception are comprehended, and also that the manifestations of the spirit are recognized in the observations and experiences of the sense world.

The sixth cultural epoch will bring the harmony between these two impulses to complete development. With this, the considerations of this book have advanced to a point where they can pass over from a view of the past to one of the future. It is, however, better if this view is preceded by a consideration of the knowledge of the higher worlds and of initiation. Then we shall have an opportunity to present briefly this view of the future, as far as this is possible within the framework of this book.

## 5 - Cognition Of The Higher Worlds. Initiation.

### Part 1

Between birth and death man, at his present evolutionary stage, lives in ordinary life through three soul states: waking, sleeping, and the state between them, dreaming. Dreaming will be briefly considered later on in this book. Here let us first consider life in its two chief alternating states — waking and sleeping.

Man acquires a knowledge of higher worlds if he develops a third soul state besides sleep and waking. During its waking state the soul surrenders itself to sense-impressions and thoughts that are aroused by these impressions. During sleep the sense-impressions cease, but the soul also loses its consciousness.

The experiences of the day sink into the sea of unconsciousness. Let us now imagine that the soul might be able during sleep to become conscious despite the exclusion of all sense-impressions as is the case in deep sleep, and even though the memories of the day's experiences were lacking. Would the soul, in that case, find itself in a state of nothingness? Would it be unable to have any experiences? An answer to these questions is only possible if a similar state of consciousness can actually be induced, if the soul is able to experience something even though no sense-activities and no memory of them are present in it.

The soul, in regard to the ordinary outer world, would then find itself in a state similar to sleep, and yet it would not be asleep, but, as in the waking state, it would confront a real world. Such a state of consciousness can be induced if the human being can bring about the soul experiences made possible by spiritual science; and everything that this science describes concerning the worlds that lie beyond the senses is the result of research in just such a state of consciousness. — In the preceding descriptions some information has been given about higher worlds. In this chapter — as far as it is possible in this book — we shall deal with the means through which the state of consciousness necessary for this method of research is developed.

This state of consciousness resembles sleep only in a certain respect, namely, through the fact that all outer sense-activities cease with its appearance; also all thoughts are stilled that have been aroused through these sense-activities. Whereas in sleep the soul has no power to experience anything consciously, it is to receive this power from the indicated state of consciousness. Through it a perceptive faculty is awakened in the soul that in ordinary life is only aroused by the activities of the senses. The soul's awakening to such a higher state of consciousness may be called initiation.

The means of initiation lead from the ordinary state of waking consciousness into a soul activity, through which spiritual organs of observation are employed. These organs are present in the soul in a germinal state; they must be developed. — It may happen that a human being at a certain moment in the course of his life, without special preparation, makes the discovery in his soul that such higher organs have developed in him. This has come about as a sort of involuntary self-awakening. Such a human being will find that through it his entire nature is transformed. A boundless enrichment of his soul experiences occurs.

He will find that there is no knowledge of the sense world that gives him such bliss, such soul satisfaction, and such inner warmth as he now experiences through the revelation of knowledge inaccessible to the physical eye. Strength and certainty of life will pour into his will from a spiritual world. — There are such cases of self-initiation. They should, however, not tempt us to believe that this is the one and only way and that we should wait for such self-initiation, doing nothing to bring about initiation through proper training.

Nothing need be said here about self-initiation, for it can appear without observing any kind of rules. How the human being may develop through training the organs of perception that lie embryonically in the soul will be described here. People who do not feel the least trace of an especial impulse to do something for the development of themselves may easily say, "Human life is directed by spiritual powers with whose guidance no one should attempt to interfere; we should wait patiently for the moment when such powers consider it proper to open another world to the soul." It may indeed be felt by such human beings as a sort of insolence or as an unjustified desire to interfere with the wisdom of spiritual guidance. Individuals who think thus will only arrive at a different point of view when a certain thought makes a sufficiently strong impression upon them.

When they say to themselves, "Wise spiritual guidance has given me certain faculties; it did not bestow them upon me to be left unused, but to be employed. The wisdom of this guidance consists in the fact that it has placed in me the germinal elements of a higher state of consciousness. I shall understand this guidance only when I feel it obligatory that everything be revealed to the human being that can be revealed through his spiritual powers." If such a thought has made a sufficiently strong impression on the soul, the above doubts about training for a higher state of consciousness will disappear.

Other doubts, however, can still arise about such training. We may say, "The development of inner soul capacities penetrates into the most concealed holy of holies of the human being. It involves a certain transformation of his entire nature. The means for such a transformation cannot, by its very nature, be thought out by ourselves. For the way of reaching higher worlds can only be known to him who knows the way into these worlds through his own experience.

If we turn to such a personality, we permit him to have an influence over the soul's most concealed holy of holies." — Whoever thinks thus would not be especially reassured even though the means of bringing about a higher state of consciousness were presented to him in a book. For the point of the matter is not whether we receive this information verbally or whether someone having the knowledge of this means presents it in a book that we then read. There are persons, however, who possess the knowledge of the rules for the development of the spiritual organs of perception and who are of the opinion that these rules ought not to be entrusted to a book.

Such people usually do not consider it permissible to publish certain truths relating to the spiritual world. This view, however — considering the present stage of human evolution — must, in a certain sense, be declared outmoded. It is correct, in regard to the publication of the rules in question, that we may do so only to a certain point. Yet the information given leads far enough for those who employ it for soul training to reach a point in the development of their knowledge from which they can then continue on the path. One can only visualize the further direction of this path correctly by what one has experienced previously on it.

From all these facts, doubts may arise about the spiritual path of knowledge. These doubts disappear if one holds in mind the nature of the course of development that is indicated by the training appropriate to our age. We shall speak here about this path. Other methods of training will only be briefly touched upon.

The training to be described here places in the hands of the person who has the will for his higher development the means for undertaking the transformation of his soul. Any dangerous interference with the inner nature of the disciple would only occur were the teacher to undertake this transformation by means that elude the consciousness of the pupil. No proper instruction for spiritual development in our age employs such means.

A proper instruction does not make the pupil a blind instrument. It gives him the rules of conduct, and he then carries them out. There is no need to withhold the reason why this or that rule of conduct is given. The acceptance of the rules and their employment by a person who seeks spiritual development need not be a matter of blind faith. Blind faith should be completely excluded from this domain. Whoever considers the nature of the human soul, as far as it is possible through ordinary self-examination without spiritual training, may ask himself after encountering the rules recommended for spiritual training, "How can these rules be effective in the life of the soul?"

It is possible to answer this question satisfactorily prior to any training by the unprejudiced employment of common sense. We are able to understand correctly the way of working of these rules prior to their practice. But it can be experienced only during training. The experience, however, will always be accompanied by understanding if we accompany each step with sound judgment, and at the present time a true spiritual science will only indicate rules for training upon which sound judgment may be brought to bear. Anyone who is willing to surrender himself to such training only, and who does not permit himself to be driven to blind faith by prejudice of any kind, will find that all doubts disappear. Objections to a proper training for a higher state of consciousness will not disturb him.

Even for a person whose inner maturity can lead him sooner or later to self-awakening of the spiritual organs of perception such training is not superfluous, but on the contrary it is quite especially suited to him. For there are but few cases in which such a person, prior to self-initiation, is not compelled to pass through the most varied, crooked and useless byways. Training spares him these deviations. It leads straight forward. If self-initiation takes place for such a soul, it is caused by its having acquired the necessary maturity in the course of previous lives. It may easily happen, however, that just such a soul has a certain dim presentiment of its maturity and through this presentiment is inclined to reject the proper training.

This presentiment may produce a certain pride that hinders faith in a true spiritual training. It is possible that a certain stage of soul development may remain concealed up to a certain age in human life and only then appear, but training may be just the right means of bringing forth this stage. If the individual pays no heed to such training, it may happen that his ability remains concealed during his present life and will only reappear in some subsequent life.

In regard to the training for supersensible knowledge described here, it is important to avoid certain obvious misunderstandings. One of these may arise through thinking that training would transform



man into a different being in regard to his entire life-conduct. It cannot, however, be a question of giving man general instructions for his conduct of life, but of telling him about soul-exercises which, properly performed, will give him the possibility of observing the supersensible. These exercises have no direct influence upon the part of his life-functions that lies outside the observation of the supersensible.

In addition to these life-functions the human being acquires the gift of supersensible observation. The function of this observation is as much separated from the ordinary functions of life as the state of waking is from that of sleeping. The one cannot disturb the other in the least. Whoever, for example, wishes to permeate the ordinary course of life with impressions of supersensible perception resembles an invalid whose sleep would be continually interrupted by injurious awakenings. It must be possible for the free will of the trained person to induce the state in which supersensible reality is observed.

Training, to be sure, is indirectly connected with certain instructions concerning conduct in as far as, without an ethically determined conduct of life, an insight into the supersensible is impossible or injurious. Consequently, much of what leads to the perception of the supersensible is at the same time a means of ennobling the conduct of life. On the other hand, as a result of insight into the supersensible world, higher moral impulses are recognized that are also valid for the sensory-physical world. Certain moral necessities are only recognized from out this world. — A second misunderstanding would arise were it believed that any soul function leading to supersensible knowledge might produce changes in the physical organism.

Such functions have nothing whatsoever to do with anything in the realm of physiology or other branches of natural science. They are pure soul-spirit processes, entirely devoid of anything physical, like sound thinking and perception. Nothing happens in the soul through such a function — considering its character — that is different from what takes place when it thinks or judges in a healthy fashion. Just as much or as little as sound thinking has to do with the body, so do the processes of true training for supersensible cognition have to do with the body.

Anything that has a different relationship to man is not true spiritual training, but its distortion. What follows is to be taken in the sense of what has been said here. Only because supersensible knowledge is something that proceeds from the entire soul of man will it appear as if things were required for this training that would transform man into something else. In truth it is a question of instruction about functions enabling the soul to bring into its life moments in which the supersensible may be observed.

## **Part 2**

The attainment of a supersensible state of consciousness can only proceed from everyday waking consciousness. In this consciousness the soul lives before its elevation. Through the training the soul acquires a means of lifting itself out of everyday consciousness. The training that is under consideration here offers among the first means those that still may be designated as functions of everyday consciousness. The most important means are just those that consist of quiet activities of the soul. They involve the opening of the soul to quite definite thoughts.

These thoughts exercise, by their very nature, an awakening power upon certain hidden faculties of the

human soul. They are to be distinguished from the visualizations of everyday waking life, which have the task of depicting outer things. The more truly they do this, the truer they are, and it is part of their nature to be true in this sense. The visualizations, however, to which the soul must open itself for the purpose of spiritual training have no such task. They are so constructed that they do not depict anything external but have in themselves the peculiarity of effecting an awakening in the soul. The best visualizations for this purpose are emblematic or symbolical.

Nevertheless, other visualizations may also be employed, for it is not a question of what they contain, but solely a question of the soul's directing its powers in such a way that it has nothing else in mind but the visualized image under consideration. While the powers of everyday soul-life are distributed in many directions — the visualized mental representations changing very rapidly — in spiritual training everything depends upon the concentration of the entire soul-life upon one visualization.

This visualization must, by means of free will, be placed at the center of consciousness. Symbolic visualized images are, therefore, better than those that represent outer objects or processes, for the latter have a point of attachment to the outer world, making the soul less dependent upon itself than when it employs symbolic visualizations that are formed through the soul's own energy. The essential is not what is visualized; what is essential is the fact that the visualization, through the way it is visualized, liberates the soul from dependence on the physical.

We understand what it means to immerse ourselves in a visualized image if we consider, first of all, the concept of memory. If, for instance, we look at a tree and then away from it so that we can no longer see it, we are then able to re-awaken the visualization of the tree in the soul by recollecting it. This visualization of the tree, which we have when the eye no longer beholds the latter, is a memory of the tree.

Now let us imagine that we preserve this memory in the soul; we permit the soul, as it were, to rest upon the visualized memory picture; and at the same time we endeavor to exclude all other visualizations. Then the soul is immersed in the visualized memory picture of the tree. We then have to do with the soul's immersion in a visualized picture or image; yet this visualization is the image of an object perceived by the senses. But if we undertake this with a visualized image formed in the consciousness by an act of independent will, we shall then be able by degrees to attain the effect upon which everything depends.

We shall now endeavor to describe an example of inner immersion in a symbolic visualization. Such a visualization must first be fashioned in the soul. This may happen in the following way. We visualize a plant as it roots in the earth, as leaf by leaf sprouts forth, as its blossom unfolds, and now we think of a human being beside this plant. We make the thought alive in the soul of how he has characteristics and faculties which, when compared with those of the plant, may be considered more perfect than the latter.

We contemplate how, according to his feelings and his will, he is able to move about hither and thither, while the plant is chained to the earth. Furthermore we say that the human being is indeed more perfect than the plant, but he also shows peculiarities that are not to be found in the plant. Just because of their nonexistence in the plant the latter may appear to me in a certain sense more perfect than the human being who is filled with desire and passion and follows them in his conduct. I may

1 speak of his being led astray by his desires and passions.

I see that the plant follows the pure laws of growth from leaf to leaf, that it opens its blossom passionlessly to the chaste rays of the sun. Furthermore, I may say to myself that the human being has a greater perfection than the plant, but he has purchased this perfection at the price of permitting instincts, desires, and passions to enter into his nature besides the forces of the plant, which appear pure to us. I now visualize how the green sap flows through the plant and that it is an expression of the pure, passionless laws of growth.

I then visualize how the red blood flows through the human veins and how it is the expression of the instincts, desires, and passions. All this I permit to arise in my soul as vivid thought. Then I visualize further how the human being is capable of evolution; how he may purify and cleanse his instincts and passions through his higher soul powers. I visualize how, as a result of this, something base in these instincts and desires is destroyed and how the latter are reborn upon a higher plane. Then the blood may be conceived of as the expression of the purified and cleansed instincts and passions.

In my thoughts I look now, for example, upon the rose and say, In the red rose petal I see the color of the green plant sap transformed into red, and the red rose, like the green leaf, follows the pure, passionless laws of growth. The red of the rose may now become the symbol of a blood that is the expression of purified instincts and passions that have stripped off all that is base, and in their purity resemble the forces active in the red rose. I now seek not merely to imbue my intellect with such thoughts but to bring them to life in my feelings. I may have a feeling of bliss when I think of the purity and passionlessness of the growing plant; I can produce within myself the feeling of how certain higher perfections must be purchased through the acquirement of instincts and desires. This can then transform the feeling of bliss, which I have felt previously, into a grave feeling; and then a feeling of liberating joy may stir in me when I surrender myself to the thought of the red blood which, like the red sap of the rose, may become the bearer of inwardly pure experiences.

It is of importance that we do not without feeling confront the thoughts that serve to construct such a symbolic visualization. After we have pondered on such thoughts and feelings for a time, we are to transform them into the following symbolic visualization. We visualize a black cross. Let this be the symbol of the destroyed base elements of instincts and passions, and at the center, where the arms of the cross intersect, let us visualize seven red, radiant roses arranged in a circle. Let these roses be the symbol of a blood that is the expression of purified, cleansed passions and instincts.

1 Such a symbolic visualization should be called forth in the soul in the way illustrated above through a visualized memory image. Such a visualization has a soul-awakening power if we surrender ourselves to it in inward meditation. We must seek to exclude all other thoughts during meditation. Only the characterized symbol is to hover in spirit before the soul as intensely as possible. — It is not without significance that this symbol is not simply given here as an awakening visualized picture, but that it has first been constructed by means of certain thoughts about plant and man.

For the effect of such a symbol depends upon the fact of its having been constructed in the way described before it is employed in inner meditation. If we visualize the symbol without first having fashioned it in our own souls, it remains cold and much less effective than when it has received, through preparation, its soul-illuminating power. During meditation, however, we should not call forth

in the soul all the preparatory thoughts, but merely let the visualized picture hover vividly before our inner eye, at the same time letting the feeling hold sway that has appeared as a result of the preparatory thoughts. Thus the symbol becomes a token alongside the feeling-experience, and its effectiveness lies in the dwelling of the soul in this inner experience. The longer we are able to dwell in it without the intervention of other, disturbing, thoughts, the more effective is the entire process.

It is well, nevertheless, for us, outside the period dedicated to the actual meditation itself, to repeat the construction of the symbol by means of thoughts and feelings of the above described kind, so that the experience may not fade away. The more patience we exercise in this renewal, the more significant is the symbol for the soul. (In my book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment*, other examples of means for inner meditation are given. Especially effective are the meditations characterized there about the growth and decay of the plant, about the slumbering creative forces in the plant seed, about the forms of crystals, and so forth. In the present book, the nature of meditation was to be described by a single example.)

Such a symbol, as is described here, portrays no outer thing or being that is brought forth by nature. But just because of this it has an awakening power for certain purely soul faculties. To be sure, someone might raise an objection. He might say, It is true, the symbol as a whole is certainly not produced by nature, but all its details are, nevertheless, borrowed from nature — the black color, the red roses, and the other details. All this is perceived by the senses. Anyone who may be disturbed by such an objection should consider that it is not the pictures of sense-perceptions that lead to the awakening of the higher soul faculties, but that this effect is produced only by the manner of combining these details, and this combination does not picture anything that is present in the sense world.

The process of effective meditation was illustrated here by a symbol, as an example. In spiritual training the most manifold pictures of this kind can be employed and they can be constructed in the most varied manner. Also certain sentences, formulae, even single words, upon which to meditate may be given. In every case these means to inner meditation have the objective of liberating the soul from sense-perception and of arousing it to an activity in which the impression upon the physical senses is meaningless and the development of the inner slumbering soul faculties becomes the essential. It may also be a matter of meditation upon mere feelings and sensations.

This shows itself to be especially effective. Let us take, for example, the feeling of joy. In the normal course of life the soul may experience joy if an outer stimulus for it is present. If a soul with normal feelings perceives how a human being performs an action that is inspired by kindness of heart, this soul will feel pleased and happy about it. But this soul may then meditate on an action of this sort. It may say to itself, an action performed through goodness of heart is one in which the performer does not follow his own interest, but the interest of his fellow-man, and such an action may be designated morally good. The contemplating soul, however, may now free itself from the mental picture of the special case in the outer world that has given it joy or pleasure, and it may form the comprehensive idea of kindness of heart.

It may perhaps think how kindness of heart arises by the one soul absorbing, so to speak, the interests of the other soul and making them its own, and it may now feel joy about this moral idea of kindness of heart. This is not the joy in this or that process in the sense world, but the joy in an idea as such. If

we attempt to keep alive such joy in the soul for a certain length of time, then this is meditation on inner feeling, on inner sensation.

The idea is not then the awakening factor of the inner soul faculties, but the holding sway, for a certain length of time, of the feeling within the soul that is not aroused through a mere single external impression. — Since supersensible knowledge is able to penetrate more deeply into the nature of things than ordinary thinking, it is able through its experiences to indicate feelings that act in a still higher degree upon the unfolding of the soul faculties, when they are employed in inner meditation.

Although this is necessary for higher degrees of training, we should remember the fact that energetic meditation on such feelings and sensations, as for example have been characterized in the observation of kindness of heart, is able to lead very far. — Since human beings are varied in character, so are the effective means of training varied for the individual man. — In regard to the duration of meditation we have to consider that the effect is all the stronger, the more tranquilly and deliberately this meditation is carried out. But any excess in this direction should be avoided. A certain inner discretion that results through the exercises themselves may teach the pupil to keep within due bounds.

Such exercises in inner meditation will in general have to be carried on for a long time before the student himself is able to perceive any results. What belongs unconditionally to spiritual training is patience and perseverance. Whoever does not call up both of these within his soul and does not, in all tranquillity, continuously carry out his exercises, so that patience and perseverance form the fundamental mood of the soul, cannot achieve much.

It will have become evident from the preceding exposition that meditation is a means of acquiring knowledge about higher worlds, but it will also have become evident that not just any content of thought will lead to it, but only a content that has been evolved in the manner described.

The path that has been indicated here leads, in the first place, to what may be called imaginative cognition. It is the first stage of higher cognition. Knowledge that rests upon sense-perception and upon the working over of the sense-perceptions through the intellect bound to the senses may be called, in the sense of spiritual science, "objective cognition."

Beyond this lie the higher stages of knowledge, the first of which is imaginative cognition. The expression "imaginative" may call forth doubts in those who think "imagination" stands only for unreal imaginings, that is, a visualization of something that has no corresponding reality. In spiritual science, however, "imaginative" cognition is to be conceived as something coming into existence through a supersensible state of consciousness of the soul. What is perceived in this state are spiritual facts and beings to which the senses have no access.

Because this state is awakened in the soul by meditating on symbols or "imageries," the world of this higher state of consciousness may be named the "imaginative" world, and the knowledge corresponding to it "imaginative" cognition. "Imaginative," therefore, means something which is "real" in a different sense from the facts and beings of physical sense-perception. The content of the visualizations that fill imaginative experience is of no importance, but of utmost importance is the soul faculty which is developed through this experience.

An obvious objection to the employment of the characterized symbolic visualizations is that their fashioning corresponds to a dreamlike thinking and to arbitrary imagining and therefore can bring forth only doubtful results. In regard to the symbols that lie at the foundation of true spiritual training, doubts of this character are unjustified. For the symbols are chosen in such a way that their connection with outer sense reality may be entirely disregarded and their value sought merely in the force with which they affect the soul when the latter withdraws all attention from the outer world, when it suppresses all impressions of the senses, and shuts out all thoughts that it may cherish as a result of outer stimuli.

The process of meditation is best illustrated by a comparison with the state of sleep. On the one hand it resembles the latter, on the other it is the complete opposite. It is a sleep that represents, in regard to everyday consciousness, a higher waking state. The important point is that through concentration upon the visualization or picture in question the soul is compelled to draw forth much stronger powers from its own depths than it employs in everyday life or in everyday cognition. Its inner activity is thereby enhanced.

It liberates itself from the bodily nature just as it does during sleep, but it does not, as in the latter case, pass over into unconsciousness, but becomes conscious of a world that it has not previously experienced. Although this soul state may be compared with sleep in regard to the liberation from the body, yet it may be described as an enhanced waking state when compared with everyday waking consciousness.

Through this the soul experiences itself in its true inner, independent nature, while in the everyday waking state it becomes conscious of itself only through the help of the body because of the weaker unfolding of its forces in that state, and does not, therefore, experience itself, but is only aware of the picture that, like a reflection, the body (or properly speaking its processes) sketches for it.

The symbols that are constructed in the above described manner do, by their very nature, not yet relate to anything real in the spiritual world. They serve the purpose of detaching the human soul from sense-perception and from the brain instrument to which the intellect is bound at the outset.

This detachment cannot occur in man prior to his feeling the following: I now visualize something by means of forces in connection with which my senses and my brain do not serve me as instruments. The first thing that the human being experiences on this path is such a liberation from the physical organs. He may then say to himself, "My consciousness is not extinguished when I disregard the sense-perceptions and ordinary intellectual thinking; I can lift myself out of them and then feel myself as a being alongside the one I was previously." This is the first purely spiritual experience: the observation of a soul-spirit ego being.

This, as a new self, has lifted itself out of the self that is only bound to the physical senses and the physical intellect. If without meditation the pupil had released himself from the world of the senses and intellect, he would have sunk into the "nothingness" of unconsciousness. The soul-spirit being, naturally, existed before meditation had taken place, but it did not yet have any organs of observing the spiritual world. It was somewhat similar to a physical body without eyes to see, or ears to hear. The force that was employed in meditation first has fashioned the soul-spirit organs out of the previously

unorganized soul-spirit nature.

The individual beholds first, therefore, what he has created. Thus, the first experience is, in a certain sense, self-perception. It belongs to the essence of spiritual training that the soul, through the practice of self-education, is at this point of its development fully conscious of the fact that at first it perceives itself in the world of pictures — imaginations — which appear as a result of the exercises described. Although these pictures appear as living in a new world, the soul must recognize that they are, at the outset, nothing but the reflection of its own being, strengthened through the exercises, and it must not only recognize this with proper discretion, but it must also have developed such a power of will that it can extinguish, can eliminate these pictures from consciousness at any time.

The soul must be able to act within these pictures completely free and fully aware. This belongs to true spiritual training at this stage. If the soul were not able to do this it would be in the same circumstances, in the sphere of spiritual experience, in which a soul would find itself in the physical world, were its eyes fettered to the object upon which they gaze, powerless to withdraw them. Only one group of inner imaginative experiences constitutes an exception to this possibility of extinction. These experiences are not to be extinguished at this stage of spiritual training. They correspond to the kernel of the soul's own being, and the student of the spiritual recognizes in these pictures what, in himself, passes through repeated earth lives as his fundamental being.

At this point the sensing of repeated earth lives becomes a real experience. In regard to everything else the independence of the experiences mentioned must rule, and only after having acquired the ability to bring about this extinction does the student approach the true external spiritual world. In place of what has been extinguished, something else appears that is recognized as spiritual reality. The student feels how he grows in his soul from the undefined into the defined. From the self-perception he then must proceed to an observation of an outer world of soul and spirit. This takes place when the student arranges his inner experiences in the sense that will be further indicated here.

In the beginning the soul of the student of the spiritual is weak in regard to everything that is to be perceived in the spiritual world. He will have to employ great inner energy in order to hold fast in meditation to the symbols or other visualizations that he has fashioned from the stimuli of the world of the senses.

If, however, he wishes besides this to attain real observation in a higher world, he must be able not only to hold fast to these visualizations, but he must also, after he has done this, be able to sojourn in a state in which no stimuli of the sensory world act upon the soul, but in which also the visualized imaginations themselves, characterized above, are extirpated from consciousness. What has been formed through meditation can only then appear in consciousness. It is important now that sufficient inner soul power be present in order really to perceive spiritually what has been formed through meditation, so that it may not elude the attention.

This is, however, always the case with but weakly developed inner energy. What is thus constructed in the beginning as a soul-spirit organism and what is to be taken hold of by the student in self-perception is delicate and fleeting, and the disturbances of the outer world of the senses and its after-effects of memory are great, however much we may endeavor to hold them back. Not only the disturbances that we observe come into question here, but much more, indeed, those of which we are not conscious at all

in everyday life. — The very nature of the human being, however, makes possible a state of transition in this regard. What the soul at the beginning cannot achieve in the waking state on account of the disturbances of the physical world, is possible in the state of sleep. Whoever surrenders to meditation will, by proper attention, become aware of something in sleep.

He will feel that during sleep he does not "fall into a complete slumber," but that at times his soul is active in a certain way while sleeping. In such states the natural processes hold back the influences of the outer world that the waking soul is not yet able to prevent by means of its own power. If, however, the exercises of meditation have already been effective, the soul frees itself during sleep from unconsciousness and feels the world of soul and spirit. This may happen in a twofold way. It may be clear to the human being during sleep that now he is in another world; or he may have the memory on awaking that he has been in another world.

To the first belongs, indeed, greater inner energy than to the second. Therefore the latter will be more frequent for the beginner in spiritual training. By degrees this may go so far that the pupil feels on waking that he has been in another world during the whole sleep period, from which he has emerged on waking, and his memory of the beings and facts of this other world will become ever more definite. Something has taken place for the student of the spiritual in one form or another that may be called the continuity of consciousness. (The continuity of consciousness during sleep.) It is not at all meant by this, however, that man is always conscious during sleep.

Much, however, has already been gained in the continuity of consciousness if the human being, who otherwise sleeps like ordinary man, has at certain times during sleep intervals in which he can consciously behold a world of soul and spirit, or if, after waking, he can look back again in memory upon such brief states of consciousness. It should not be forgotten, however, that what is described here may be only understood as a transitional state. It is good to pass through this state in the course of training, but one should certainly not believe that a conclusive perception in regard to the world of soul and spirit should be derived from it.

The soul is uncertain in this state and cannot yet depend upon what it perceives. But through such experiences it gathers more and more power in order to succeed, also while awake, in warding off the disturbing influences of the physical outer and inner worlds, and thus to acquire the faculty of soul-spirit observation when impressions no longer come through the senses, when the intellect bound to the physical brain is silent, and when consciousness is freed even from the visualizations of meditation by means of which we have only prepared ourselves for spiritual perception. — Whatever is revealed by spiritual science in this or that form should never originate from any other soul-spirit observation than from one that has been made during the state of complete wakefulness.

Two soul experiences are important in the process of spiritual training. Through the one, man may say to himself, "Although I now disregard all the impressions the outer physical world may offer, nevertheless, I do not look into myself as though at a being in whom all activity is extinguished, but I look at one who is conscious of himself in a world of which I know nothing as long as I only permit myself to be stimulated by sense impressions and the ordinary impressions of the intellect." At this moment the soul has the feeling that it has given birth, in the manner described above, to a new being in itself as the kernel of its soul nature, and this being possesses characteristics quite different from those that previously existed in the soul.



The other experience consists in now having the old being like a second alongside the new. What, up to the present, the student knew as enclosing him becomes something that now confronts him, in a certain sense. He feels himself at times outside of what he had otherwise called his own being, his ego. It is as though he now lived in full consciousness in two egos. One of these is the being he has known up to the present. The other stands, like a being newly born, above it. The student feels how the first ego attains a certain independence of the second, just as the body of the human being has a certain independence of the first ego. — This experience is of great significance. For through it the human being knows what it means to live in the world that he strives to reach through training.

The second, the new-born ego, may now be trained to perceive within the spiritual world. There may be developed in this ego what, for the spiritual world, has the same significance the sense organs possess for the sensory-physical world. If this development has advanced to the necessary stage, then the human being will not only feel himself as a new-born ego, but he will now perceive spiritual facts and spiritual beings in his environment, just as he perceives the physical world through the physical senses. This is a third significant experience.

In order completely to find his way about at this stage of spiritual training the human being must realize that, with the strengthening of soul powers, self-love and egotism will appear to a degree quite unknown to everyday soul-life. It would be a misunderstanding if someone were to believe that at this point only ordinary self-love is meant. This self-love increases at this stage of development to such a degree that it assumes the appearance of a nature force within the human soul, and in order to vanquish this strong egotism a rigorous strengthening of the will is necessary. This egotism is not produced by spiritual training; it is always present; it only comes to consciousness through spiritual experience. The training of the will must go hand in hand with the other spiritual training.

A strong inclination exists to feel enraptured in the world that we have created for ourselves, and we must, in the manner described above, be able to extinguish, as it were, what we have striven to create with such great effort. In the imaginative world that has thus been reached the student must extinguish himself. Against this however, the strongest impulses of egotism wage war. — The belief may easily arise that the exercises of spiritual training are something external, disregarding the moral evolution of the soul.

It must be said concerning this that the moral force that is necessary for the indicated victory over egotism cannot be attained unless the moral condition of the soul is brought to a corresponding level. Progress in spiritual training is not thinkable without a corresponding moral progress. Without moral force the described victory over egotism is not possible. All talk about true spiritual training not being at the same time moral training does not conform to facts.

Only the person who does not know such an experience can make the following objection by asking, "How are we to know that we are dealing with realities and not with mere visions, hallucinations, and so forth, when we believe we have spiritual perceptions?" — The facts are such, however, that the student who has reached the characterized stage by proper training is just as able to distinguish his own visualization from spiritual reality as a man with a healthy mind is able to distinguish the thought of a hot piece of iron from an actual one that he touches with his hand. Healthy experience, and nothing else, shows the difference.

In the spiritual world also, life itself is the touchstone. Just as we know that in the sense world the mental picture of a piece of iron, be it thought ever so hot, will not burn the fingers, the trained spiritual student knows whether or not he experiences a spiritual fact only in his imaginings or whether real facts or beings make an impression upon his awakened spiritual organs of perception. The general rules that we must observe during spiritual training in order not to fall victim to illusions in this regard will be described later.

It is of greatest importance that the student of the spiritual has acquired a quite definite soul state when he becomes conscious of a new-born ego. For through his ego the human being attains to control of his sensations, feelings, thoughts, instincts, passions, and desires. Perception and thought cannot be left to themselves in the soul. They must be regulated through attentive thinking. It is the ego that employs these laws of thinking and through them brings order into the life of visualization and thought.

It is similar with desires, instincts, inclinations, and passions. The ethical principles become guides of these soul powers. Through moral judgment the ego becomes the guide of the soul in this realm. If the human being now draws a higher ego out of his ordinary ego, the latter becomes independent in a certain sense. From this ego just as much of living force is withdrawn as is bestowed upon the higher ego. Let us suppose, however, the case in which the human being has not yet developed a sufficient ability and firmness in the laws of thought and in his power of judgment, and he wishes to give birth to his higher ego at this stage of development.

He will be able to leave behind for his everyday ego only so much thought power as he has previously developed. If the measure of regulated thinking is too small, then there will appear a disordered, confused, fantastic thinking and judgment in the ordinary ego that has become independent. Because the new-born ego can only be weak in such a personality, the disturbed lower ego will gain domination over supersensible perception, and man will not show equilibrium in his power of judgment in observing the supersensible world. If he had developed sufficient ability in logical thinking, he would be able, without fear, to permit the ordinary ego to have its independence. — This is also true in the domain of the ethical.

If the human being has not attained firmness in moral judgment, if he has not gained sufficient control over his inclinations, instincts, and passions, then he will make his ordinary ego independent in a state in which these soul powers act. It may happen that the human being in describing the knowledge he has experienced in the supersensible is not governed by the same high sense of truth that guides him in what he brings to his consciousness in the physical outer world.

With such a demoralized sense of truth, he might believe anything to be spiritual reality that in truth is only his own fantastic imagining. Into this sense of truth there must act firmness of ethical judgment, certainty of character, keenness of conscience, which are developed in the lower, first ego, before the higher, second ego becomes active for the purpose of supersensible cognition. — What is said here must not discourage training, but it must be taken very seriously.

Anyone who has the strong will to do what brings the first ego to inner certainty in the exercise of its functions need not recoil from the liberation of his second ego, brought about through spiritual training for the sake of supersensible cognition. But he must keep in mind that self-deception has great power

over the human being when it is a question of his feeling himself "mature" enough for some step. In the spiritual training described here, man attains such a development of his thought life that it is impossible for him to encounter the dangers of going astray, often presumed to be inevitable.

This development of thought acts in such a way that all necessary inner experiences appear, but that they occur in the soul without being accompanied by damaging aberrations of fantasy. Without corresponding thought development the experiences may call forth a profound uncertainty in the soul. The method stressed here causes the experiences to appear in such a way that the student becomes completely familiar with them, just as he becomes familiar with the perceptions of the physical world in a healthy soul state. Through the development of thought life he becomes, as it were, an observer of what he experiences in himself, while, without this thought life, he stands heedless within the experience.

In a factual training certain qualities are mentioned that the student who wishes to find his way into the higher worlds should acquire through practice. These are, above all, control of the soul over its train of thought, over its will, and its feelings. The way in which this control is to be acquired through practice has a twofold purpose. On the one hand, the soul is to be imbued with firmness, certainty, and equilibrium to such a degree that it preserves these qualities, although from its being a second ego is born. On the other hand, this second ego is to be furnished with strength and inner consistency of character.

What is necessary for the thinking of man in spiritual training is, above all, objectivity. In the physical-sensory world, life is the human ego's great teacher of objectivity. Were the soul to let thoughts wander about aimlessly, it would be immediately compelled to let itself be corrected by life if it did not wish to come into conflict with it. The soul must think according to the course of the facts of life. If now the human being turns his attention away from the physical-sensory world, he lacks the compulsory correction of the latter. If his thinking is then unable to be its own corrective, it must become irrational. Therefore the thinking of the student of the spiritual must be trained in such a manner that it is able to give to itself direction and goal.

Thinking must be its own instructor in inner firmness and the capacity to hold the attention strictly to one object. For this reason, suitable "thought exercises" are not to be undertaken with unfamiliar and complicated objects, but with those that are simple and familiar. Anyone who is able for months at a time to concentrate his thoughts daily at least for five minutes upon an ordinary object (for example a needle, a pencil, or any other simple object), and during this time to exclude all thoughts that have no bearing on the subject, has achieved a great deal in this regard. (We may contemplate a new object daily, or the same one for several days.)

Also, the one who considers himself a thinker as a result of scientific training should not disdain to prepare himself for spiritual training in this manner. For if for a certain length of time we fasten our thoughts upon an object that is well known to us, we can be sure that we think in conformity with facts. If we ask ourselves what a pencil is composed of, how its materials are prepared, how they are brought together afterward, when pencils were invented, and so forth, we then conform our thoughts more to reality than if we reflect upon the origin of man, or upon the nature of life. Through simple thought exercises we acquire greater ability for factual thinking concerning the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions than through complicated and learned ideas.

For in the first place it is not at all a question of thinking about this or that, but of thinking factually by means of inner force. If we have schooled ourselves in regard to factuality by a physical-sensory process, easily surveyed, then thought becomes accustomed to function in accordance with facts even though it does not feel itself controlled by the physical world of the senses and its laws, and we rid ourselves of the habit of letting our thoughts wander without relation to facts.

The soul must become a ruler in the sphere of the will as it must be in the world of thought. In the physical-sensory world, it is life itself that appears as the ruler. It emphasizes this or that need of the human being, and the will feels itself impelled to satisfy these needs. In higher training man must become accustomed to obey his own commands strictly. He who becomes accustomed to this will be less and less inclined to desire the non-essential. Dissatisfaction and instability in the life of will rest upon the desire for things the realization of which we cannot conceive clearly. Such dissatisfaction may bring the entire mental life into disorder when a higher ego is about to emerge from the soul. It is a good practice if one gives oneself for months, at a certain time of the day, the following command: Today, at this definite time, I shall perform this or that action.

One then gradually becomes able to determine the time for this action and the nature of the thing to be done so as to permit its being carried out with great exactness. Thus one lifts oneself above the damaging attitude of mind found in, "I should like this, I want that," in which we do not at all consider the possibility of its accomplishment. A great personality — Goethe — lets a seeress say, "Him I love who desires the impossible." [Goethe: Faust 11.] And Goethe himself says, "To live in the idea means to treat the impossible as though it were possible." [Goethe: Verses in Prose.] Such expressions must not be used as objections to what is presented here. For the demand of Goethe and his seeress, Manto, can only be fulfilled by someone who has trained himself to desire what is possible, in order then to be able, through his strong will, to treat the "impossible" so that it is transformed through his will into the possible.

In regard to the world of feeling the soul should attain for spiritual training a certain degree of calmness. It is necessary for that purpose that the soul become ruler over expressions of joy and sorrow, of pleasure and pain. It is just in regard to the acquiring of this ability that much prejudice may result. One might imagine that one would become dull and without sympathy in regard to one's fellowmen if one should not feel joy with the joyful and with the painful, pain. Yet this is not the point in question.

With the joyful the soul should rejoice, with sadness it should feel pain. But it should acquire the ability to control the expression of joy and sorrow, of pleasure and pain. If one endeavors to do this, one will soon notice that one does not become less sensitive, but on the contrary more receptive to all that is joyous and sorrowful in one's environment than one was previously. To be sure, if one wishes to acquire the ability with which we are concerned here, one must strictly observe oneself for a long period of time. One must see to it that one is able fully to sympathize with joy and sorrow without losing one's self-control so that one gives way to an involuntary expression of one's feelings.

It is not the justified pain that one should suppress, but involuntary weeping; not the horror of an evil action, but the blind rage of anger; not attention to danger, but fruitless fear, and so forth. — Only through such practice does the student of the spiritual attain the tranquillity of mind that is necessary to

prevent the soul at the birth of the higher ego, and, above all, during its activity, from leading a second, abnormal life like a sort of Doppelgänger — soul double — along side this higher ego. It is just in regard to these things that one should not surrender oneself to any sort of self-deception. It may appear to many a one that he already possesses a certain equanimity in ordinary life and therefore does not need this exercise. It is just such a person who doubly needs it.

It may be quite possible to be calm when confronting the things of ordinary life, but when one ascends into a higher world, the lack of equilibrium that heretofore was only suppressed may assert itself all the more. It must be grasped that for spiritual training what one already appeared to possess previously is of less importance than the need to practice, according to exact rules, what one lacks.

Although this sentence appears contradictory, it is, nevertheless, correct. Even though life has taught us this or that, the abilities we have acquired by ourselves serve the cause of spiritual training. If life has brought us excitability, we should break ourselves of the habit; if life has brought us complacency, then we should through self-education arouse ourselves to such a degree that the expression of the soul corresponds to the impression received. Anyone who never laughs about anything has just as little control of his life as someone who, without any control whatever, is continually given to laughter.

For the control of thought and feeling there is a further means of education in the acquirement of the faculty that we may call positiveness. There is a beautiful legend that tells of how the Christ Jesus, accompanied by some other persons, passed by a dead dog lying on the roadside. While the others turned aside from the hideous spectacle, the Christ Jesus spoke admiringly of the animal's beautiful teeth. One can school oneself in order to attain the attitude of soul toward the world shown by this legend. The erroneous, the bad, the ugly should not prevent the soul from finding the true, the good, and the beautiful wherever it is present.

This positiveness should not be confused with non-criticism, with the arbitrary closing of the eyes to the bad, the false, and the inferior. If you admire the "beautiful teeth" of a dead animal, you also see the decaying corpse. But this corpse does not prevent your seeing the beautiful teeth. One cannot consider the bad good and the false true, but it is possible to attain the ability not to be deterred by evil from seeing good, and by error from seeing truth.

Thought linked with will undergoes a certain maturing if we permit ourselves never to be robbed by previous experiences of the unbiased receptivity for new experiences. For the student of the spiritual the following thought should entirely lose its meaning, "I have never heard that, I do not believe that." It should be his aim, during specific periods of time, to learn something new on every occasion from everything and everybody. From every breath of air, from every leaf, from the babbling of children one can learn something if one is prepared to bring to one's aid a certain point of view that one has not made use of up to the present.

It will, however, be easily possible in regard to such an ability to go wide of the mark. One should not in any way disregard, at any particular stage of life, one's previous experiences. One should judge what one experiences in the present by one's experiences of the past. This is placed upon one scale of the balance; upon the other, however, must be placed the inclination of the student continually to experience the new. Above all, there must be faith in the possibility that new experiences may contradict the old.

Thus we have named five capacities of the soul that the student must make his own by correct training: Control of the direction of thought; control of the impulses of will; calmness in joy and sorrow; positiveness in judging the world; impartiality in our attitude toward life. Anyone who has employed certain consecutive periods of time for the purpose of acquiring these capacities will still be subject to the necessity of bringing them into harmonious concord in his soul. He will be under the necessity of practicing them simultaneously, in pairs, or three and one, and so forth, in order to bring about harmony.

The exercises just characterized are indicated by the methods of spiritual training because by being conscientiously carried out they not only effect in the student what has been designated above as a direct result, but indirectly much else follows, which is needed on the path to the spiritual worlds.

Whoever carries out these exercises to a sufficient degree will encounter in the process many shortcomings and defects in his soul-life, and he will find precisely the means required by him for strengthening and safeguarding his intellectual life, his life of feeling, and his character. He will certainly have need of many other exercises, according to his abilities, his temperament, and character; such exercises will follow, however, when those named are sufficiently carried out.

The student will indeed notice that the exercises described yield, indirectly and by degrees, what did not in the first place appear to be in them. If, for example, someone has too little self-confidence, he will be able to notice after a certain time that through the exercises the necessary self-confidence has developed. It is the same in regard to other soul characteristics. (Special and more detailed exercises may be found in my book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment*.) — It is significant that the student of the spiritual be able to increase the indicated abilities to ever higher degrees.

He must bring the control of thought and feeling to such a stage that the soul acquires the power of establishing periods of complete inner tranquillity, during which the student holds back from his spirit and heart all that everyday outer life brings of joy and sorrow, of satisfaction and affliction, indeed, of duties and demands. During such periods only those things should enter the soul that the soul itself permits to enter during the state of meditation.

In regard to this, a prejudice may easily arise. The opinion might develop that the student might become estranged from life and its duties if he withdraws from it in heart and spirit during certain periods of the day. In reality, however, this is not at all the case.

Anyone who surrenders himself, in the manner described, to periods of inner tranquillity and peace will, during these periods, engender so many and such strong forces for the duties of outer life that as a result he will not, indeed, perform his duties more poorly, but, certainly, in a better fashion. — It is of great benefit if in such periods the student detaches himself completely from the thoughts of his personal affairs, if he is able to elevate himself to what concerns not only himself but mankind in general. If he is able to fill his soul with the communications from the higher spiritual world and if they are able to arouse his interest to just as high a degree as is the case with personal troubles or affairs, then his soul will gather from it fruit of special value. — Whoever, in this way, endeavors to regulate his soul-life will also attain the possibility of self-observation through which he observes his

own affairs with the same tranquillity as if they were those of others.

The ability to behold one's own experiences, one's own joys and sorrows as though they were the joys and sorrows of others is a good preparation for spiritual training. One gradually attains the necessary degree of this quality if, after one has finished one's daily tasks, one permits the panorama of one's daily experiences to pass before the eyes of the spirit. One must see oneself in a picture within one's experiences; that is, one must observe oneself in one's daily life as though from outside. One attains a certain ability in such self-observation if one begins with the visualization of detached portions of this daily life.

One then becomes increasingly clever and skillful in such retrospect, so that, after a longer period of practice, one will be able to form a complete picture within a brief span of time. This looking at one's experiences backward has a special value for spiritual training for the reason that it brings the soul to a point where it is able to release itself in thinking from the previous habit of merely following in thought the course of everyday events. In thought-retrospect one visualizes correctly, but one is not held to the sensory course of events.

One needs this exercise to familiarize oneself with the spiritual world. Thought strengthens itself in this way in a healthy manner. It is therefore also good not only to review in retrospect one's daily life, but to retrace in reverse order, for instance, the course of a drama, a narrative, or a melody. — More and more it will become the ideal for the student to relate himself to the life events he encounters in such a way that, with inner certainty and soul tranquillity, he allows them to approach him and does not judge them according to his soul condition, but according to their inner significance and their inner value. It is just by looking upon this ideal that he will create for himself the soul basis for the surrender of himself to the above described meditations on symbolic and other thoughts and feelings.

The conditions described here must be fulfilled, because supersensible experience is built upon the foundation on which one stands in everyday soul life before one enters the supersensible world. In a twofold manner all supersensible experience is dependent upon the starting point at which the soul stands before it enters into this world. Anyone who, from the beginning, does not consider making a healthy judgment the foundation of his spiritual training will develop in himself supersensible faculties with which he perceives the spiritual world inexactly and incorrectly.

His spiritual organs of perception will, so to speak, unfold incorrectly. Just as one cannot see correctly in the sense world with eyes that are faulty and diseased, one cannot perceive correctly with spiritual organs that have not been constructed upon the foundation of a healthy capacity for judgment. — Whoever makes the start with an immoral soul condition elevates himself to the spiritual world in a way by which his spiritual perception becomes stupefied and clouded.

He stands confronting the supersensible worlds like someone observing the sensory world in a stupor. Such a person will, to be sure, make no important statements. The spiritual observer in his state of stupor is, however, more awake than a human being in everyday consciousness. His assertions, therefore, will become errors in regard to the spiritual world.

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## Footnotes:

The point is not whether this or that idea of natural science finds the above thoughts justified or not. For it is a question of the development of such thoughts by means of plant and man that may be gained, without any theory, through simple, direct perception. Such thoughts have indeed their importance also, besides the theoretical ideas about the things of the outer world, which in other connections are of no less importance. Here thoughts do not have the purpose of representing a fact scientifically, but of constructing a symbol that proves itself effective in the soul, notwithstanding the objections that may occur to this or that individual in fashioning this symbol.

## Part 3

The inner excellence of the stage of imaginative cognition is attained through the fact that the soul meditations described are supported by what we may call familiarizing oneself with sense-free thinking. If one forms a thought based upon observation in the physical sense world, this thought is not sense-free. It is, however, not a fact that man is able to form only such thoughts. Human thought does not need to become empty and without content when it refuses to be filled with the results of sense-observations.

The safest and most evident way for the student of the spiritual to acquire such sense-free thinking is to make his own, in thinking, the facts of the higher world that are communicated to him by spiritual science. It is not possible to observe these facts by means of the physical senses. Nevertheless, the student will notice that they can be grasped mentally if he has sufficient patience and persistence.

We are not able to carry on research in the higher worlds without training, nor can we make observations in that world; yet without higher training we are able to understand the descriptions of spiritual researchers, and if someone asks, "How can I accept in good faith what these researchers say since I am unable to perceive the spiritual world myself?" then this is completely unfounded.

For it is entirely possible merely by reflecting on what is given, to attain the certain conviction that what is communicated is true, and if anyone is unable to form this conviction through reflection, it is not because it is impossible to believe something one cannot see, but solely because his reflection has not been sufficiently thorough, comprehensive and unprejudiced. In order to gain clarity in regard to this point we must realize that human thinking, when it arouses itself with inner energy, is able to comprehend more than is usually presumed. For in thought itself an inner entity is already present that is connected with the supersensible world.

The soul is usually not conscious of this connection because it is accustomed to developing the thought faculty only by employing it in the sense world. It therefore regards communications from the supersensible world as something incomprehensible. These communications, however, are not only comprehensible to a mode of thinking taught through spiritual training, but for every sort of thinking that is fully conscious of its own power and that wishes to employ it. — By making what spiritual research offers increasingly one's own, one accustoms oneself to a mode of thinking that does not derive its content from sense-observations.



We learn to recognize how, in the inner reaches of the soul, thought weaves into thought, how thought seeks thought, although the thought associations are not effected by the power of sense-observation. The essential in this is the fact that one becomes aware of how the thought world has an inner life, of how one, by really thinking, finds oneself already in the region of a living supersensible world. One says to oneself, "There is something in me that fashions a thought organism; I am, nevertheless, at one with this something."

By surrendering oneself to sense-free thinking one becomes conscious of the existence of something essential flowing into our inner life, just as the characteristics of sense objects flow into us through the medium of our physical organs when we observe by means of our senses. The observer of the sense world says to himself, "Outside in space there is a rose; it is not strange to me, for it makes itself known to me through its color and fragrance." One needs now only to be sufficiently unprejudiced in order to say to oneself when sense-free thinking acts in one, "Something real proclaims its presence in me that binds thought to thought, fashioning a thought organism."

But the sensations experienced by observing the objects of the outer sense world are different from the sensations experienced when spiritual reality manifests itself in sense-free thinking. The observer of sense objects experiences the rose as something external to himself. The observer who has surrendered himself to sense-free thought feels the spiritual reality announcing itself as though it existed within him, he feels himself one with it. Whoever, more or less consciously, only admits as real what confronts him like an external object, will naturally not be able to have the feeling, "Whatever has the nature of being in itself may also announce itself to me by my being united with it as though I were one with it." In order in this regard to see correctly, one must be able to have the following inner experience.

One must learn to distinguish between the thought associations one creates arbitrarily and those one experiences in oneself when one silences this arbitrary volition. In the latter case one may then say, "I remain quite silent within myself; I produce no thought associations; I surrender myself to what 'thinks in me.' " Then one is fully justified in saying, "Something possessing the nature of being acts within me," just as one is justified in saying, "A rose acts upon me when I see its red color, when I smell its fragrance." — In this connection, there lies no contradiction in the fact that the content of one's thoughts is derived from the communications of the spiritual researcher.

The thoughts are, indeed, already present when one surrenders to them; but one cannot think them if one does not, in every case, re-create them anew within the soul. What is important is the fact that the spiritual researcher calls up thoughts in his listeners and readers that they must first draw forth out of themselves, while the one who describes sense reality points to something that may be observed by listeners and readers in the sense world.

(The path is absolutely safe upon which the communications of spiritual science lead us to sense-free thinking. There is, however, still another path that is safer and above all more exact, but it is also more difficult for many human beings. This path is presented in my books, *A Theory of Knowledge Based on Goethe's World Conception, and Philosophy of Freedom*. These writings offer what human thought can acquire if thinking does not give itself up to the impressions of the physical-sensory world, but only to itself.

It is then pure thought, which acts in the human being like a living entity, and not thought that merely indulges in memories of the sensory. In the writings mentioned above nothing is inserted from the communications of spiritual science itself. Yet it is shown that pure thinking, merely active within itself, may throw light on the problems of world, life, and man. These writings stand at an important point intermediate between cognition of the sense world and that of the spiritual world.

They offer what thinking can gain when it elevates itself above sense-observation, while still avoiding entering upon spiritual research. Whoever permits these writings to act upon his entire soul nature, stands already within the spiritual world; it presents itself to him, however, as a world of thought. He who feels himself in the position to permit such an intermediate stage to act upon him, travels a safe path, and through it he is able to gain a feeling toward the higher world that will bear for him the most beautiful fruit throughout all future time.)

#### **Part 4**

The object of meditation on the previously characterized symbolic mental images and feelings is, correctly speaking, the development of the higher organs of perception within the human astral body. They are created from the substance of this astral body. These new organs of observation open up a new world, and in this new world man becomes acquainted with himself as a new ego. The new organs of observation are to be distinguished from the organs of the physical sense world through the fact of their being active organs.

Whereas eyes and ears remain passive, permitting light and sound to act upon them, the soul-spirit organs of perception are continually active while perceiving and they seize upon their objects and facts, as it were, in full consciousness. This results in the feeling that soul-spirit cognition is the act of uniting with the corresponding facts, is really a "living within them." — The soul-spirit organs that are being individually developed may, by way of comparison, be called "lotus flowers," according to the forms which they present imaginatively to supersensible consciousness. (Granted, it must be clear that such a designation has nothing more to do with the case than the expression "chamber" has to do with the case when we speak of the "chamber of the heart.")

Through quite definite methods of inner meditation the astral body is affected in such a way that one or another of the soul-spirit organs, one or another of the "lotus flowers," is formed. After all that has been described in this book it ought to be superfluous to accentuate the fact that these "organs of observation" are not to be imagined as something that, in the mental representation of its sense-image, is a picture of its reality. These "organs" are supersensible and consist of a definitely formed soul activity; they exist only as far and as long as this soul activity is practiced. The existence of these organs in the human being produces nothing of a sensory character any more than human thinking produces some sort of a physical "vapor."

Whoever insists on visualizing the supersensory as something sensory becomes involved in misunderstandings. In spite of the superfluity of this remark, it is made here because again and again there are those who accept the supersensory as a fact, but who, in their thoughts, desire only what is sensory, and because again and again there appear opponents of supersensory cognition who believe that the spiritual researcher speaks of "lotus flowers" as though they were delicate, physical structures. Every correct meditation that is made in regard to imaginative cognition has its effect upon one or

another organ. (In my book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment*, certain methods of meditation, and exercises that affect one or another of the organs, are outlined.)

Proper training sets up the several exercises of the student of the spiritual and arranges them to follow one another so that the organs are able to develop correspondingly, either singly, in groups, or consecutively. In connection with this development the spiritual student must have great patience and endurance. Anyone having only the measure of patience possessed, as a rule, by most human beings through the ordinary relationships of life will find that this does not suffice. For it takes a long time, often a very long time, before the organs are sufficiently developed to permit their employment by the spiritual student in perceiving the spiritual world.

This is the moment when something occurs for him that may be called illumination, in contrast to the preparation or purification consisting of the exercises that develop the organs. (We speak of purification, because the corresponding exercises purify the student in a certain sphere of his inner life of all that springs only from the sensory world of observation.) It may happen that the student, even before his actual illumination occurs, may experience repeatedly "flashes of light" coming from a higher world. He should accept such experiences gratefully.

Through them he can already become a witness for the spiritual world. But he should not waver if this does not occur during this period of preparation, which may perhaps seem to him altogether too long. If he exhibits any impatience whatever "because he does not yet see anything," he has not yet gained the right attitude toward a higher world. This attitude can only be grasped by someone for whom the exercises performed in his training can be, as it were, an end in themselves. These exercises are, in truth, work performed on the soul-spirit nature, that is to say, on the student's own astral body, and although he "sees nothing," he may "feel" that he is working on his soul-spirit nature. If, however, one forms a definite opinion right at the beginning of what one actually expects to "see," one will not have this feeling.

Then one will consider as nothing what in truth is of immeasurable significance. But one should be subtly observant of everything one experiences during the exercises and that is so fundamentally different from all experiences in the sense world. One will then certainly notice that one's astral body, upon which one is working, is not a neutral substance, but that in it there lives a totally different world of which one knows nothing in one's life of the senses.

Higher beings are working upon the astral body, just as the outer physical-sensory world works upon the physical body, and one encounters this higher life in one's own astral body if one does not close oneself to it. If someone repeatedly says to himself, "I perceive nothing!" then, in most cases, he has imagined that spiritual perception must take place in this or that manner, and because he does not perceive what he imagines he should see, he says, "I see nothing!"

If the student has acquired the right attitude toward the exercises of spiritual training, they will constitute something for him that he loves more and more for its own sake. He then knows that through the practice itself he stands in a world of soul and spirit, and with patience and serenity he awaits what will result. This attitude may arise in the consciousness of the student most favorably in the following words, "I will do everything that is proper in the way of exercises, and I know that just as much will come to me at the proper time as is important for me. I do not demand it impatiently, but I

am ever ready to receive it."

It is not valid to object that "the spiritual student must thus grope about in the dark, perhaps for an immeasurably long time; for he can only know clearly that he is on the right path in his exercises when the results appear." It is untrue that only results can bring knowledge of the correctness of the exercises. If the student takes the right attitude toward them, he finds that the satisfaction he draws from the practice gives him the assurance that what he is doing is right; he does not have to wait for the results. Correct practice in the sphere of spiritual training calls forth satisfaction that is not mere satisfaction, but knowledge that is to say, the knowledge that he is doing something which convinces him that he is making progress in the right direction.

Every spiritual student may have this knowledge at every moment, provided he is subtly attentive to his experiences. If he does not employ this attention then the experiences escape him, as is the case with a pedestrian who, lost in thought, does not see the trees on both sides of the road, although he would see them were he to direct his attention to them. — It is not at all desirable that a result be hastened different from the one that must always occur from correct practice. For this result might easily be only the smallest part of what should actually appear.

In regard to spiritual development a partial success is often the reason for a strong retardation of the complete success. The movement among such forms of spiritual life that correspond to the partial success dulls the sensitivity in regard to the influences of the forces that lead to higher stages of evolution, and what we may have gained by having "peered" into the spirit world is only an illusion, for this "peering" cannot furnish the truth, but only a mirage.

## **Part 5**

The psycho-spiritual organs, the lotus flowers, are fashioned so as to appear to supersensible consciousness, in the student undergoing training, as though located in the neighborhood of certain organs of the physical body. From among these soul organs the following will be mentioned here. First, the one that is felt between the eyebrows — the so-called two-petalled lotus flower; the one in the neighborhood of the larynx — the sixteen-petalled lotus flower; a third in the heart region — the twelve-petalled lotus flower; a fourth in the region of the solar plexus.

Other similar organs appear in the neighborhood of other parts of the physical body. (The names "two-petalled" or "sixteen-petalled" may be used because the corresponding organs may be likened to flowers of a corresponding number of petals.)

One becomes conscious of the lotus flowers through the astral body. The moment one has developed one or another of these organs, one is aware of its existence. One feels that one can employ it and through its use really enter into a higher world. The impressions that one receives from that world still resemble in many ways those of the physical-sensory world. He who possesses imaginative cognition will be able to speak of the new, higher world in such a way that he designates the impressions as sensations of heat or cold, as perceptions of tones and words, as effects of light and color, for he experiences them as such. But he is aware that these perceptions in the imaginative world express something quite different from sense reality.

He recognizes that behind them stand not physical material, but soul-spirit causes. If he experiences something like an impression of heat, he does not, for instance, ascribe it to a piece of hot iron, but he considers it the outflow of a soul process that, up to the present, he has only known in his inner soul-life. He knows that behind imaginative perceptions stand soul and spiritual things and processes just as behind physical perceptions stand material physical beings and facts. — Beside this similarity of the imaginative with the physical world there is, however, a significant difference. Certain phenomena in the physical world appear quite different in the imaginative world.

In the former can be observed a continual growth and decay of things, an alternation of birth and death. In the imaginative world a continual transformation of one thing into another takes the place of these phenomena. One sees, for example, the decay of a plant in the physical world. In the imaginative world, in proportion to the withering of the plant the growth of another formation makes its appearance that is not perceptible physically and into which the decaying plant is gradually transformed.

When the plant has disappeared, this formation stands completely developed in its place. Birth and death are ideas that lose their significance in the imaginative world. In their place appears the concept of transformation of one thing into another. — Because this is so, the truths about the being of man become accessible to imaginative cognition, truths that have been described in Chapter 2 of this book, entitled "The Essential Nature of Mankind." To physical-sensory perception only the processes of the physical body are perceptible.

They occur in the "region of birth and death." The other members of human nature — life body, sentient body, and ego — come under the law of transformation, and perception of them is acquired through imaginative cognition. Whoever has advanced to this point perceives the releasing itself from the physical body of what at death continues to live on in another state of existence.

Development, however, does not stop with the imaginative world. The human being who might wish to stop in this world would perceive the beings undergoing transformation, but he would be unable to explain the processes of transformation; he would be unable to orientate himself in the newly attained world.

The imaginative world is an unstable region. In it there exist everywhere constant motion and transformation; nowhere are there points of rest. Such points of rest are attained by man only when he has developed himself beyond the stage of imaginative cognition to the stage that may be called "cognition through inspiration." — It is not necessary that a person who seeks cognition of the supersensible world develop himself in such a way that he advance first to the possession of a full degree of imaginative cognition, and then only advance to "Inspiration." His exercises may be so arranged that what may lead to imagination and to inspiration proceeds hand in hand. He will then, after a certain time, enter a higher world in which he not only perceives, but in which he is able to orientate himself, and which he can interpret.

To be sure, this progress will, as a rule, be of such a character that first of all some of the phenomena of the imaginative world manifest themselves to him; then after a time he will experience the feeling, "Now I am beginning to orientate myself." — The world of inspiration is, nevertheless, something quite new in comparison with the world of mere imagination. Through the latter one perceives the

transformation of one process into another; through the former one learns to know the inner qualities of beings who transform themselves.

Through imagination one learns to know the soul-expression of beings; through inspiration one penetrates into their inner spiritual nature. One recognizes above all a host of spiritual beings and discerns a great number of relationships between one being and another. One has to deal with a multitude of individual beings also in the physical-sensory world; in the world of inspiration, however, this multitude is of a different character. There each being has a quite definite relationship to others, not as in the physical world through external influences, but through its inner constitution.

If we perceive a being in the world of inspiration, there is no evidence of an outer influence upon another being, which might be compared with the effect of one physical being upon another, but a relationship exists between two beings through their inner constitution. Let us compare this relationship with a relationship in the physical world, by selecting for comparison the relationship between the separate sounds or letters of a word.

Take, for instance, the word "man." It is produced through the concordance of the sounds m-a-n. There is no impulse or other external influence passing over from the m to the a; both sounds act together within the whole through their inner constitution. Therefore observation in the world of inspiration may only be compared with reading, — and the beings in the world of inspiration act upon the observer like the letters of an alphabet, which he must learn to know and the interrelationships of which must unfold themselves to him like a supersensible script. Spiritual science, therefore, may call cognition through inspiration — speaking figuratively — the reading of secret or occult script.

How we may read by means of this occult script, and how we may communicate what is read, will now be made clear by means of the preceding chapters of this book itself. How the human being takes shape out of various members was described at the very outset. It was then shown how the cosmic being, within which the human being develops, passes through the various states of Saturn, Sun, Moon, and Earth.

The perceptions through which one can, on the one hand, cognize the members of the human being and, on the other, the consecutive states of the Earth and its preceding transformations, disclose themselves to imaginative knowledge. It is, however, also necessary that it be known what relationships exist between the Saturn state and the human physical body, the Sun state and the ether body, and so forth.

It must be shown that the germinal human physical body has come already into existence during the Saturn state, and that it has evolved further to its present form during the Sun, Moon, and Earth states. It was necessary to show also, for example, what transformations have taken place within the human being as a result of the separation of the sun from the Earth, and similarly through the separation of the moon. It was necessary also to describe the powers and beings who co-operated in order that such transformations could occur in humanity as are expressed in the transformations during the Atlantean period and also during the successive periods of the ancient Indian, the ancient Persian, the Egyptian cultures, and the subsequent periods of culture.

The description of these relationships does not result from imaginative perception, but from cognition

through inspiration, by reading the occult script. For this sort of "reading" the perceptions of imagination are like letter symbols or sounds. This "reading," however, is not only necessary for the purpose of explaining what has just been described, but it would be impossible to understand the life course of the whole human being were it only perceived through imaginative cognition.

One would perceive, indeed, how the soul-spiritual members are released at death from what remains in the physical world, but one would not understand the relationships between what happens to the human being after death and the preceding and succeeding states, were one unable to orientate oneself within the imaginatively perceived.. Without cognition through inspiration the imaginative world would remain like writing at which we stare but which we cannot read.

When the student of the spiritual advances from imagination to inspiration he soon sees how incorrect it would be to relinquish the understanding of the macrocosmic phenomena and to limit himself only to facts that, so to say, touch upon immediate human interests. Someone who is not initiated into these things might well say the following. "It appears to me only necessary to learn about the fate of the human soul after death; if I am told something about that, it will suffice; why does spiritual science wish to demonstrate such distant things as the Saturn or Sun state, and the sun and moon separation, and so forth?"

Anyone properly informed about these things learns that real knowledge of what he wishes to know is never acquired without an understanding of what seems to him so unnecessary. A description of the human states after death remains completely unintelligible and worthless if man is unable to connect them with concepts that are derived from such remote matters. Even the simplest observation of the scientist of the supersensible makes his acquaintance with such things necessary. If, for example, a plant makes the transition from blossom to fruit, the human observer of the supersensible sees a transformation taking place in an astral being that during the period of flowering has overshadowed the plant from above and enclosed it like a cloud. Had the fructification not occurred, then this astral being would have made a transition into quite a different shape from the one it has assumed in consequence of fructification.

Now one understands the entire process perceived by supersensible observation, if one has learned to understand its nature through the macrocosmic process through which the Earth and all its inhabitants have passed at the time of the sun separation. Before fructification, the plant is in a position similar to the entire Earth prior to the sun separation. After fructification, the plant blossom shows itself in a condition similar to the Earth after the sun had severed itself and the moon forces were still present in it.

If one has made one's own the concepts that may be gained by studying the sun separation, one then understands adequately the meaning of the process of plant fructification. One will say that the plant is in a sun state before fructification, in a moon state after it. For it is a fact that even the smallest process in the world may be grasped only if we recognize that it constitutes a copy of macrocosmic processes. Otherwise its very nature remains unintelligible, just as Raphael's Madonna would remain unintelligible if nothing were to be seen but a small blue speck when the rest of the picture were covered up.

Everything that occurs in the human being is a copy of macrocosmic processes that have to do with his existence. If one wishes to understand the observations of supersensible consciousness concerning the phenomena occurring between birth and death, and again between death and rebirth, one can do this if one has acquired the faculty of deciphering the imaginative observations through the concepts acquired by the study of the macrocosmic processes. — This study gives us the key to the comprehension of human life. Therefore, in the sense of spiritual science, observation of Saturn, Sun, and Moon is at the same time observation of man.

Through inspiration one acquires the knowledge of the relationships between the beings of the higher world. It is possible through a higher stage of cognition to understand the inner nature of these beings themselves. This stage of cognition may be designated intuitive cognition. (Intuition is a word misused in everyday life for an obscure, uncertain insight into a fact, that is, for a certain idea which at times agrees with truth but the justification of which is at the time not provable. What is meant here has naturally nothing to do with this sort of intuition. Intuition denotes here a cognition of the highest, most illuminating clarity, and, if one has it, one is conscious in the fullest sense of its justification.) — To have knowledge of a sense-being means to stand outside it and to judge it according to the external impression.

To have knowledge of a spiritual being through intuition means to have become completely one with it, to have become united with its inner nature. Step by step the student of the spiritual ascends to such knowledge. Imagination leads him to sense the perceptions no longer as outer characteristics of beings, but to recognize in them the outpouring of something psycho-spiritual; inspiration leads him further into the inner nature of beings. He learns through it to understand what these beings are to each other; with intuition he penetrates into the beings themselves. — The significance of intuition also may be shown by the descriptions given in this book. In the preceding chapters, not only the course of Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions was described, but it was told that beings participate in this development in the most varied ways.

Thrones or Spirits of Will, Spirits of Wisdom, of Motion, and others were mentioned. In the Earth evolution mention was made of the spirits Lucifer and Ahriman. The construction of the cosmos was traced back to the beings who participate in it. What may be learned about these beings is won through intuitive cognition. This faculty is also necessary if one wishes to have a knowledge of the course of human life. What is released after death from the human bodily nature goes through various states in the subsequent period. The states directly after death might be described in some measure through imaginative cognition.

What, however, takes place when man advances further into the period between death and rebirth would have to remain quite unintelligible to imaginative cognition, if inspiration did not come to the rescue. Only inspiration is able to discover what may be said about the life of man in the land of spirits after purification. Then something appears for which inspiration no longer suffices, where it reaches, so to say, the limits of understanding. There is a period in human evolution between death and rebirth when the being of man is accessible only to intuition.

This part of the being of man, however, is always present in him; and if we wish to understand it according to its true inner nature, we must investigate it by means of intuition also in the period between birth and death. Whoever wished to fathom the nature of man by means of imagination and



inspiration alone, would miss the innermost processes of his being that take place from incarnation to incarnation. Only intuitive cognition, therefore, makes possible an adequate research into repeated earth lives and into karma. The truth communicated about these processes must originate from research by means of intuitive cognition. — If man himself wishes to have a knowledge of his own inner being, he can only acquire this through intuition. By means of it he perceives what progresses in him from earth life to earth life.

## **Part 6**

Man is able to attain knowledge by means of inspiration and intuition only through soul-spirit exercises. They resemble those that have been described as meditation for the attainment of imagination. While, however, those exercises that lead to imagination are linked to the impressions of the sensory-physical world, this link must disappear more and more in the exercises for inspiration. In order to make clear to himself what has to happen there, let a person consider again the symbol of the rose cross.

If he ponders upon this symbol he has an image before him, the parts of which have been taken from the impressions of the sense world: the black color of the cross, the roses, and so forth. The combining of these parts into a rose cross has not been taken from the physical sense world. If now the student of the spirit attempts to let the black cross and also the red roses as pictures of sense realities disappear entirely from his consciousness and only to retain in his soul the spiritual activity that has combined these parts, then he has a means for meditation that leads him by degrees to inspiration. One may place the following question before one's soul.

What have I done inwardly in order to combine cross and rose into a symbol? What I have done — my own soul process — I wish to hold fast to; I let the picture itself, however, disappear from my consciousness. Then I wish to feel within me all that my soul has done in order to bring the image into existence, but I do not wish to hold the image itself; I wish to live quite inwardly within my own activity, which has created the image. Thus, I do not intend to meditate on an image, but to dwell in my own image-creating soul activity.

Such meditation must be carried out in regard to many symbols. This then leads to cognition through inspiration. Another example would be the following. One meditates on the thought of a growing and decaying plant. One allows to arise in the soul the image of a slowly growing plant as it shoots up out of the seed, as it unfolds leaf on leaf, until it develops flower and fruit. Then again, one meditates on how it begins to fade until its complete dissolution. One acquires gradually by meditating on such an image a feeling of growth and decay for which the plant remains a mere symbol. From this feeling, if this exercise is continued with perseverance, there may arise the imagination of the transformation that underlies physical growth and decay. If one wishes, however, to attain the corresponding state of inspiration, one has to carry out the exercise differently.

The student must recall his own soul activity that has gained the visualization of growth and decay from the image of the plant. He must now let the plant disappear completely from consciousness and only meditate upon what he has himself done inwardly. Only through such exercises is it possible to ascend to inspiration. In the beginning it will not be entirely easy for the student of the spirit to comprehend completely how he should go about such an exercise. The reason for this is that the

human being who is accustomed to have his inner life determined by outer impressions immediately finds himself uncertain and wavering when he has to unfold a soul-life that has discarded all connection with outer impressions.

In a still higher degree than in the acquiring of imagination the student must be clear, in regard to these exercises that lead to inspiration, that he ought only to carry them out when he accompanies them with all those precautionary measures that can lead to safeguarding and strengthening of his power of discrimination, his life of feeling, and his character.

If he takes these precautions, then he will have a twofold result. In the first place, he will not, through these exercises, lose the equilibrium of his personality during supersensible perception; secondly, he will at the same time gain the faculty of being able actually to carry out what is required in these exercises. He will maintain in regard to them that they are difficult only so long as he has not yet acquired a quite definite soul condition, quite definite feelings and sensations. He will soon gain understanding and also ability for the exercises, if in patience and perseverance he fosters in his soul such inner faculties as favor the unfolding of supersensible knowledge. If he grows accustomed to withdrawing into himself frequently in such a way that he is less concerned with brooding on himself than with quietly arranging and working over his life-experiences, he will gain much. He will see that his thoughts and feelings are enriched if he brings one life-experience into relationship with another.

He will become aware to what a high degree he experiences something new not only by having new impressions and new experiences, but also by permitting the old to work in him. If he sets to work in such a way that he lets his experiences, indeed, even his acquired opinions, play back and forth as though he were not at all involved in them with his sympathies and antipathies, with his personal interests and feelings, he will prepare an especially good soil for the forces of supersensible cognition. He will develop, in truth, what may be called a rich inner life. The question of chief importance here, however, is equanimity and equilibrium of the soul qualities.

Man is only too easily inclined, if he surrenders himself to a certain soul activity, to fall into one-sidedness. For example, if he becomes aware of the advantage of inner meditation and of dwelling in his own thought world, he may develop such an inclination toward it that he begins to shut himself off from the impressions of the outer world. This, however, leads to the withering and devastation of the inner life. Those go the farthest who preserve, alongside the ability to withdraw inwardly, an open receptivity to all impressions of the outer world. One need not think here merely of the so-called important impressions of life, but every man in every situation — even in the poorest surroundings — may have sufficient experiences if he only keeps his mind sufficiently receptive.

One need not seek the experiences; they are present everywhere. — Of special importance also is the way experiences are transformed in the human soul. For example, somebody may discover that a person revered by him or others has this or that quality that may be viewed as a fault of character. Such an experience may cause the human being to meditate in a twofold manner. He may simply say to himself, "Now, that I have recognized this fault, I can no longer revere this person in the same way as formerly." Or he may pose the following question to himself, "How does it happen that this revered person is afflicted with this fault? Should I not consider that this fault is not merely a fault, but something due to the circumstances of this person's life, perhaps even to his great capacities?"

A human being posing this question to himself will perhaps arrive at the result that his reverence is not in the least to be decreased by the discovery of such a fault. He will have learned something every time he goes through such an experience; he will have added something to his understanding of life. It would, however, certainly be disastrous to the human being were he to let himself be misled by the merit of such a view of life to excuse everything he possibly can in people and things for whom he has a preference, or even to form the habit of disregarding all faults because it brings him advantage for his inner development.

This will not be the case if he has the subjective impulse not merely to censure faults but to understand them; it will occur when this attitude is demanded by the case in question, regardless of the gain or loss to him who judges. It is entirely correct that one cannot learn through condemning faults, but only through understanding them. If, however, because of understanding, one should entirely exclude disapproval, one would not get very far either. Here also it is not a question of one-sidedness in either direction, but of equanimity and equilibrium of the soul powers. — It is especially so with a soul quality that is of great significance for the development of the human being; this is what is called the feeling of reverence or devotion.

Those who have developed this feeling in themselves or possess it from the outset through a fortunate gift of nature have an excellent basis for the forces of supersensible knowledge. The person who in childhood or youth has been able to look up with self-surrendering admiration to personalities as though to high ideals, possesses something at the foundation of his soul in which supersensible cognition thrives especially well. And whoever with mature judgment in later life looks upon the starry heavens and feels with wonder in complete surrender the revelation of exalted powers makes himself thus mature for knowledge of supersensible worlds. Something similar is the case with those who are able to admire the forces ruling in human life, and it is not of little importance if we, even as mature human beings, can have reverence to the highest degree for other men whose worth we divine or believe we know.

Only where such reverence is present can the view into the higher world open up. The person who is unable to revere will in no way advance very far in his knowledge. Whoever does not wish to acknowledge anything in the world will find that the essential nature of things is closed to him. — The person, however, who permits himself to be misled, through an unrestrained feeling of reverence and surrender, to deaden in himself a healthy consciousness of self and self-confidence sins against the law of equanimity and equilibrium.

The student will continually work on himself in order to make himself more and more mature; he is then justified in having confidence in his own personality and in having faith that its powers will continually increase. If he achieves correct feelings in this direction he may say to himself, "In me there lie hidden forces and I can draw them forth from my inner being. Therefore, when I see something that I must revere because it stands above me, I need not only revere it, but I may hope to develop myself to such a degree that I become similar to what I revere."

The greater the capacity of a human being to direct his attention to certain processes of life with which his personal judgment is not, at the outset, familiar, the greater the possibility for him to lay the foundation for a development into the spiritual worlds. An example may make this clear. A man is in a certain situation in life where he may perform a certain deed or leave it undone. His judgment suggests

to him: Do this! But there may be a certain inexplicable something in his feelings that holds him back from the deed.

Now it may be that he does not pay any attention to this inexplicable something that seeks to restrain him, but simply performs the deed, according to his capacity to judge. Or he may surrender to the urge of this inexplicable something and leave the deed undone. If he then follows up the matter further it may become evident that evil would have been the result had he followed his judgment, but that by non-performance of the deed, a blessing has ensued. Such an experience may lead man's thoughts into a quite definite direction. He may say to himself, "Something lives in me that is a better guide than my present capacity of judgment. I must hold my mind open to this, something in me that cannot at all be reached by the present degree of my capacity of judgment."

The soul is benefited to the highest degree when it directs its attention toward such occurrences in life. It then becomes aware, as though in a state of healthy premonition, that something exists in man that transcends his present ability to judge. Through such attention the human being directs his efforts toward an extension of soul-life, but here also it is possible that one-sidedness may result that is dangerous. Whoever were to form the habit of disregarding his judgment because his "premonitions" impel him to this or that, would become the plaything of all sorts of uncertain impulses, and from such a habit it is not a great distance to complete lack of judgment and superstition. — Any sort of superstition is fatal to the student of the spiritual.

He acquires the possibility of penetrating in a true way into the regions of spiritual life only by guarding himself carefully against superstition, fantastic ideas, and day-dreaming. No one can enter the spirit world in the right way who is happy in experiencing something that "cannot be grasped by the human mind." A preference for the "inexplicable" certainly makes no one a student of the spirit. He must completely abandon the notion that "a mystic is someone who presumes wherever it suits him something inexplicable and unfathomable in the world." The student shows the proper feeling by acknowledging this existence of hidden forces and beings everywhere, but also by assuming that the uninvestigated may be investigated if the necessary powers are present.

There is a certain attitude of soul that is important for the student of the spirit at every stage of his development. This consists in not directing his desire for knowledge in a one-sided way by asking, "How may this or that question be answered?" but by asking, "How do I develop this or that ability in myself?" If then by inner patient work in himself this or that faculty is developed, the answer to certain questions is received. Students of the spirit will always foster this attitude of soul. Through this they are led to work on themselves, to make themselves more and more mature, and to renounce the desire to force answers to certain questions.

They will wait until such answers come to them. — If, however, they become one-sided here also, they will not advance properly. The student may also have the feeling at a certain point of his development that he, with the degree of his ability, can himself answer the most sublime questions. Here also equanimity and equilibrium play an important role in the attitude of soul.

Many more soul faculties could be described, the fostering and development of which are beneficial when the student strives by means of exercises to attain inspiration. In all of them, we should have to emphasize that equanimity and equilibrium are the soul faculties upon which everything depends.

They prepare the understanding and the ability to carry out the exercises outlined for the purpose of acquiring inspiration.

The exercises for the attainment of intuition demand that the student cause not only the images, to which he has surrendered himself in acquiring imagination, to disappear from his consciousness, but also the life within his own soul activity into which he has immersed himself for the acquirement of inspiration. He should then literally retain nothing in his soul of previously known outer or inner experiences. Were there to be, however, nothing left in his consciousness after this discarding of outer and inner experiences, that is to say, were his consciousness then entirely to disappear and he to sink down into unconsciousness, this would then make it clear to him that he had not yet made himself mature enough to undertake exercises for intuition; he would then have to continue the exercises for imagination and inspiration.

A time will surely come when the consciousness is not empty after the soul has discarded all inner and outer experiences, but when, after this discarding, something remains in consciousness as an effect, to which we then may surrender in meditation just as we had previously surrendered to what owes its existence to outer or inner impressions. This something is of a quite special character. It is, in contrast to all preceding experiences, something entirely new. When one experiences it one knows, "This I have not known before.

It is a perception just as the real tone, heard by the ear, is a perception, but this something can only enter my consciousness through intuition, just as the tone can only enter my consciousness through the ear." Through intuition man's impressions are stripped of the last trace of the sensory-physical; the spiritual world now begins to open itself to cognition in a form that no longer has anything in common with the qualities of the physical world of the senses.

## **Part 7**

Imaginative consciousness is attained through the development of the lotus flowers in the astral body. Through the exercises that are undertaken for acquiring inspiration and intuition, certain definite motions, forms, and currents appear in the human ether or life body that were not present previously. They are in fact the organs through which man adds to the scope of his faculties the "reading of the occult script," and what lies beyond it.

The changes in the ether body of a human being who has attained inspiration and intuition present themselves to supersensible cognition in the following manner. Somewhere in the neighborhood of the physical heart a new center becomes conscious in the ether body, which develops into an etheric organ. From this organ, movements and currents flow to the various members of the human body in the most manifold way.

The most important of these currents flow to the lotus flowers, permeating them and their various petals, then proceeding outward, pouring themselves like radiations into external space. The more the human being is developed, the greater the sphere around him within which these radiations are perceptible. The center in the region of the heart does not, however, develop immediately at the start of correct training. It is first prepared. There appears, to begin with, a temporary center in the head; this

then moves down into the neighborhood of the larynx and finally settles in the region of the physical heart.

Were its development irregular, then the organ of which we have been speaking might immediately be formed in the neighborhood of the heart. In that case there would be danger that the student, instead of attaining quiet and factual supersensible perception, would become a visionary and fantast.

As he develops further, the student acquires the ability to free the currents and structures of his ether body from his physical body and to use them independently. In doing this, the lotus flowers serve him as organs through which he brings the ether body into motion. Before this occurs, however, special currents and radiations must have formed in the sphere of the ether body, enclosing it like a fine network and making it into a self-contained being. If that has happened, the movements and currents taking place in the ether body are able to come into unhindered contact with the outer world of soul and spirit and to unite with it, so that outer occurrences in the realm of soul and spirit and inner events in the human ether body flow into one another.

If that happens, the moment has arrived when man perceives the world of inspiration consciously. This cognition occurs in a different way from cognition in the sensory-physical world. In the latter we gain perceptions through the senses and form from them mental images and concepts. This is not the case with the knowledge derived from inspiration. What one knows is immediately present in the act; there is no reflection after perception. What sensory-physical cognition gains only afterwards in concepts is, in inspiration, given simultaneously with perception. Man would therefore merge with the environment of soul and spirit and would not be able to distinguish himself from it had he not developed the above characterized network in the ether body.

If the exercises leading to intuition are carried out, their effect extends not only to the ether body, but right down into the supersensible forces of the physical body. One should not, however, think that in this way effects take place in the physical body that are accessible to everyday sensory observation. These are effects that only supersensory cognition can judge. They have nothing whatever to do with external cognition. They are the results of the maturity of consciousness, when the latter is able to have experiences in intuition, in spite of the fact that it has excluded all previously known outer and inner experiences. — The experiences of intuition are delicate, intimate, and subtle, and the human physical body is, at the present stage of its evolution, coarse in comparison.

It offers therefore a strong hindrance to the success of intuition exercises. If these are continued with energy and persistence and with the requisite inner tranquillity, the powerful hindrances of the physical body are finally overcome. The student notices this by the fact that gradually certain expressions of the physical body that formerly took place unconsciously now come under his control. He notices it also by the fact that for a short time he feels the need, for example, so to control the breath that it comes into a sort of concord or harmony with what the soul performs in the exercises or otherwise in inner meditation.

The ideal of the development is that no exercises be made at all by means of the physical body itself, also no breathing exercises, but that everything that occurs in the physical body in this way should only come about as a consequence of pure intuition exercises.

## Part 8

If the student of the spirit ascends upon the path into the higher worlds of knowledge, he notices at a certain stage that the cohesion of the forces of his personality assumes a different form from the one in the physical-sensory world, where the ego effects a uniform co-operation of the soul forces, of thinking, feeling, and willing. These three soul forces stand always in a certain relationship to each other in the conditions of ordinary human life. One sees, for example, a certain object in the outer world.

It pleases or displeases the soul. That is to say, of necessity the visualizing of a thing will be followed by a feeling of pleasure or displeasure. One may, perhaps, desire the object or have the impulse to alter it in one way or another. That is, the power of desire and will associate with visualizing and feeling. That this co-ordination takes place is caused by the ego uniting visualizing (thinking), feeling, and willing and in this way bringing order into the forces of the personality. This healthy order would be interrupted if the ego were to prove powerless in this regard; if, for example, desire should elect to go a different way from feeling or thinking.

A human being would not be in a healthy soul condition who might think that this or that is right, but who might want something of which he is convinced that it is not right. The case would be similar if someone did not want what pleases him, but rather what displeases him. The human being now notices that on the path to higher knowledge thinking, feeling, and willing do indeed separate and each assumes a certain independence. For example, a certain thought has no longer an inward urge toward a certain feeling and willing. The matter is as follows.

In thinking something may be perceived correctly, but in order to have any feeling or to come to a resolution of the will, we need again an independent impulse from ourselves. During supersensible perception thinking, feeling, and willing do not remain three forces that radiate from the common egocenter of the personality, but they become three independent entities, three personalities, as it were; one must now make one's own ego all the stronger, for it is not merely a matter of its bringing three forces into order, but of leading and directing three entities. This separation, however, must only exist during supersensible perception.

Here again it becomes clear how important it is that the exercises for higher training be accompanied by those that give certainty and firmness to the power of judgment, and to the life of feeling and willing. For the person who does not bring these qualities with him into the higher world will soon see how the ego proves weak and unable to act as an orderly guide for thinking, feeling, and willing. If this weakness were present, the soul would be as though torn by three personalities in as many directions and its inner unity would cease.

If, however, the development of the student proceeds in the right way the described transformation of forces signifies true progress; the ego remains master of the independent entities that now form its soul. — In the further course of this evolution the development continues. Thinking that has become independent stimulates the emergence of a special fourth soul-spirit being that may be described as a direct influx of currents into man, similar to thoughts. The entire cosmos then appears as a thought-structure confronting man as does the plant or animal world in the realm of the physical senses.

Likewise, feeling and willing that have become independent stimulate two forces in the soul that act in it like independent beings. Still another seventh power and being appears that is similar to one's own ego itself.

This entire experience is connected with yet another. Before his entrance into the supersensible world, man knew thinking, feeling, and willing only as inner soul experiences. As soon as he enters the supersensible world he perceives objects that do not express the physical-sensory, but the psycho-spiritual. Behind the characteristics of the new world now perceived by him stand soul-spirit beings.

These now stand before him as an outer world, just as in the physical realm stones, plants, and animals stood before his senses. The student of the spiritual can now perceive an important difference between the world of soul and spirit that reveals itself to him, and the world that he was accustomed to perceiving through his physical senses. A plant in the world of the senses remains just as it is, whatever the human soul may feel or think about it. With the images of the world of soul and spirit this is, at the outset, not the case. They alter according to what the human being feels or thinks. In this way he gives them form that depends upon his own nature. Let us imagine that a certain picture appears before man in the world of imagination.

If, at first, he remains indifferent to it in his soul, it then shows itself in a certain form. At the moment, however, when pleasure or displeasure is felt in regard to the picture, it changes its form. The pictures therefore, in the first instance, express not only what they are, independent of man, but they reflect what man is himself. They are permeated through and through by his own nature. The latter spreads like a veil over the supersensible beings. Although real beings confront him, he does not see them, but instead, his own creation.

Thus he may have something true before him and, nevertheless, see something false. Indeed, this is not only the case in regard to what man notices in himself as his own essential nature, but everything that is in him affects this world. He may have, for example, hidden inclinations that do not come into evidence in life because of his education and character; they affect the world of the soul and spirit, which takes on a peculiar coloring through the whole being of man, no matter whether he himself knows much about this being or not. — In order to be able to advance further from this stage of development it is necessary that man learn to distinguish between himself and the outer spiritual world. It is necessary that he learn to eliminate all the effects of himself upon his soul-spirit environment. This cannot be done otherwise than by acquiring a knowledge of what he himself carries into the new world.

It is therefore important that he first possess true, thoroughly developed self-knowledge, in order to be able to have a clear perception of the surrounding world of soul and spirit. Now, certain facts of human development demand that such self-knowledge must take place quite naturally at the time of the entrance into the higher world. Man develops his ego, his self-consciousness in the everyday physical-sensory world. This ego now acts as a center of attraction for everything belonging to man. All his inclinations, sympathies, antipathies, passions, and opinions group themselves, as it were, around his ego, and this ego is also the point of attraction for what may be designated as the karma of man.

If this ego were to be seen unconcealed it would show that certain forms of destiny must still be encountered by it in this and in subsequent incarnations, according to the way it has lived in the



preceding incarnations and has made this or that its own. Invested with all this, the ego must appear as the first image before the human soul when the latter ascends into the world of soul and spirit. This Doppelgänger (double or twin likeness) of man must, according to a law of the spiritual world, emerge prior to everything else as his first impression in that world.

One may easily make the law underlying this fact understandable if one considers the following. In the life of the physical senses man only perceives himself in so far as he experiences himself inwardly in his thinking, feeling, and willing. This, however, is an inner perception; it does not present itself to the human being like stones, plants, and animals. Also, man learns to know himself only partially through inner perception. He has something in himself that prevents his having more profound self-knowledge. This is an impulse to transform immediately a trait of character if he, as a result of self-knowledge, must admit to it and does not wish to deceive himself about himself.

If he does not follow this impulse, if he simply turns his attention away from himself, remaining what he is, then he, naturally, also deprives himself of the possibility of self-knowledge in the point in question. If man, however, penetrates into himself and confronts himself without deception with this or that trait, then he will either be in the position to improve the trait, or he will be incapable of doing so under the present circumstances of his life. In the latter case a feeling will creep over his soul that must be described as a feeling of shame.

This is indeed the reaction of healthy human nature: it feels through self-knowledge various kinds of shame. This feeling has even in ordinary life a quite definite effect. The normally thinking human being will take care that what fills him, through himself, with this feeling does not become evident outwardly in effects, does not manifest in outer deeds. Shame is thus a force that impels man to conceal something in his inner being and not allow it to become outwardly perceptible.

If we give this due consideration, we shall find it comprehensible that spiritual research ascribes much farther reaching effects to an inner soul experience that is closely related to the feeling of shame. This research finds that there is, concealed in the depths of the soul, a sort of hidden shame of which the human being is not conscious in physical-sensory life. This concealed feeling, however, acts in a similar manner to the feeling of shame in everyday life; it prevents the innermost nature of the human being from appearing before him in a perceptible picture. If this feeling were not present, the human being would perceive before him what he is in truth; his thoughts, feelings, and will would not only be experienced inwardly, but would be perceived outwardly just as stones, animals, and plants are perceived. This feeling is thus the concealer of man from himself, and at the same time it is the concealer of the entire world of soul and spirit.

Owing to the fact that his inner nature is concealed from him, he is also not able to perceive that by means of which he should develop inner organs in order to cognize the world of soul and spirit; he is unable so to transform his nature that it may unfold spiritual organs of perception. — If, however, through correct training man strives to acquire these organs of perception, what he himself is appears to him as first impression. He perceives his Doppelgänger, his double. This self-perception is not at all to be separated from the perception of the rest of the world of soul and spirit.

In everyday life of the physical-sensory world, the feeling characterized acts so as constantly to close the door of the world of soul and spirit to the human being. Even the mere attempt to penetrate into

this world causes the feeling of shame — which arises immediately, but of which we do not become conscious — to conceal the part of the world of soul and spirit that strives to appear. The exercises characterized open the door to this world.

It is a fact, however, that this concealed feeling acts like a great benefactor of man. For all that man acquires of power of judgment, feeling-life, and character without spiritual-scientific training does not enable him to bear without further preparation the perception of his own being in its true form. He would lose through this perception all self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-consciousness. That this may not happen, we must take the necessary precautions which we do undertake, alongside the exercises for higher knowledge, in the fostering of a healthy power of judgment, feeling-life, and character.

Through this regular training man learns to know so much of spiritual science — as though without intention — and, moreover, so many means for the attainment of self-knowledge and self-observation become clear to him as are necessary in order to encounter his Doppelganger bravely. The student then only sees in another form, as a picture of the imaginative world, what he has already learned in the physical world. If he has first comprehended the law of karma properly in the physical world through his intellect, he will not be especially shaken when he now sees the beginnings of his destiny engraved in the image of his Doppelganger.

If man has made himself acquainted through his power of judgment with the evolution of the cosmos and mankind and knows how, at a certain point of time of this evolution, the forces of Lucifer have penetrated into the human soul, he will bear it without difficulty when he becomes aware that the Luciferic beings with all their effects are contained within the image of his own nature. — We see from this how necessary it is that man does not demand entrance into the spiritual world before he has understood, through his ordinary power of judgment developed in the physical-sensory world, certain truths about the spiritual world. The knowledge given in this book prior to the discussion about "Cognition of the Higher Worlds" should have been acquired by the student of spiritual science by means of his ordinary power of thought in the regular course of development, before he has the desire himself to enter into supersensible worlds.

In a training in which no attention is paid to the certainty and firmness of the power of judgment, of the life of feeling and character, it may happen that the student encounters the higher world before he possesses the necessary inner faculties. In that case the encounter with his Doppelganger would depress him and lead to error. If, however, the encounter were entirely avoided — something that might indeed be possible — and man nevertheless were led into the supersensible world, he would then be just as little in the position to recognize that world in its true shape.

For it would be quite impossible for him to distinguish between what he carries over as projections of himself into things and what they are in reality. This distinction is only possible if one perceives one's own being as an image in itself, and if, as a result of this distinction, everything that flows from one's own inner nature becomes detached from the environment. — For man's life in the physical-sensory world, the Doppelganger's effect is such that he becomes immediately invisible through the feeling of shame characterized when man approaches the world of soul and spirit. As a result of this, he conceals the entire latter world also.

Like a "guardian" he stands there before that world, in order to deny entrance to those who are not truly capable of entering. He may therefore be called the "guardian of the threshold that lies before the world of soul and spirit." — Besides the described encounter with the guardian at the entrance into the supersensible world, man also encounters him when passing through physical death, and in the course of life between death and a new birth the guardian discloses himself by degrees in the evolution of soul and spirit. There, however, the encounter cannot depress the human being, because he then has knowledge of worlds quite different from those he knows in the life between birth and death.

If, without encountering the "guardian of the threshold," man were to enter the world of soul and spirit, he might fall prey to deception after deception. For he would never be able to distinguish between what he himself has carried over into that world and what in reality belongs to it. A proper training must lead the student of spiritual science into the realm of truth only, not into the realm of illusion. This training will of itself be of such a nature that the encounter must of necessity take place sometime. For it is one of the precautionary measures, indispensable for the observation of supersensible worlds, against the possibility of falling prey to deception and the fantastic. — It belongs to the most indispensable measures that every student of spiritual science must take, to work carefully on himself in order not to become a fantast, a human being who might succumb to possible deception and self-delusion.

Where the advice for spiritual training is correctly followed, the sources that may bring deception are at the same time destroyed. Naturally, we cannot speak at length here of all the numerous details that have to be considered in regard to such precautionary measures. The important points can only be indicated. Deceptions that have to be considered here are derived from two sources. They originate in part from the coloring of reality through one's own soul nature. In ordinary life of the physical-sensory world there is comparatively little danger from this source of deception; for here the outer world continually impresses its own form sharply upon our observation, no matter how the observer wants to color it according to his own wishes and interests.

As soon, however, as man enters the imaginative world, its pictures are transformed through such wishes and interests, and he has before him, like a reality, what he himself has formed, or at least has helped in forming. This source of deception is removed by the student's having learned to recognize, through his encounter with the "guardian of the threshold," his own inner nature, which he might thus carry into the world of soul and spirit.

The preparation that the student of spiritual science undergoes before his entrance into the world of soul and spirit acts in such a way that he becomes accustomed to disregarding himself even when observing the physical-sensory world and to permitting the objects and processes to speak to him purely out of their own nature. If the student has thus prepared himself sufficiently, he can calmly await the encounter with the "guardian of the threshold." This encounter will be the final test to determine whether he feels himself really in a position to disregard his own nature also when he confronts the world of soul and spirit.

Besides this source of delusion, there is still another. This comes into evidence when one misinterprets an impression made on one. A simple example of this sort of delusion in the physical sense-life is the delusion that arises when a man sits in a railway coach moving in a certain direction and believes the trees and other objects of perception are moving in the opposite direction, while actually it is he

himself who is moving with the train.

Although there are numerous cases where such delusions in the physical sense-world are more difficult to correct than the simple one quoted, still, it is easy to see that within this world one also finds the means of disposing of such delusions when, with sound judgment, one takes into consideration all that may possibly contribute to an adequate factual explanation. The matter is different, however, as soon as one penetrates into the realms of the supersensible. In the world of the senses facts are not altered as a result of human delusion; therefore it is possible, by means of unprejudiced observation, to rectify the delusion by means of the facts. In the supersensible world this is not immediately possible.

If one wants to observe a supersensible process and approaches it with false judgment, one carries this judgment over into the process and it becomes so interwoven with the fact that it is impossible to distinguish the judgment from the fact. The error is then not within the human being and the correct fact outside him, but the error itself is made a component of the outer fact. It cannot, therefore, be rectified simply by an unbiased observation of the fact. We are here pointing to what may be a superabundant source of delusion and the fantastic for those who approach the supersensible world without proper preparation. — The student of the spiritual, besides acquiring the ability to exclude the delusions that arise through the coloring of supersensible world-phenomena with his own nature, must also acquire the ability to make the second indicated source of delusion ineffective.

He can exclude what comes from himself if he has first recognized the image of his own Doppelgänger. He will be able to exclude the second source of delusion if he acquires the ability to recognize, from the inner quality of a supersensible fact, whether it is reality or delusion. If the delusion were to appear exactly like the actual facts, then a distinction would not be possible. This, however, is not the case.

Delusions of the supersensible world have qualities in themselves by which they are to be distinguished from realities, and it is important that the student of the spiritual know by which qualities he can recognize realities. Nothing is more self-evident than the fact that anyone ignorant of spiritual training may ask, "How is it at all possible to protect myself against delusion, when its sources are so numerous?" And he may continue to ask, "Is there any proof for the student of the spiritual against the fact that all his professed higher knowledge is not something based on mere delusion and autosuggestion?" Anyone who asks such questions does not realize that in true spiritual training, through the very manner of its occurrence, the sources of delusion are stopped up.

In the first place, in preparing himself the true spiritual science student will acquire sufficient knowledge about what may cause delusion and autosuggestion, and thus be in a position to protect himself from them. He has, in this regard, more opportunity than any other human being to make himself prudent and capable in judgment on the path of life. Everything that he experiences causes him to disregard indefinite premonitions and suggestions. This training makes him as careful as possible.

Besides this, all correct training leads first to concepts about great cosmic events, and thus to things that make necessary the exertion of sound judgment, which becomes, at the same time, more refined and acute. Only someone who might refuse to go into such distant realms and preferred to abide with "revelations" of a world near at hand might lose the strengthening of that sound judgment that gives him certainty in distinguishing between delusion and reality.

All of this, however, is not yet the most important. That lies in the exercises themselves that are used in a correct spiritual training. These must be so arranged that the student is always consciously aware of what takes place in the soul during inner meditation. In order to bring about imagination, a symbol is first formed. In this symbol are still contained mental images of outer perceptions. The human being is not alone responsible for the content of these mental images; he does not make it himself. Thus he may delude himself in regard to its origin; he may interpret its origin incorrectly. But the student of spiritual science removes this content from his consciousness when he advances to the exercises of inspiration. Here he contemplates his own soul activity only, which has formed the symbol.

Here also error is still possible. Through education, learning, and through other means man has acquired the character of his soul activity. He cannot know everything about its origin. The student of spiritual science now removes even his own soul activity from his consciousness. If now anything remains in his consciousness, nothing is attached to it that cannot be surveyed. Nothing can intermingle with it that is not to be judged in regard to its whole content. In intuition, the student of spiritual science has thus a criterion enabling him to recognize how a clear reality of the world of soul and spirit is constituted. If he now applies the signs of soul and spirit-reality thus recognized to everything that comes under his observation, he is able to distinguish between illusion and reality.

He may be certain that by employing this law he will remain protected from illusion in the supersensible world just as it cannot happen to him in the physical-sensory world to mistake an imaginary piece of hot iron for one that really burns. It is taken for granted that one only takes this attitude toward the knowledge one regards as one's own experiences in the supersensible worlds, and not toward what one receives as communications from other persons and that one comprehends with one's physical intellect and sound feeling for truth.

The student of the spiritual will take pains to draw an exact line between what he has acquired in the one way and what he has acquired in the other. He will receive willingly, on the one hand, the communications about the higher worlds and seek to understand them by means of his capacity to judge. If on the other hand he states something as his own experience, his own observation, he will have tested whether this has confronted him with precisely the qualities he has learned to perceive by means of unerring intuition.

## **Part 9**

After the student of the spiritual has encountered the "guardian of the threshold," further experiences await him as he ascends into supersensible worlds. First he will notice that an inner relationship exists between this "guardian of the threshold" and the soul-power that, in the above description, has resulted as the seventh, and has shaped itself into an independent principle. Indeed, this seventh principle is in a certain regard nothing else but the Doppelganger, the "guardian of the threshold" himself, and this principle sets the student of the spiritual a special task.

He has to direct and lead with his newborn self what he is in his ordinary self and which appears to him in an image. A sort of battle against the Doppelganger will result. The latter will constantly strive for supremacy. To establish the right relationship to this Doppelganger and not permit him to do

anything that is not under the influence of the newborn ego strengthens and fortifies man's powers. — In the higher world, self-knowledge is different, in a certain respect, from self-knowledge in the physical-sensory world. Whereas in the physical-sensory world self-knowledge appears only as an inner experience, the newborn self presents itself at once as an outer soul phenomenon.

Man beholds his newborn self as another being standing before him, but he cannot perceive it completely. For whatever stage he may have reached upon the way into the supersensible worlds, there are always still higher stages. At these stages he will perceive ever more and more of his "higher self." This "higher self" can thus only partially reveal itself to the student of the spiritual at any of these stages. The temptation is extremely great which overtakes the human being when he first becomes aware of some aspect of his "higher self," to observe this "higher self," so to speak, from the standpoint he has gained in the physical-sensory world.

This temptation is even good and it must appear, if development is to proceed in the right way. We must observe what appears in the Doppelgänger, the "guardian of the threshold," and place it before the "higher self" in order to note the contrast between what we are and what we are to become. Through this observation the "guardian of the threshold" begins to take on quite a different form. He presents himself as an image of all the hindrances that the development of the higher self must encounter.

The student will perceive what a load he must drag in the form of his ordinary self, and if he is not strong enough through his preparations to say, "I will not remain stationary here, but unceasingly strive to reach my higher self," he will slacken his efforts and shrink back before what is in store for him. He has plunged into the world of soul and spirit, but now gives up his efforts. He becomes a prisoner of the form that, through the "guardian of the threshold," now stands before the soul. What is important here is the fact that in this experience he does not have the feeling of being a prisoner. On the contrary, he believes he experiences something quite different.

The form that the "guardian of the threshold" calls forth can be of such a nature that it causes the impression in the soul of the observer of having before him, in the pictures that appear at this evolutionary stage, the entire compass of all imaginable worlds, of having attained the pinnacle of knowledge, with no need of striving further. Instead of feeling to be a prisoner he may feel himself as the immeasurably rich possessor of all the world mysteries.

The fact that one can have such an experience that depicts the very opposite of the actual facts will, however, not astonish a person who keeps in mind the fact that, when he experiences this, he stands already in the world of soul and spirit and that it is a peculiarity of this world that events may present themselves in reverse order. This fact was pointed out earlier in this book when life after death was discussed.

The figure that one perceives at this stage of development shows the student of the spiritual something in addition to what appeared to him in the first instance as the "guardian of the threshold." In this Doppelgänger all the peculiarities were perceived that the ordinary self of man has in consequence of the influence of the forces of Lucifer. Now, however, in the course of human evolution another power has entered the human soul through the influence of Lucifer. This is the power that was designated in an earlier section of this book as the power of Ahriman.

It is the power that prevents the human being during physical sense-existence from perceiving the soul-spirit beings of the outer world lying behind the veil of the sensory. The form the human soul has assumed under the influence of this power is shown in a picture by the shape that emerges in the experience described. — The person who is adequately prepared for this experience will be able to interpret it correctly; very soon thereafter another form will appear that we may call the "greater guardian of the threshold" in contrast to the already described "lesser guardian."

This greater guardian tells the student of the spiritual that he must not remain stationary at this stage but must energetically work on. He calls forth in the observer the consciousness that the world that is conquered becomes truth, and is not transformed into illusion, only if the work is continued in an adequate manner. — If, because of incorrect spiritual training, a person were to enter upon this experience unprepared, then, in the encounter with the "greater guardian of the threshold," something would pour into his soul that only can be compared to the "feeling of immeasurable horror," of "boundless fear."

Just as the student of the spiritual in his encounter with the "lesser guardian of the threshold" is afforded the possibility of testing whether or not he is protected against delusions arising from the intermingling of his own being with the supersensible world, so can he also test himself by the experiences that finally lead to the "greater guardian of the threshold" whether he is capable of mastering the delusions described above as coming from the second source. If he is able to withstand the gigantic illusion that has been conjured up before him — that the picture world he has gained is a rich possession, while in reality he is only a prisoner — if he is able to resist this delusion, he is then, during the progressing course of his development, guarded from mistaking illusion for reality.

The "guardian of the threshold" will assume, to a certain degree, an individual shape for each human being. The encounter with him corresponds indeed to the experience by which the personal character of the supersensible observations is overcome and through which the possibility is given of entering a region of experience that is free from personal coloring and applies to every human being.

## **Part 10**

If the student of the spiritual has had the above described experiences he is capable of distinguishing, within the surrounding world of soul and spirit, between himself and what lies outside him. He will then recognize that it is necessary to comprehend the cosmic process described in this book, in order to understand man and his life.

Indeed, we understand the physical body only when we recognize how it has been fashioned during the Saturn, Sun, Moon, and Earth evolutions. We understand the ether body when we follow its formations through the Sun, Moon, and Earth evolutions. Moreover, we understand what at present is connected with the Earth evolution when we know how everything has unfolded itself step by step.

Through spiritual training the student is placed in the position to recognize the relationship of everything that exists in the human being to corresponding facts and beings of the world outside him. For it is a fact that every member of the human organism stands in a relationship to the whole world

surrounding it. In this book it has only been possible to indicate the facts in a sketchy outline.

We must, however, consider that the human physical body, for example, was present during the Saturn evolution only in its rudimentary beginnings. Its organs — the heart, the lungs, the brain — developed later out of these beginnings during the Sun, Moon, and Earth evolutions. The heart, lungs, and the other organs are thus related to the Sun, Moon, and Earth evolutions. It is quite the same with the members of the ether and soul body, the sentient soul, and the other principles.

Man is fashioned from the entire surrounding world, and every part of him corresponds to a process or being of the outer world. At the corresponding stage of his development the student becomes acquainted with this relationship between his own being and the great world. We may designate this stage of cognition as the becoming aware of the correspondence between the lesser world, the microcosm, which is the human being himself, and the greater world, the macrocosm.

If the student has struggled through to such a stage of knowledge, a new experience may occur for him. He begins to feel as though he were intergrown with the entire cosmic structure, in spite of the fact that he feels himself in his complete independence. This feeling is a merging with the entire cosmos, a becoming one with it, but without losing one's own essential being. This stage of development may be designated as the "becoming one with the macrocosm." It is significant that this becoming one, this union, is not to be thought of as though through it the individual consciousness were to cease and the human being were to flow out into the universe, merging with it.

Such a thought would be merely the expression of an opinion springing from the untrained power of judgment. — The stages of higher knowledge, in the sense of the process of initiation that has been described in this book, may now be enumerated as follows:

- 1 - Study of spiritual science, in which one employs one's power of judgment gained in the physical-sensory world.
- 2 - Acquiring imaginative knowledge.
- 3 - Reading the occult script-corresponding to inspiration.
- 4 - Living into the spiritual environment — corresponding to intuition.
- 5 - Knowledge of the relationships between microcosm and macrocosm.
- 6 - Union with the macrocosm.
- 7 - Total experience of all previous experiences as a fundamental mood of the soul.

These stages need not be thought of as successive experiences. On the contrary, the training may proceed in such a way that, in accordance with the individuality of the student of the spiritual, he may have reached only a certain degree of perfection in a preceding stage when he begins exercises that correspond to a subsequent stage. It may well happen, for example, that the student has only gained a few imaginations with certainty, yet he already performs exercises leading to inspiration, intuition, or the cognition of the relationship between microcosm and macrocosm.

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If the student of the spiritual has experienced intuition, he not only knows the images of the psycho-



spiritual world, he cannot merely read their connections in the "occult script," but he attains to knowledge of the spiritual beings themselves through whose co-operation the world, to which the human being belongs, comes into existence. In this way he learns to know himself in the form he possesses as a spiritual being in the world of soul and spirit.

He has struggled through to a perception of his higher ego, and he has become aware of how he has to continue his efforts in order to control his Doppelgänger, the "guardian of the threshold." He has, however, also encountered the "greater guardian of the threshold," who stands before him as an ever present exhorter to further effort. This "greater guardian" becomes the ideal toward which he strives.

If this feeling emerges in the student of the spiritual, he has then acquired the possibility of recognizing who it is that stands there before him as the "greater guardian of the threshold." To the perception of the student of the spiritual this guardian now transforms himself into the form of the Christ, whose Being and participation in Earth evolution has been made clear in the previous chapters of this book. The student is now initiated into the exalted mystery that is linked with the name of the Christ.

The Christ shows Himself to the student as the "great ideal of man on earth." — If thus through intuition the Christ is recognized in the spiritual world, what occurred historically on earth in the fourth post-Atlantean evolutionary epoch — the Greco-Latin epoch — also becomes comprehensible. The way in which, at that time, the exalted Sun Being, the Christ, has intervened in the Earth evolution and how he continues to work within this evolution becomes the personally experienced knowledge of the student of the spiritual.

It is thus a revelation of the meaning and significance of Earth evolution that the student receives through intuition. The way to knowledge of the supersensible worlds, which is described here, is one that every human being can follow, no matter what the situation in which he may find himself within the present-day conditions of life. When describing such a path we must consider that the goal of knowledge and truth is the same in all ages of Earth evolution, but that the starting points of man have been different in different ages.

If the human being wishes to tread the path to the spiritual world he cannot at present begin at the same starting point as, for example, the would-be initiate of ancient Egypt. Therefore, the exercises that were imposed upon the student of the spiritual of ancient Egypt cannot be carried out by the modern man without modification. Since that time, human souls have passed through various incarnations, and this advance from incarnation to incarnation is not without meaning and significance. The faculties and qualities of souls alter from incarnation to incarnation.

Whoever considers human historical life, be it only superficially, is able to notice that since the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.D. all life-conditions have changed when compared with previous centuries; that opinions, feelings, and also abilities of human beings have become different from what they were previously. The path to higher knowledge described here is eminently fit for souls who incarnate in the immediate present.

It is one that places the point of departure for spiritual development just where the human being now stands in any situation presented by modern life. — Progressive evolution leads mankind in regard to the path to higher knowledge from period to period to ever changing forms, just as outer life changes

its forms, and at all times a perfect harmony must prevail between outer life and initiation.

## **6 - The Present And Future Of Cosmic And Human Evolution**

It is impossible to know anything of the present and future of human and cosmic evolution in the sense of spiritual science without a knowledge of this evolution in the past. For what presents itself to the perception of the spiritual researcher when he observes the hidden facts of the past contains simultaneously all he can know of the present and future. This book has dealt with the evolution of Saturn, Sun, Moon, and Earth.

It is impossible to understand the Earth evolution, in the sense of spiritual science, if one does not observe the facts of the preceding evolutionary cycles. For the facts of the Moon, Sun, and Saturn evolutions are contained in a certain sense within the conditions that confront the human being at present within the sphere of the earth. The beings and things that participated in the Moon evolution have evolved further.

Everything that belongs to the present earth came out of them. For physical-sensory consciousness, however, not everything is perceptible that, having come from the Moon, has become the Earth. A part of what has evolved over from the Moon becomes evident only at a certain stage of supersensible consciousness. When this knowledge is attained, then we perceive that our earth is bound to a supersensible world, containing the part of the Moon existence that has not condensed to the condition of physical sense-perception.

This supersensible world contains the uncondensed part of the Moon as it is at present, not as it was at the time of the ancient Moon evolution. Supersensible consciousness, however, is able to obtain a picture of the previous condition. If this supersensible consciousness concentrates upon the perception it can have at the present time, it becomes evident that, quite by itself, it gradually resolves itself into two pictures.

One of these presents the shape the Earth had during its Moon evolution; the manner in which the other picture shows itself, however, reveals that it contains a form that is still in its germinal stage and that will only become real in the future in the sense that the earth is now real. Further observation shows that, in a certain sense, the effect of what happens upon the earth streams continually into this future form.

In this form we have, therefore, before us what is to be our earth in the future. The effects of earth existence will unite with what happens in the characterized world and out of this will arise the new cosmic being into which the Earth will be transformed, just as the Moon has transformed itself into the Earth. We may call this future form the Jupiter evolution. If we observe this Jupiter stage with supersensible perception, we can see that in the future certain processes must take place, because in the supersensible part of the Earth that originated on the Moon certain beings and things are present that will assume certain forms when, within the earth of the physical senses, this or that will have taken place.

In the Jupiter evolution something will, therefore, exist that has already been determined by the Moon evolution, and it will contain new factors that enter into the entire evolution only through terrestrial processes. Because of this, supersensible consciousness may learn something of what will happen

during the Jupiter state. The beings and facts perceived within this field of consciousness do not possess the nature of sense images; they do not even appear as delicate, airy structures from which effects might proceed which remind us of sense-impressions. They give us pure spiritual impressions of tone, light, and warmth.

The latter do not express themselves through any sort of material embodiment. They can be comprehended only through supersensible consciousness. We may, nevertheless, say that these beings possess a "body." Yet this body shows itself within their soul nature, which reveals itself as their present being, like a sum of condensed memories which they bear within their soul. We are able to distinguish in their being between what they now experience, and what they have experienced and remember. The latter is contained within them like a bodily nature.

They experience it just as the earth man experiences his body. At a stage of supersensible perception higher than the one just described as necessary for the cognition of Moon and Jupiter, supersensible beings and things become visible that are the further developed forms of what was already present during the Sun evolution, but which has attained at present such a high stage of evolution that it does not at all exist for a consciousness that has only attained to the perception of Moon forms.

The picture of this world also resolves itself into two pictures during inner meditation. One of these leads to the cognition of the past Sun evolution, the other presents a future form of the Earth; that is to say, the form into which the Earth will have transformed itself when the effects of the Earth and Jupiter processes have streamed into the forms of that world. What we thus observe of this future world may be designated, in the sense of spiritual science, as the Venus evolution. In a similar manner there is, for a still more highly developed supersensible consciousness, a future stage of evolution that may be designated Vulcan evolution.

It has a relationship to the Saturn evolution similar to the one the Venus evolution has to the Sun evolution, and the Jupiter evolution has to the Moon evolution. We may, therefore, if we consider the past, present and future of Earth evolution, speak of Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth, Jupiter, Venus, and Vulcan evolutions. — Just as these all-encompassing relationships of the Earth evolution result for our consciousness, so also there result observations of a nearer future. Every picture of the past corresponds also to one of the future.

Yet in speaking of such things something must be emphasized which, of necessity, must be given due consideration. If we wish to recognize such matters we must discard completely the opinion that philosophical reflection, trained merely by external reality, is able to discover anything about them. These things cannot and never should be investigated by such a mode of thinking.

If a person were to believe, when he has received communications through spiritual science about the Moon evolution, that through such reflection he might discover how things will appear on Jupiter by combining the relationships of Earth and Moon, he will fall prey to enormous deceptions. Research into these relationships is only to be made when supersensible consciousness has lifted itself to higher observation. Only when what has thus been discovered is communicated can it be understood without supersensible consciousness.

Concerning the communications about the future, the researcher of the spiritual is in a position different from the position concerning those about the past. The human being cannot, at the outset, confront future events as impartially as he can confront the past. What will occur in the future stirs human feelings and will; the past is endured in quite a different manner. Whoever observes life knows how true this already is for ordinary existence. To what an enormous degree this increases, what forms it assumes in regard to the hidden facts of life only he can know who is cognizant of certain things of the supersensible worlds. This is the reason why the knowledge of these things is fixed within quite definite limits.

Just as the great cosmic evolution can be presented in the succession of its states from the Saturn to the Vulcan evolution, it is also possible to present smaller time-divisions; those of the Earth evolution, for example. Since that enormous catastrophe that brought the ancient Atlantean civilization to an end there have been successive stages within human evolution that in this book have been designated as the ancient Indian, the ancient Persian, the Egypto-Chaldean, and the Greco-Latin epochs of culture. The fifth period is the one in which mankind now stands, the present.

This period gradually began during the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries A.D., after it had prepared itself since the fourth and fifth centuries. From the fifteenth century onward it emerged quite clearly. The preceding Greco-Latin culture began about the eighth century B.C. At the end of its first third, the Christ event occurred. The condition of the human soul and all the human faculties changed with the transition from the Egypto-Chaldean to the Greco-Latin cultural period.

In the former there was not yet present what we now know as logical cogitation, as intellectual comprehension of the world. What the human being now acquires as knowledge through his intellect he received in the form that was fitting for that time: directly through an inner, in a certain respect, supersensible knowledge. He perceived objects, and while perceiving them their concept, their image, needed by the soul, arose in its inner being. With the power of cognition described, not only images of the physical sense world emerge, but from the depths of the soul there arises a certain knowledge of non-sensory facts and beings.

This was the remnant of ancient dim clairvoyant consciousness, once the common possession of all mankind. During the Greco-Latin period there arose more and more human beings who lacked such faculties. Instead of these faculties, intellectual reflection upon objects began to appear. Human beings were by degrees removed from a direct, dreamlike perception of the world of soul and spirit and were ever more dependent upon a picture of that world, formed by their intellect and feeling. This state continued in a certain respect throughout the entire fourth post-Atlantean period. Only those individuals who had preserved the ancient soul condition like a heritage could still receive the spiritual world directly into their consciousness.

These individuals, however, are stragglers of a more ancient epoch. The kind of knowledge they possessed no longer fitted the new age. For it is a consequence of the laws of evolution that an ancient soul faculty loses its full significance when new faculties appear. Human life then adapts itself to these new faculties, and it is no longer able to exercise the old faculties. There were, however, also individuals who in a quite conscious manner began to develop, besides the acquired powers of intellect and feeling, other higher faculties that again made it possible for them to penetrate into the world of soul and spirit. They had to begin to do this in a manner quite different from what was customary for

the pupils of the ancient initiates.

The latter did not yet have to consider the soul faculties first developed in the fourth cultural period. In that period the method of spiritual training began that has been described in this book as the present-day method. But it was at that time only in its infancy; it could be properly developed only in the fifth cultural period, actually since the twelfth and thirteenth — chiefly the fifteenth — centuries of our era. Human beings who in this way sought to ascend into the supersensible world were able to experience through their own imagination, inspiration, and intuition something of higher realms of existence. Those who remained satisfied with the developed faculties of intellect and feeling could learn only from tradition, what ancient clairvoyance knew, and which was transmitted from generation to generation by word of mouth, or in writing.

Something of the real nature of the Christ event could also be known only from tradition by those born after the event, if they had not attained a perception of the supersensible worlds. There were, however, certain initiates who still possessed the natural clairvoyant perception of the supersensible world and who through their development could elevate themselves to a higher world in spite of the fact that they paid no attention to the new powers of intellect and soul. Through such initiates a transition was created from the old method of initiation to the new.

Such personalities existed also in subsequent periods. It was the chief characteristic of the fourth cultural epoch that the soul's exclusion from direct intercourse with the world of soul and spirit strengthened the human being in his powers of intellect and feeling. The souls who were incarnated at that time with highly developed powers of intellect and feeling carried over the result of this development into their incarnations in the fifth cultural period. As a compensation for this exclusion from intercourse with the world of soul and spirit the mighty traditions of primeval wisdom were then available to man — and especially those concerning the Christ event — traditions that by the very power of their content gave the souls a confident knowledge of the higher worlds. — But human beings always existed who developed the higher powers of knowledge in addition to the faculties of intellect and feeling.

It was their task to experience the facts of the higher world and chiefly the mystery of the Christ event through direct supersensible cognition. From them there flowed into the souls of other men as much as was comprehensible and good for them. — In harmony with the meaning of Earth evolution, the first spreading of Christianity had of necessity to occur just at a time when the powers of supersensible cognition had not been developed in a large portion of mankind. It was because of this that the force of tradition was so powerful at that time.

The strongest possible force was needed to lead men, who were themselves unable to behold this world, to a trust in the supersensible world. There were almost always — if we disregard a brief period of exception in the thirteenth century — individuals who were able to elevate themselves to higher worlds through imagination, inspiration, and intuition. These men are the post-Christian successors of the ancient initiates, of the leaders and members of the institutions of mystery wisdom. They had the task of recognizing, by means of their own faculties, what had been comprehensible through ancient mystery wisdom, to which they had to add the knowledge of the essential nature of the Christ event.

A knowledge thus arose among these new initiates that included everything that was the subject of

ancient initiation, but in the center of this knowledge there radiated the higher wisdom of the mysteries of the Christ event. Only in a small degree could such knowledge flow into general life, while the human souls of the fourth period of culture had to consolidate the faculties of intellect and feeling. Thus it was at that time a very "hidden knowledge." Then the dawn of the new age broke, which is to be designated as the fifth cultural period.

Its nature consists in the advance of the evolution of the intellectual faculties, which have unfolded to an exuberant blossoming and will unfold still further in the present and into the future. This prepared itself slowly, beginning with the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in order to accelerate its advance from the sixteenth century onward into the present time. Under these influences, the chief objective of the evolution of the fifth cultural epoch was the fostering of the powers of the intellect, whereas the confident knowledge of former ages, traditional knowledge, lost more and more of its power over the human soul. But in its place there developed what may be called an increasingly stronger influx into human souls of the knowledge gained through modern supersensible consciousness. The "hidden knowledge" flows, although quite unnoticed at the beginning, into the mode of thinking of the men of this period. It is only self-evident that, up to the present, intellectual forces reject this knowledge. But what must happen will happen, in spite of all temporary rejection.

The "hidden knowledge," which from this side takes hold of mankind now and will take hold of it more and more in the future, may be called symbolically "the wisdom of the Grail." If this symbol, as it is given in legend and myth, is understood in its deeper meaning, we shall find that it is a significant image of the nature of what has been spoken of above as the knowledge of the new initiation, with the Christ mystery at its center. The modern initiates may, therefore, also be called "initiates of the Grail."

The way into the supersensible worlds, the first stages of which have been described in this book, leads to the "science of the Grail." This knowledge has the peculiarity that research into its facts can be made only if one has acquired the necessary means that have been described in this book. If, however, such research has been made, these facts can then be understood through the soul forces developed in the fifth cultural period. Indeed, it will become more and more evident that these forces, in an ever higher degree, will find satisfaction through this knowledge.

We move now in an age in which this knowledge ought to be received more abundantly into general consciousness than was previously the case, and it is from this point of view that this book desires to impart its information. To the degree to which the development of mankind will absorb the knowledge of the Grail, the impulse given through the Christ event can become ever more significant. To the external aspect of Christian development the inner aspect will be joined more and more. What may be known through imagination, inspiration, and intuition about the higher worlds in connection with the Christ mystery will increasingly permeate the thought, feeling, and will-life of humanity. The "concealed knowledge of the Grail" will be revealed; as an inner force it will permeate more and more the manifestations of human life.

Throughout the fifth cultural period the knowledge of supersensible worlds will flow into human consciousness, and when the sixth period begins, mankind will have been able to re-attain at a higher stage what it has possessed of non-sensory perception at an earlier period in a still dim way. The new possession will, however, have a form quite different from the old. What the soul knew in ancient times of higher worlds was not permeated by its own power of intellect and feeling; that knowledge

came as an inspiration. In the future the soul will not merely have inspirations, but it will comprehend them and feel them as being of its own being.

If knowledge about this or that being or thing dawns upon the soul, the intellect will then find it justified through its own nature; if a knowledge of a different kind asserts itself — knowledge of a moral law, or a human relationship — the soul will then say to itself: My feeling can only justify itself when I act in accordance with this knowledge. Such a soul state is to be developed by a sufficiently large number of human beings of the sixth cultural period. — What the third, the Egypto-Chaldean cultural period, has bestowed upon human evolution repeats itself, in a certain way, in the fifth period. In the third period the soul still perceived certain facts of the supersensible world, but the perception of this world was disappearing. The intellectual powers were preparing themselves for their evolution, and they were, for the time being, to exclude the human being from the higher world. In the fifth cultural period the supersensible facts, which in the third period were perceived by a hazy clairvoyance, again become manifest.

Now they are permeated with the forces of human intellect and personal feeling. They become permeated also with what can be imparted to the soul through the knowledge of the Christ mystery. Hence they assume quite a different form from the one possessed previously. Whereas the impressions received from the supersensible worlds were felt in ancient times as forces giving impulses to the human being from an external spiritual world in which he did not dwell, these impressions will be felt, through the development of the modern age, as proceeding from a world into which the human being grows and in which he participates progressively more and more.

No one should believe that the Egypto-Chaldean culture will repeat itself in such a way that the soul will simply receive what existed at that time and has been handed down by tradition. The Christ impulse, rightly understood, works in such a way that the human soul who has received it feels, recognizes, and conducts itself as a member of a spiritual world, outside of which it had previously dwelt. — Whereas in this way the third epoch reappears in the fifth, in order to permeate human souls with what the fourth epoch has brought as something completely new, something similar will be the case with the sixth epoch in regard to the second and the seventh in regard to the first, the ancient Indian epoch. All the marvels of wisdom of ancient India that the great teachers of that time could proclaim will be able to reappear as truth of life of human souls in the seventh cultural epoch.

The transformations in the things of the earth existing outside the human being occur with a certain relationship to humanity's own evolution. After the seventh cultural period has run its course, the earth will be visited by a catastrophe that may be likened to what occurred between the Atlantean and post-Atlantean ages, and the transformed earth conditions after this catastrophe will again evolve in seven time periods. Human souls who will then be incarnated will experience, at a higher stage, the union with the higher world experienced by the Atlanteans at a lower stage.

Only those human beings, however, in whom are incarnated souls that have developed in a manner possible through the influences of the Greco-Latin epoch and the subsequent fifth, sixth, and seventh cultural epochs of the post-Atlantean evolution will be able to cope with the newly formed earth conditions. The inner being of such souls will correspond to what the earth has then become. Other souls will then have to remain behind, whereas previously they would have had the choice of creating the conditions for advancement. Souls who will have created the possibility for themselves, in the



transition from the fifth to the sixth post-Atlantean period, of penetrating supersensible knowledge with the forces of intellect and feeling, will have the maturity for the corresponding conditions following the next great catastrophe. The fifth and sixth periods are, so to speak, decisive.

In the seventh, the souls who will have reached the goal of the sixth will develop correspondingly further; the other souls, however, will, under the changed conditions of the environment, find but little opportunity of retrieving what they have neglected. Only at some future time will conditions appear again that will permit this. — Evolution thus advances from age to age. Supersensible cognition not only observes such future changes in which the earth alone takes part, but it is also aware of changes that occur in co-operation with the heavenly bodies in its environment. A time will come when the evolution of the earth and mankind will have advanced so far that the spiritual powers and beings that had to sever themselves from the earth during the Lemurian age, in order to make possible the continued progress of the earth's beings, will be able to unite themselves again with the earth.

The moon will then reunite with the earth. This will occur because at that time a sufficiently large number of human souls will possess so much inner strength that they will use these moon forces for the benefit of further evolution. This will occur at a time when, alongside the high level of development that will have been reached by a certain number of human souls, another development will occur that has taken the direction toward evil. The laggard souls will have accumulated in their karma so much error, ugliness, and evil that they will form, for the time being, a special union of evil and aberrant human beings who violently oppose the community of good men.

The good humanity will through its development acquire the use of the moon forces and thereby so transform the evil part also that, as a special realm of the earth, it may participate in further evolution. Through this work of the good humanity, the earth, united with the moon, will be able, after a certain period of evolution, to reunite also with the sun and with the other planets. Then, after an intermediate stage, which presents itself as a sojourn in a higher world, the Earth will transform itself into Jupiter. Within this state, what is now called the mineral kingdom will no longer exist; the forces of this mineral kingdom will be transformed into plant forces.

The plant kingdom, which in contrast to the present plant kingdom will have an entirely new form, appears during the Jupiter state as the lowest kingdom. To this a higher kingdom is added, the transformed animal kingdom; above it there is a human kingdom, which proves to be the progeny of the evil community that arose on the earth; above all these are to be found the descendants of the good community of earth men, a human kingdom of a higher order. A great part of the activity of this latter human kingdom consists in the work of ennobling the fallen souls of the evil community, so that they may still be able to find their way back into the actual human kingdom.

The Venus evolution will be one in which the plant kingdom also will have disappeared; the lowest kingdom at that time will be the retransformed animal kingdom; this will be joined on an ascending scale by three human kingdoms of different degrees of perfection. During the Venus state the earth remains united with the sun; during the Jupiter state, however, evolution proceeds in such a way that at a certain point of time the sun departs once more from Jupiter and the latter receives its effects from the outside. After a time, the union of sun and Jupiter [ Jupiter minus the sun in contradistinction to Jupiter with the sun. (Tr.)] again occurs and the transformation gradually proceeds over into the Venus state.

During that state a special cosmic body splits off that contains all the beings who have resisted evolution, a so to speak "irredeemable moon," which now moves toward an evolution, for the character of which no expression can be found because it is too dissimilar to anything that man can experience on earth. The evolved mankind, however, advances in a completely spiritualized existence to the Vulcan evolution, the description of which does not lie within the scope of this book.

We see that the highest imaginable ideal of human evolution results from the "knowledge of the Grail": the spiritualization that man acquires through his own efforts. For this spiritualization appears finally as a result of the harmony that he produces in the fifth and sixth cultural periods of present evolution between the acquired powers of intellect and feeling and the knowledge of the supersensible worlds. What he there produces in the inmost depths of his soul is finally itself to become the outer world.

The human spirit elevates itself to the tremendous impressions of its outer world and first divines and afterwards recognizes spiritual beings behind these impressions; man's heart feels the boundless sublimity of the spiritual. The human being can also recognize that his inner experiences of intellect, feeling, and character are the indications of a nascent world of the spirit.

Whoever believes that human freedom is not compatible with foreknowledge and predestination of the future condition of things, should consider that free human action in the future depends just as little upon the character the predestined things will have as this freedom depends upon his resolve to live in a house a year hence, the plan of which he determines today. He will be as free as it is possible for him to be according to his inner nature, precisely in the house he has built for himself; and he will be as free upon Jupiter and Venus as his inner life permits just within the conditions that will arise there. Freedom will not depend upon what has been predestined by antecedent conditions, but upon what the soul has made of itself.

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Within the Earth evolution is contained what has evolved during the preceding Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions. The earth man finds "wisdom" in the processes that take place in his environment. This wisdom is present as the result of what had happened previously. The Earth is the descendant of the ancient Moon which, with all that belonged to it, formed itself into the "cosmos of wisdom." The Earth is the beginning of an evolution through which a new force is added to this wisdom. It brings the human being to the point where he feels himself an independent member of the spirit world.

This rests on the fact that his ego is fashioned by the Spirits of Form during the Earth evolution, just as upon Saturn the Spirits of Will formed his physical body, upon the Sun the Spirits of Wisdom his life-body, and upon the Moon the Spirits of Motion his astral body. The manifestation of wisdom appears through the co-operation of the Spirits of Will, Wisdom, and Motion. The Earth beings and Earth processes can harmonize in wisdom with the other beings of their world through the work of these three classes of spirits.

From the Spirits of Form the human being receives his independent ego. In the future this ego will

harmonize with the beings of Earth, Jupiter, Venus, and Vulcan through the power that is added to wisdom by the Earth evolution. This is the power of love. In earth humanity this power of love must take its beginning, and the "cosmos of wisdom" unfolds itself into a "cosmos of love." Everything that the ego is able to unfold within itself is to become love. The exalted Sun Being Whom we are able to characterize in the description of the Christ evolution manifests Himself as the all-encompassing "archetype of love."

Thus the seed of love is planted into the innermost core of human nature. And from there it is to flow into the whole of evolution. Just as the previously formed wisdom reveals itself in the forces of the sensory external world of the earth, in the present-day "nature forces," so in the future love will reveal itself in all phenomena as a new nature force. It is the mystery of all evolution into the future that knowledge and all that the human being does through a true understanding of evolution is a sowing of seed that must ripen as love, and the greater the force of love coming into being, the greater will be the accomplishments of creative force in the future.

In what will be created from love will lie the strong forces leading to the above described culminating result of spiritualization. The greater the amount of spiritual cognition that flows into human and earth evolution, the greater will be the number of fertile seeds for the future. Spiritual knowledge is transmuted by its very nature into love. The entire process that has been described, beginning with the Greco-Latin cultural epoch and extending through our present epoch, shows how this transformation is to take place, and also shows that the beginning of development into the future has been made.

What has been prepared during the Saturn, Sun, and Moon evolutions as wisdom acts in the physical, ether, and astral body of man; there it shows itself as "cosmic wisdom"; in the "ego," however, it becomes "inner wisdom." From the Earth stage onward, "wisdom of the external world" becomes inner wisdom of man. Intensified in the inner life, it becomes the seed of love. Wisdom is the pre-condition of love; love is the result of wisdom reborn in the ego.

Whoever could be misled by the preceding expositions into believing that the described evolution bears a fatalistic stamp, would have misunderstood them. Whoever were to believe that in such an evolution a certain number of men would be condemned to belong to the kingdom of "evil humanity," fails to perceive how the mutual relationship between outer world and the world of soul and spirit takes shape in this evolution. Both outer world and the world of soul and spirit form, within certain limits, separate evolutionary streams. Through the forces inherent in the sensory stream there arise the forms of the "evil human kingdom."

The necessity for a human soul to incarnate in such a form will only occur if this soul itself has created the conditions for it. The case might also arise that the forms originating from the forces of the sensory could not find human souls originating in the previous age, for these souls might be too good for that type of body. These forms would then have to be ensouled from the cosmos by something quite different from former human souls.

Human souls will incarnate in the forms characterized only when they have made themselves ready for such an incarnation. Supersensible cognition is bound to state what it perceives concerning this sphere, namely, that in the future indicated there will exist two human kingdoms, one good and one evil, but it does not abstractly deduce from the present state of human souls a future state appearing as though

with the force of self-evident necessity.

Evolution of human forms and evolution of soul-destinies must be sought by supersensible cognition on two quite separate paths; any attempt to mix the two in the conception of the world would be a remnant of a materialistic attitude that, if present, would project itself dangerously into the science of the supersensible.

## 7 - Details From The Realm Of Spiritual Science

### The Ether Body Of Man

If higher members of man are observed by means of supersensible perception, this perception is never completely similar to perception with the outer senses. If the human being touches an object and has a perception of heat, he must distinguish between what comes from the object, what streams out of it, as if it were, and what he himself experiences in his soul. The inner soul experience of the sensation of heat is something quite different from the heat streaming from the object. Let us now imagine this soul experience alone, without the outer object. Let us imagine the experience of a sensation of heat in the soul without an outer physical cause.

If such an experience were simply present without a cause, it would be imaginary. The student of the spiritual experiences such inner perceptions without physical cause, and above all, without their being caused by his own body. These perceptions appear at a certain stage of development, however, in such a way that he is able to know (as has been shown, through the experience itself) that the inner perception is not imaginary, but that it is caused by a being of the world of soul and spirit in a supersensory outer world just as the usual sensation of heat, for example, is caused by an outer physical-sensory object.

This is also the case when one speaks of a color perception. There a distinction must be made between the color of the outer object and the inner sensation of color in the soul. Let us visualize the inner sensation of the soul when it perceives a red object of the outer physical-sensory world. Let us imagine that we retain a vivid memory of the impression, but we turn the eye away from the object. Let us now visualize as an inner experience what we then retain as memory picture of the color. We shall then distinguish between the inner experience of the color, and the outer color. These inner experiences are certainly different in content from the outer sense-impressions. They bear much more the character of what is felt as pain and joy than the normal outer sensation. Now think that such an inner experience arises in the soul without an outer physical-sensory object or the memory of such an object as the cause.

A person able to have supersensible perceptions may have such an experience. He is also able to know, in the case in question, that it is not imaginary, but the expression of a being of the world of soul and spirit. If this being now calls forth an impression similar to the one made by a red object of the physical-sensory world, it may then be designated red. In the case of a physical-sensory object, the outer impression will always be there first; then comes the inner color experience.

In the case of true supersensible perception by the human being of our time, the process must be reversed: first the inner experience, shadowlike, like a mere color memory, and then a picture that becomes ever more vivid. The less attention one pays to the fact that the process must occur in this manner, the less one will be able to distinguish between real spiritual perception and imaginary deception, hallucination, and so forth. Whether the vividness of the picture, in the case of such a perception of the world of soul and spirit, remains entirely shadowlike, like a dim visualization, or whether it produces an intensive effect, like an outer object, will depend entirely upon the development of the student of the spiritual.

It is possible to describe the general impression that the clairvoyant has of the human ether body thus: If the person who has supersensible perception has developed such a power of will that, in spite of the presence of a physical man before him, he is capable of diverting his attention from what the physical eye beholds, then he is able by means of supersensible consciousness to look into the space occupied by the physical human being. Of course, a strong increase of will is necessary in order not only to turn the attention away from something one thinks but from something that stands before one, so that the physical impression becomes entirely extinguished. But this increase of will is possible, and it appears as a result of the exercises for the attainment of supersensible cognition.

The one who is thus able to cognize may then have, in the first instance, a general impression of the ether body. In his soul the same inner sensation emerges that he has by looking at the color of the peach blossom; this then increases in intensity and enables him to say that the ether body has the color of the peach blossom. Then he perceives also the individual organs and currents of the ether body. We may, however, describe the ether body further by indicating the experiences of the soul that correspond to the sensations of heat, to the impressions of tone, and so forth. For it is not merely a phenomenon of color. In the same sense the astral body and the other members of man's being may be described. Whoever considers this will understand how descriptions are to be taken that are made in the sense of spiritual science. (See Chapter II in this book.)

## **The Astral World**

As long as we observe only the physical world, the earth as a dwelling place of man appears like a separate cosmic body. If, however, supersensible cognition rises to different worlds, this separation ceases. It was, therefore, possible to say that imagination perceives, together with the earth, the Moon condition developed right into the present. Not only does the supersensible realm of the earth belong to the world we enter in this way, but embedded in it are still other cosmic bodies, physically separated from the earth. The knower of supersensible worlds does then not merely observe the supersensible nature of the earth, but, at the outset, also the supersensible nature of other cosmic bodies. (That it is primarily a question of observing the supersensible nature of other cosmic bodies should be considered by those who are impelled to ask the question: Why do the clairvoyants not tell us about the conditions on Mars? Such a questioner has the physical-sensory conditions in mind.)

In the presentation of this book it was, therefore, possible also to speak of certain relationships of the earth evolution with the simultaneously occurring Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars evolutions, and so forth. — When the human astral body yields to sleep, it does not then belong to the earth conditions only, but to worlds in which still other cosmic realms, stellar worlds, astral worlds, partake. Indeed, these worlds are also active in the astral body of man during the waking state. Therefore, the name "astral body" seems to be justified.

## **The Life Of Man After Death**

In the exposition of this book we have spoken of the time during which, after the death of the human being, the astral body still remains united with the ether body. During this time a gradually fading memory of the whole life just passed is present. (See Chapter III.) The length of this period varies with different human beings. It depends upon the degree of power with which the astral body of the

individual human being holds fast to the ether body, upon the degree of force the former exercises upon the latter.

Supersensible cognition may have an impression of this power when it observes a human being who, because of his state of body and soul, ought to be asleep, but who remains awake by means of inner strength. It now becomes evident that different people are able to remain awake for greatly varying lengths of time without being overpowered by sleep. For the most extreme length of time that a human being is able to remain awake does the memory of the life just passed through continue after death, that is to say, does the connection of the astral with the ether body last.

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When the ether body is released from man after death, a portion of it still remains for the rest of man's future evolution. This may be described as an extract or an essence of this body. This extract contains the fruits of the past life, and it is the bearer of everything that, during man's spiritual development between death and a new birth, unfolds as a germinal beginning of the subsequent life. (Compare Chapter 3.)

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The length of time between death and a new birth is determined by the fact that, as a rule, the ego returns to the physical-sensory world only after the latter has been changed sufficiently to make it possible for the ego to experience something new. While the ego remains in the spiritual realms, the earthly dwelling place undergoes a change. This change is connected in a certain respect with the great changes in the cosmos, with the changed position of earth and sun, and so forth. These are changes, however, in which certain repetitions take place in connection with new conditions.

They express themselves outwardly, for instance, through the fact that the point of the celestial sphere at which the sun rises in the beginning of spring makes a complete circle in the course of 26,000 years. This vernal equinox thus resolves, in the course of that period, from one celestial region to another. In the course of one twelfth of this period, in about 2,100 years, the conditions on the earth have altered so much that the human soul can experience something new after a preceding incarnation.

Since the experiences of a human being are different according to his incarnation as a woman or as a man, there occur as a rule two incarnations within the characterized period of 2,100 years, one as a man and one as a woman. These things, however, depend also upon the nature of the forces man takes with him from earth existence through the door of death. It should, therefore, be understood that all indications given here are valid in the essentials; in individual cases, however, they show themselves varied in the most manifold way.

How long the human being remains in the spiritual world between death and a new birth depends in one way only upon the described conditions in the cosmos. In another regard this depends on the states of development through which man passes during that time. These states lead the ego, after a certain lapse of time, to a spiritual condition that finds no further satisfaction in its inner spiritual

experiences, and which develops the longing toward the change of consciousness that finds satisfaction in the reflection through physical experience.

Through the co-operation of this inner thirst for incarnation and the possibility offered by the cosmos of finding the corresponding bodily organism the entrance of the human being into earth-life occurs. Since there must be a twofold cooperation, incarnation occurs, in one instance, — although the "thirst for incarnation" has not yet attained its full intensity — because an approximately fitting embodiment can be realized; it occurs, in another instance, — although the thirst for incarnation has overstepped its normal intensity — because at the corresponding time there was no possibility yet of embodiment. The general mood of life in which a human being finds himself because of the constitution of his bodily nature is connected with these conditions.

## **The Course Of Human Life**

The life of the human being as it expresses itself in the succession of conditions between birth and death can only be grasped completely by taking into account not only the sensory-physical body, but also those changes that occur in the supersensory principles of human nature. — We may regard these changes in the following manner. Physical birth represents the breaking loose of the human being from the physical maternal sheath.

Forces, which the embryonic human being had in common with the maternal body before birth, are present in him after birth only as independent forces. Later in life, however, supersensible events occur for supersensible perception, resembling the sensory events occurring at physical birth. Up to the time of his change of teeth (at the sixth or seventh year), the human being, in regard to his ether body, is surrounded by an etheric sheath. This falls away at this period of life. A "birth" of the ether body takes place.

The human being, however, still continues to be enclosed by an astral sheath; this falls away between the twelfth and sixteenth years, (at the time of puberty). The "birth" of the astral body then takes place. And still later the actual ego is born. (The fruitful points of view for education, which result from these supersensible facts, are to be found in my brochure, *The Education of the Child from the Standpoint of Spiritual Science*. In this booklet also may be found a further exposition of what here can only be indicated.) Man, after the birth of the ego, lives so as to fit himself into the conditions of the world and life and is active within them according to the principles working through the ego: sentient soul, intellectual soul, and consciousness soul.

Then a time arrives when the ether body retraces the processes of his development from the seventh year onward. Whereas the astral body has previously developed in such a way that it has first unfolded in itself what was already present in him as a possibility at birth, and then, after the birth of the ego, has enriched itself through the experiences of the outer world, it begins from a certain point of time to nourish itself spiritually by its own ether body. It feeds on the ether body. In the further course of life the ether body also begins to feed on the physical body.

With this is connected the decline of the physical body in old age. — As a result the course of human life falls into three periods: one in which the physical and ether bodies unfold; another in which the



astral body and the ego are developed; finally the third period in which the ether and physical bodies reverse their development. The astral body, however, participates in all processes between birth and death.

Through the fact of its being actually born spiritually only between the twelfth and sixteenth years and of its being compelled, during the last period of life, to feed on the forces of the ether and physical bodies, what it is able to do through its own forces develops more slowly than it would were it not in a physical and ether body. After death, when the physical and ether bodies have fallen away, the development during the period of purification (compare Chapter 3), therefore, takes place in such a way that it lasts about one third of the duration of life between birth and death.

### **The Higher Regions Of The Spiritual World**

By means of imagination, inspiration, and intuition supersensible cognition gradually reaches the regions of the spiritual world in which there are accessible to it the beings that participate in the evolution of the cosmos and man. Through this fact it is also possible for this cognition to follow up human evolution between death and a new birth so that this becomes comprehensible.

There are, however, still higher regions of existence that can only be briefly alluded to here. If supersensible cognition has raised itself up to the stage of intuition, it then lives in a world of spiritual beings. These beings also undergo development. The concerns of modern mankind extend, so to speak, into the world of intuition. To be sure, the human being also receives influences from still higher worlds in the course of his development between death and a new birth, but he does not experience these influences directly; the beings of the spiritual world convey them to him, and if these are taken into consideration, we then have everything that happens to man.

The affairs of these beings, however, what they need for themselves in order to lead human development, can be observed only through cognition that reaches beyond intuition. In this we have a hint concerning higher spiritual worlds that are to be thought of as being of such a character that spiritual matters, which on earth are the most exalted, belong there to those on a lower level. For example, within the earth region, reasoned conclusions are among the highest achievements, while the effects of the mineral kingdom are among the lowest. In those higher regions, reasoned conclusions approximate what are on earth mineral effects. Beyond the region of intuition lies the realm in which, out of spiritual causes, the cosmic plan is spun.

### **The Members Of Man's Being**

When it has been said (compare beginning of Chapter IV) that the ego works on the members of man's being — on the physical, ether, and astral bodies — and fashions these, in reverse order, into spirit self, life spirit, and spirit man, this refers to the work of the ego on the being of man by means of the highest faculties, which began their development only in the course of the earth periods. This transformation, however, is preceded by another on a lower stage, and through this the sentient soul, intellectual soul, and consciousness soul are developed.

For, while during the course of human evolution the sentient soul is formed, transformations in the

astral body take place; the formation of the intellectual soul expresses itself in transformations in the ether body, the formation of the consciousness soul in transformations in the physical body. In the course of the description of the Earth evolution given in this book, the details of these processes were indicated. We may thus say, in a certain sense, that the sentient soul is already based upon a transformed astral body, the intellectual soul upon a transformed ether body, and the consciousness soul upon a transformed physical body. We may, however, also say that these three soul principles are parts of the astral body, for the consciousness soul, for example, is only possible through its being an astral entity in a physical body adapted to it. It lives an astral life in a physical body that has been fashioned into its dwelling place.

## **The Dream State**

The dream state has been characterized, in a certain respect, in the earlier chapter, Sleep and Death. It is to be conceived of, on the one hand, as being a remnant of the ancient picture consciousness that man possessed during the Moon evolution and also during a large part of Earth evolution. For evolution advances in such a fashion that the earlier states play over into the later. Thus, a remnant now appears in the human being during the dream state of what was previously a normal state. On the other hand, however, this state is different from ancient picture consciousness, for the ego, since its development, plays also into the processes of the astral body taking place in sleep while man is dreaming.

Thus, in dreams we have a picture consciousness transformed through the presence of the ego. Since the ego, however, does not consciously carry on its activity upon the astral body during the state of dreaming, nothing that belongs to the realm of dream life must be considered as belonging to what in truth can lead to a spiritual-scientific knowledge of supersensible worlds. The same is true for what is often designated as vision, premonition, or second-sight (deuteroscopy). These come into existence through the ego's eliminating itself with the result that remnants of ancient states of consciousness arise. These have no direct use in spiritual science. What is observed by them cannot be considered in the true sense a result of the latter.

## **The Acquirement Of Supersensible Knowledge**

The path leading to a knowledge of supersensible worlds that has been described more explicitly in this book may also be called the "direct path of knowledge." Another exists beside it that we may designate as the "path of feeling." It would, however, be quite incorrect to believe that the first path has nothing to do with the development of feeling. On the contrary, it leads to the greatest possible deepening of the life of feeling. The path of feeling, however, turns directly to feeling only and seeks to ascend from this to knowledge.

It is based upon the fact that when the soul surrenders itself completely to a feeling for a certain length of time, this feeling transforms itself into knowledge, into a picture-like perception. If, for example, the soul fills itself completely during weeks, months, or even a longer period, with the feeling of humility, then the content of feeling transforms itself into a perception. One may, by passing step by step through such feelings, also find a path into supersensible regions.

This, however, is not easily carried out by modern man under ordinary life-conditions. Seclusion, retirement from present-day life is an almost unavoidable necessity for this path. For the impressions experienced in daily life disturb, especially at the beginning, what the soul reaches through its immersion in certain feelings. In contrast to this, the path of knowledge described in this book can be carried out in every situation of modern life.

### **Observation Of Special Events And Beings Of The World Of Spirit**

The question may be asked whether inner meditation and the other means described of attaining supersensible cognition permit only a general observation of man between death and a new birth or of other spiritual processes, or whether they permit the observation of quite definite processes and beings, for example, of some particular deceased person. The answer to this must be: Whoever acquires by the described means the faculty of observing the spiritual world, may also reach the point of observing detailed occurrences within it.

He makes himself capable of coming in contact with human beings dwelling in the world of spirit between death and a new birth. One must, however, pay heed to the fact that this must happen, in the sense of spiritual science, only after one has gone through the regular training in supersensible cognition. Only then is one able, in regard to special events and beings, to distinguish between delusion and reality. Whoever wishes to observe details without the proper training may fall a victim to many deceptions. Even the most elementary achievement, namely, the understanding of the way in which such impressions of special supersensible facts are to be interpreted is not possible without an advanced spiritual training. The training that leads into the higher worlds for the observation of what is described in this book leads also to the ability to follow the life of an individual human being after death.

It also leads to the observation and understanding of all special beings of the world of soul and spirit who influence from hidden worlds the outer manifested world. Nevertheless, correct observation of details is only possible upon the basis of cognition of the general, great cosmic and human facts of the spiritual world that concern every human being.

Whoever desires the one without desiring the other goes astray. It belongs to the experiences that must be undergone in regard to the observation of the spiritual world that the admission into the realms of supersensible existence for which one longs at the very first is granted only when the student has striven on solemn and difficult paths, leading to problems of general knowledge, for that which gives information about the meaning of life.

If he has trodden these paths with a pure and unegotistical urge for knowledge, then only is he mature enough to observe details, the observation of which would have been previously only a satisfying of egotistical longings, even though he had persuaded himself that it was only his love of someone who is dead, for example, that had made him strive for an insight into the spiritual world. The insight into the special is only possible for him who, from sincere interest for general spiritual-scientific knowledge, has gained the possibility of accepting also the special without any egotistical desire like an objective scientific truth.

## 8 - Special Comments

### (a) page 30 and fol. pp.

Expositions of the kind in this book about the faculty of memory can easily be misunderstood. For those who only observe external processes will not readily detect the difference between what happens in the animal or even in the plant when something appears that resembles memory, and what is here described as actual memory in man. Certainly, if an animal carries out an action a third or fourth time, it may then so perform it that the outer process appears as though the action were the result of memory and what is learned through it.

Like some natural scientists and their adherents, one may, indeed, extend the concept of memory or recollection to such a point that one says that when the little chick pops from the shell and immediately pecks at the grain, knowing even how to make the movements of its head and body in order to reach its object, it could not have learned this in the shell, but that it was learned through the thousands and thousands of creatures from which it has descended. (Ewald Hering, for example, states this.) We may declare that the phenomenon under discussion has the appearance of memory.

We shall, however, never gain a real comprehension of man's being if we do not hold in mind what appears quite especially unique in the human being as the process of real perception of previous experiences at subsequent times, not merely as an influence of past states into later ones. Here in this book this perception of the past, not merely the reappearance — even though changed — of the previous in the subsequent, is called memory.

If one were to use the word memory for the corresponding processes in the plant and animal kingdoms, then one ought to have a different word for the processes of memory in man. It is not the word, however, that is important in the above presentation, but, for the sake of understanding the human being, the significant thing is the recognition of the difference between what occurs in man on the one hand, and in animal and plant on the other. What may appear as highly intelligent actions in animals has also no connection whatever with what is here called memory.

### (b) page 39 and fol. pp.

No fixed boundary can be drawn between the changes resulting from the activity of the ego in the astral body and those taking place in the ether body. They pass over into each other. If man learns something and through it gains a certain power of discrimination, then a change has occurred in the astral body; if however, this judgment or discrimination so alters his soul condition that he becomes accustomed, after he has learned something about a matter, to feel differently about it from previously, a change has then taken place in the ether body. Everything that becomes a possession of the human soul that can be recalled in memory is based upon a change in the ether body. What becomes, by degrees, an immutable treasure of memory, rests on the fact that the work performed on the astral body has been transferred to the ether body.

### (c) page 51 and fol. pp.

The connection between sleep and fatigue is, in most cases, not viewed in a manner demanded by the facts. Sleep is supposed to be a result of fatigue. That this thought is much too simple is shown by the fact that a man, not at all tired, may fall asleep while listening to an uninteresting lecture, or on some similar occasion. Whoever maintains that such an occasion tires the listener, tries to explain by a method that lacks a serious scientific attitude. Unprejudiced observation must lead to the conclusion that waking and sleeping present different relationships of the soul to the body, which must appear in the regular course of life in rhythmical sequence like the right and left swing of a pendulum.

The result of such unprejudiced observation is that the filling of the soul with the impressions of the outer world awakes in it the desire, after experiencing this state, to enter another in which it is absorbed in the enjoyment of its own bodily nature. Two soul states alternate: the state of surrender to outer impressions and the state of surrender to one's own bodily nature. In the first state the desire for the second is unconsciously produced; the second state then takes its course in unconsciousness. The expression of the desire for the enjoyment of one's own bodily nature is fatigue.

We must then actually say that we feel tired, because we wish to go to sleep, not that we wish to go to sleep because we feel tired. Since the human soul can, through habit, arbitrarily call forth in itself the states that of necessity appear in normal human life, it is possible that, when the soul makes itself insensitive to a given outer impression, it calls forth in itself the desire for enjoyment of its own bodily nature; that is to say, the soul goes to sleep, even though this state is not induced by the inner condition of the human being.

#### **(d) p. 89**

The statement that, if the personal talents of a human being were subject only to the law of heredity, they would have to show themselves not at the end but at the beginning of a blood relationship, might easily be misunderstood. It might be said that talents cannot show themselves at the beginning, for they must first be developed. But this is not a valid objection. For, if we wish to prove that something is inherited from a forebear, we must show how there is to be found again in the descendant what existed already previously. If it were shown that something was present at the beginning of a blood relationship that would be found again in the further course of its evolution, we might then speak of heredity. We cannot do this, however, if at the end something appears that previously did not exist. The reversal of the above sentence was only to show that in this case the idea of heredity is an impossible one.

#### **(e) p. 110**

In certain chapters of this book it has been indicated how the world of man and the human being himself pass through the states that have been designated by the names Saturn, Sun, Moon, Earth, Jupiter, Venus, Vulcan. Indications have also been given concerning the relationship between human evolution and celestial bodies co-existing with the earth, such as Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, and so forth. These latter celestial bodies naturally go through their evolution also.

In the present age they have reached a stage in which their physical parts are shown to perception as what is called in physical astronomy Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, and so forth. If now, in the sense of

spiritual science, the present Saturn is studied, it shows itself, so to speak, as a reincarnation of ancient Saturn. It has come into existence because, before the separation of the sun from the earth, certain beings were present who were unable to participate in this separation, since they had absorbed into themselves so many of the characteristics belonging to the Saturn state that they could not abide in an environment where especially the sun characteristics were unfolded.

The present Jupiter has arisen, however, through the presence of beings who possessed characteristics that can only unfold on the future Jupiter of general cosmic evolution. An abode came into existence for them in which they are able to anticipate this future evolution. Similarly, Mars is a celestial body on which beings dwell who have passed through the Moon evolution in such a way that the earth could offer them no further advancement. Mars is a reincarnation of the ancient Moon at a higher stage.

The present Mercury is the dwelling place of beings who, by having developed certain earth characteristics in a form higher than it can occur on this earth planet, are in advance of the evolution of the Earth. In a similar way the present Venus is a prophetic anticipation of the future Venus state. From all this we are justified in choosing the designations for the states that have preceded the Earth and that will follow it from their present representatives in the cosmos. It is self-evident that there will be many objections to what has been brought forth here by those who wish to subject the paralleling of the supersensibly perceived Saturn, Sun and other cosmic states of evolution with the similarly named physical celestial bodies to the judgment of an intellect trained in outer observation of nature.

But just as it is possible, by means of mathematical concepts, to place the solar system before the soul as an image of time-space occurrences, so is it possible for supersensible cognition to permeate the mathematical picture with a soul content. Then it takes on a form that justifies the above indicated parallels. This permeation with a soul content is a natural consequence of the further application of a strictly natural scientific mode of observation. This latter mode of observation limits itself at present to seeking a reciprocal relationship between the solar system and the earth according to purely mathematical-mechanical concepts.

By doing so, the natural science of the future will of itself be driven to concepts that will extend the idea of a mechanical cosmos to one endowed with soul. To show — which could very well be done — that such an extension ought already to occur on the basis of modern natural scientific concepts would require the writing of another book. Here the matter in question can only be indicated; as a consequence, this indication is exposed to misunderstandings of one sort or another.

The disagreement of spiritual science with natural science is often only apparent, because the latter science still refuses at present to form thoughts that are not only demanded by supersensible cognition but also, in truth, by a cognition that adheres strictly to the physical-sensory. An unprejudiced observer is able to see everywhere in the results of modern natural scientific observation allusions to other fields of purely physical-sensory observation, which will have to be investigated in the future in a purely natural scientific manner and which will show that what supersensible perception reveals is completely verified by a physical observation of nature insofar as supersensible cognition is concerned with those supersensible cosmic occurrences to which physical-sensory manifestation corresponds.

# Cosmic Memory (Prehistory of Earth and Man)

by  
Rudolf Steiner

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# cosmic memory

anthology of Earth and Man

Rudolf Steiner





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## Introduction

### Rudolf Steiner: The Man And His Work

Rudolf Steiner is one of those figures who appear at critical moments in human history, and whose contribution places them in the vanguard of the progress of mankind.

Born in Austria in 1861, educated at the Technische Hochschule in Vienna, where he specialized in the study of mathematics and science, Steiner received recognition as a scholar when he was invited to edit the well-known Kurschner edition of the natural scientific writings of Goethe.

Already in 1886 at the age of twenty-five, he had shown his comprehensive grasp of the deeper implications of Goethe's way of thinking by writing his *Grundlinien einer Erkenntnistheorie der Goetheschen Weltanschauung* (Theory of Knowledge Implicit in Goethe's Conception of the World). Four years later he was called to join the group of eminent scholars in residence at Weimar, where he worked with them at the Goethe-Schiller Archives for some years.

A further result of these activities was the writing of his *Goethes Weltanschauung* (Goethe's Conception of the World) which, together with his introductions and commentary on Goethe's scientific writings, established Steiner as one of the outstanding exponents of Goethe's methodology.

In these years Steiner came into the circle of those around the aged Nietzsche. Out of the profound impression which this experience made upon him, he wrote his *Friedrich Nietzsche, Ein Kämpfer gegen seine Zeit* (Friedrich Nietzsche, a Fighter Against his Time), published in 1895. This work evaluates the achievements of the great philosopher against the background of his tragic life-experience on the one hand, and the spirit of the nineteenth century on the other.

In 1891 Steiner received his Ph.D. at the University of Rostock. His thesis dealt with the scientific teaching of Fichte, and is further evidence of Steiner's ability to evaluate the work of men whose influence has gone far to shape the thinking of the modern world. In somewhat enlarged form, this thesis appeared under the title, *Wahrheit und Wissenschaft* (Truth and Science), as the preface to Steiner's chief philosophical work, *Die Philosophie der Freiheit*, 1894. Later he suggested *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* as the title of the English translation of this book.

At about this time Steiner began his work as a lecturer. This activity was eventually to occupy the major portion of his time and was to take him on repeated lecture tours throughout Western Europe. These journeys extended from Norway, Sweden and Finland in the north to Italy and Sicily in the South, and included several visits to the British Isles. From about the turn of the century to his death in 1925, Steiner gave well over 6,000 lectures before audiences of most diverse backgrounds and from every walk of life.

First in Vienna, later in Weimar and Berlin, Steiner wrote for various periodicals and for the daily press. For nearly twenty years, observations on current affairs, reviews of books and plays, along with comment on scientific and philosophical developments flowed from his pen. Finally, upon completion of his work at Weimar, Steiner moved to Berlin in 1897 to assume the editorship of *Das Magazin für*

Litteratur, a well-known literary periodical which had been founded by Joseph Lehmann in 1832, the year of Goethe's death.

Steiner's written works, which eventually included over fifty titles, together with his extensive lecturing activity brought him into contact with increasing numbers of people in many countries. The sheer physical and mental vigor required to carry on a life of such broad, constant activity would alone be sufficient to mark him as one of the most creatively productive men of our time.

The philosophical outlook of Rudolf Steiner embraces such fundamental questions as the being of man, the nature and purpose of freedom, the meaning of evolution, the relation of man to nature, the life after death and before birth. On these and similar subjects, Steiner had unexpectedly new, inspiring and thought-provoking things to say. Through a study of his writings one can come to a clear, reasonable, comprehensive understanding of the human being and his place in the universe.

It is noteworthy that in all his years of work, Steiner made no appeal to emotionalism or sectarianism in his readers or hearers. His scrupulous regard and deep respect for the freedom of every man shines through everything he produced. The slightest compulsion or persuasion he considered an affront to the dignity and ability of the human being. Therefore, he confined himself to objective statements in his writing and speaking, leaving his readers and hearers entirely free to reject or accept his words.

Rudolf Steiner repeatedly emphasized that it is not educational background alone, but the healthy, sound, judgment and good will of each individual that enables the latter to comprehend what he has to say. While men and women eminent in cultural, social, political and scientific life have been and are among those who have studied and have found value in Steiner's work, experience has shown repeatedly that his ideas can be grasped by the simplest people. His ability to reach, without exception, all who come to meet his ideas with the willingness to understand, is another example of the well-known hallmark of genius.

The ideas of Rudolf Steiner address themselves to the humanity in men and women of every race and of every religious and philosophical point of view, and included them. However, it should be observed that for Steiner the decisive event in world development and the meaning of the historical process is centered in the life and activity of the Christ. Thus, his point of view is essentially Christian, but not in a limited or doctrinal sense.

The ideas expressed in his *Das Christentum als mystische Tatsache und die Mysterien des Altertums* (Christianity as Mystical Fact and the Mysteries of Antiquity), 1902, and in other works, especially his cycles of lectures on the Gospels (1908-1912), have brought to many a totally new relationship to Christianity, sufficiently broad to include men of every religious background in full tolerance, yet more deeply grounded in basic reality than are many of the creeds current today.

From his student days, Steiner had been occupied with the education of children. Through his own experience as tutor in Vienna and later as instructor in a school for working men and women in Berlin, he had ample opportunity to gain first-hand experience in dealing with the needs and interests of young people. In his Berlin teaching work he saw how closely related are the problems of education and of social life. Some of the fundamental starting-points for an educational praxis suited

to the needs of children and young people today, Steiner set forth in a small work titled *Die Erziehung des Kindes vom Gesichtspunkte der Geisteswissenschaft* (The Education of the Child in the Light of the Science of the Spirit), published in 1907.

Just forty years ago, in response to an invitation arising from the need of the time and from some of the ideas expressed in the essay mentioned above, Rudolf Steiner inaugurated a system of education of children and young people based upon factors inherent in the nature of the growing child, the learning process, and the requirements of modern life. He himself outlined the curriculum, selected the faculty, and, despite constant demands for his assistance in many other directions, he carefully supervised the initial years of activity of the first Rudolf Steiner Schools in Germany, Switzerland and England.

The story of the successful development of the educational movement over the past forty years cannot be told here. However, from the opening of the first Rudolf Steiner School, the Waldorf School in Stuttgart, Germany, to the present time, the success of Rudolf Steiner Education (sometimes referred to as Waldorf Education) has proven the correctness of Steiner's concept of the way in which to prepare the child for his eventual adult role in his contribution to modern society, existence in seventeen countries of the world, including the United States, Canada, Mexico, and South America.

In 1913, at Dornach near Basel, Switzerland, Rudolf Steiner laid the foundation of the Goetheanum, a unique building erected in consonance with his design and under his personal supervision. Intended as the building in which Steiner's four dramas would be performed, the Goetheanum also became the center of the Anthroposophical Society which had been founded by students of Rudolf Steiner in 1912. The original building was destroyed by fire in 1922, and subsequently was replaced prepared by Rudolf Steiner.

Today the Goetheanum is the world headquarters of General Anthroposophical Society, which was founded at Dornach at Christmas, 1923, with Rudolf Steiner as President. Audiences of many thousands come there each year to attend performances of Steiner's dramas, of Goethe's *Faust* (Parts I and II in their entirety), and of plays by other authors, presented on the Goetheanum stage, one of the finest in Europe. Eurythmy performances, musical events, conferences and lectures on many subjects, as well as courses of study in various fields attract people to the Goetheanum from many countries of the world, including the United States.

Among activities springing from the work of Rudolf Steiner are Bio-Dynamic Farming and Gardening, which aims at improved nutrition resulting from methods of agriculture outlined by him; the art of Eurythmy, created and described by him as "visible speech and visible song"; the work of the Clinical and Therapeutical Institute at Arlesheim, Switzerland, with related institutions in other countries, where for the past thirty years the indications given by Rudolf Steiner in the fields of Medicine and Pharmacology have been applied; the Homes for Children in need of special care, which exist in many countries for the treatment of mentally retarded children along lines developed under Steiner's direction; the further development of Steiner's indications of new directions of work in such fields as Mathematics, Physics, Painting, Sculpture, Music Therapy, Drama, Speech Formation, Astronomy, Economics, Psychology, and so on. Indeed, one cannot but wonder at the breadth, the scope of the benefits which have resulted from the work of this one man!

A full evaluation of what Rudolf Steiner accomplished for the good of mankind in so many directions can come about only when one comprehends the ideas which motivated him. He expressed these in his writings, of which the present volume is one. Taken together, these written works comprise the body of knowledge to which Steiner gave the name, the science of the spirit, or Anthroposophy. On page 249 of this book he writes of the benefits of this science of the spirit:

"When correctly understood, the truths of the science of the spirit will give man a true foundation for his life, will let him recognize his value, his dignity, and his essence, and will give him the highest zest for living. For these truths enlighten him about his connection with the world around him; they show him his highest goals, his true destiny. And they do this in a way which corresponds to the demands of the present, so that he need not remain caught in the contradiction between belief and knowledge."

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Many of the thoughts expressed in this book may at first appear startling, even fantastic in their implications. Yet when the prospect of space travel, as well as modern developments in technology, psychology, medicine and philosophy challenge our entire understanding of life and the nature of the living, strangeness as such should be no valid reason for the serious reader to turn away from a book of this kind. For example, while the word "occult" or "supersensible" may have undesirable connotations for many, current developments are fast bringing re-examination of knowledge previously shunned by conventional research. The challenge of the atomic age has made serious re-evaluation of all knowledge imperative, and it is recognized that no single area of that knowledge can be left out of consideration.

Steiner himself anticipated the reader's initial difficulties with this book, as he indicates on page 112: "The reader is requested to bear with much that is dark and difficult to comprehend, and to struggle toward an understanding, just as the writer has struggled toward a generally understandable manner of presentation. Many a difficulty in reading will be rewarded when one looks upon the deep mysteries, the important human enigmas which are indicated."

On the other hand, a further problem arises as a result of Steiner's conviction regarding the purpose for which a book dealing with the science of the spirit is designed. This involves the form of the book as against its content. Steiner stressed repeatedly that a book on the science of the spirit does not exist only for the purpose of conveying information to the reader. With painstaking effort, he elaborated his books in such a manner that while the reader receives certain information from the pages, he also experiences a kind of awakening of spiritual life within himself. Steiner describes this awakening as "... an experiencing with inner shocks, tensions and resolutions."

In his autobiography he speaks of his striving to bring about such an awakening in the readers of his books: "I know that with every page my inner battle has been to reach the utmost possible in this direction. In the matter of style, I do not so describe that my subjective feelings can be detected in the sentences. In writing I subdue to a dry mathematical style what has come out of warm and profound feeling. But only such a style can be an awakener, for the reader must cause warmth and feeling to awaken in himself. He cannot simply allow these to flow into him from the one setting forth the truth,

while he remains passively composed." (The Course of My Life, p. 330)

In the present translation, therefore, careful effort has been made to preserve as much as possible such external form details as sentence and paragraph arrangement, italics, and even some of the more characteristic punctuation of the original, regardless of currently accepted English usage.

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The essays contained in this book occupy a significant place in the life-work of Rudolf Steiner. They are his first written expression of a cosmology resulting from that spiritual perception which he described as "a fully conscious standing-within the spiritual world." In his autobiography he refers to the early years of the present century as the time when, "Out of the experience of the spiritual world in general developed specific details of knowledge." (Op. cit. pp. 326, 328.) Steiner has stated that from his early childhood he knew the reality of the spiritual world because he could experience this spiritual world directly. However, only after nearly forty years was it possible for him to transmit to others concrete, detailed information regarding this spiritual world.

As they appear in the present essays, these "specific details" touch upon processes and events of extraordinary sweep and magnitude. They include essential elements of man's prehistory and early history, and shed light upon the evolutionary development of our earth. Published now for the first time in America, just a century after Darwin's *Origin of the Species* began its transformation of Man's view of himself and of his environment, these essays clarify and complement the pioneer work of the great English scientist.

Rudolf Steiner shows that the insoluble link between man and cosmos is the fundamental basis of evolution. As man has participated in the development of the world we know today, so his achievements are directly connected with the ultimate destiny of the universe. In his hands rests the freedom to shape the future course of creation. Knowledge of his exalted origins and of the path he followed in forfeiting divine direction for the attainment of his present self-dependent freedom, are indispensable if man is to evolve a future worthy of a responsible human being. This book appears now because of its particular significance at a moment when imperative and grave decisions are being made in the interests of the future of mankind.

Paul Marshal Allen  
Englewood, New Jersey  
June, 1959

## Preface by the Editor of the German Edition (1939)

These Essays of Dr. Rudolf Steiner which first appeared in 1904 are now published in book form after thirty-five years. They were written for the periodical *Lucifer Gnosis*, which appeared at first as a monthly and then at longer intervals. This explains the occasional repetition of what has been said previously. But, after all, repetitions are especially useful in the study of the science of the spirit. However, some may find it confusing that beside the new terminology coined for the Occident one is also mentioned which has been taken from oriental esoterica.

The latter had become popular in Europe around the turn of the century through the literature of the Theosophical Society. The exotic names had stayed in people's memories, but the finer nuances which the Oriental associates with them remained closed to the European. The adaptation of our language, which is fitted for sensory perception, to a more delicate spiritual conceptualization and to a concrete picturing of even the extrasensory was something at which Dr. Steiner worked unceasingly. In the description of the activity of the Hierarchies he uses the Christian terminology customary for this purpose.

What is here presented in form of a brief survey, finds its continuation in the books *Theosophie* and *Geheimwissenschaft im Umriss*.

The periodical *Lucifer Gnosis* could not be continued because of the excessive demands made by lecturing activities and other occupations. Apart from the results of spiritual scientific research, it contained many essays in which Dr. Steiner comes to grips with the scientific thinking of the present. Since writings like these concerning the *Akasha Chronicle* cannot fail to appear as wild phantasy to most unprepared readers of today, two essays from this periodical which touch upon the epistemological problems of the present, precede and follow them. The sober logic of these two essays should furnish proof that the investigator of supersensible worlds is also able to survey problems of the present in a calm and objective manner.

The periodical was also devoted to the answering of questions posed by its readers. From this section we include some points relating to Atlantean humanity and to mystery science. However, the one who wishes to obtain a clear idea of the manner in which a reading of the *Akasha Chronicle* becomes possible, must devote himself intensively to the study of Anthroposophy.

Apart from the above-mentioned books we indicate for those who are advanced in the study of the science of the spirit, the esoteric reflections on *Okkultes Lesen und Okkultes Hören* (Occult Reading and Occult Hearing), and the third volume of the series *Geistige Wesen und Ihre Wirkungen* (Spiritual Beings and Their Effects) which has just appeared and should be of special interest today: *Geschichtliche Notwendigkeit und Freiheit, Schicksalseinwirkungen aus der Welt der Toten* (Historical Necessity and Freedom, Fateful Influences from the World of the Dead).

Marie Steiner (1867-1948)

## **1 - Contemporary Civilization in the Mirror of the Science of the Spirit (1904)**

The Observer of the course of scientific development in the last decades cannot doubt that a great revolution is in preparation. Today when a scientist talks about the so-called enigmas of existence, it sounds quite different than it did a short time ago.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century some of the most daring spirits saw in scientific materialism the only creed possible to one familiar with the then recent results of research. The blunt saying of that time has become famous: "Thoughts stand in about the same relationship to the brain as gall to the liver." This was stated by Karl Vogt, who in his *Köhlerglauben und Wissenschaft* (Blind Faith and Science) and in other writings, declared everything to be superannated which did not make spiritual activity and the life of the soul proceed from the mechanism of the nervous system and of the brain in the same manner in which the physicist explains that the movement of the hands proceeds from the mechanism of the clock.

That was the time when Ludwig Buechner's *Kraft und Stoff* (Force and Matter) became a sort of gospel among wide circles of the educated. One may well say that excellent, independently thinking minds came to such convictions because of the powerful impression made by the successes of science in those times. A short time before, the microscope had shown the synthesis of living beings out of their smallest parts, the cells. Geology, the science of the formation of the earth, had come to the point of explaining the development of the planets in terms of the same laws which still operate today. Darwinism promised to explain the origin of man in a completely natural way and began its victorious course through the educated world so auspiciously that for many it seemed to dispose of all "old belief."

A short time ago, all this became quite different. It is true that stragglers who adhere to these opinions can still be found in men like Ladenburg at the Congress of Scientists in 1903, who proclaim the materialistic gospel; but against them stand others who have arrived at a quite different way of speaking through more mature reflection on scientific questions. A work has just appeared which bears the title, *Naturwissenschaft und Weltanschauung* (Science and World Conception). Its author is Max Verworn, a physiologist of the school of Haeckel.

In this work one can read the following: "Indeed, even if we possessed the most complete knowledge of the physiological events in the cells and fibers of the cerebral cortex with which psychic events are connected, even if we could look into the mechanism of the brain as we look into the works of a clock, we would never find anything but moving atoms. No human being could see or otherwise perceive through his senses how sensations and ideas arise in this mechanism. The results which the materialistic conception has obtained in its attempt to trace mental processes back to the movements of atoms illustrates its efficiency very clearly.

As long as the materialistic conception has existed, it has not explained the simplest sensation by movements of atoms. Thus it has been and thus it will be in future. How could it be conceivable that things which are not perceptible by the senses, such as the psychic processes, could ever be explained by a mere splitting up of large bodies into their smallest parts?



The atom is still a body after all, and no movement of atoms is ever capable of bridging the gulf between the material world and the psyche. However fruitful the materialistic point of view has been as a scientific working hypothesis, however fruitful it will doubtless remain in this sense in the future — I point only to the successes of structural chemistry — just as useless is it as the basis for a world conception. Here it shows itself to be too narrow. Philosophical materialism has finished playing its historical role. This attempt at a scientific world conception has failed for ever." Thus, at the beginning of the twentieth century, a scientist speaks about the conception which around the middle of the nineteenth was proclaimed as a new gospel demanded by the advances of science.

It is especially the 'fifties, the 'sixties, and the 'seventies of the nineteenth century which may be designated as the years of the high tide of materialism. The explanation of mental and spiritual phenomena on the basis of purely mechanical processes exercised a really fascinating influence at that time. The materialists could tell themselves that they had won a victory over the adherents of a spiritual world conception. Those also who had not started from scientific studies joined their ranks.

While Buechner, Vogt, Moleschott and others still built on purely scientific premises, in his *Alten und neuen Glauben* (Old and New Belief, 1872), David Friedrich Strauss attempted to obtain bases for the new creed from his theological and philosophical ideas. Decades before he had already intervened in the intellectual life with his *Leben Jesu* (Life of Jesus) in a manner which caused a sensation. He seemed to be equipped with the full theological and philosophical culture of his time.

He now said boldly that the materialistic explanation of the phenomena of the universe, including man, had to form the basis for a new gospel, for a new moral comprehension and formation of existence. The descent of man from purely animal ancestors seemed about to become a new dogma, and in the eyes of scientific philosophers, all adherence to spiritual-soul origin of our race amounted to an antiquated superstition from the infancy of mankind, with which one did not have to disturb oneself further.

The historians of culture came to the aid of those who built on the new science. The customs and ideas of savage tribes were made the object of study. The remains of primitive cultures, which are dug out of the ground like the bones of prehistoric animals and the impressions of extinct plants were to bear witness to the fact that at his first appearance on earth man was distinguished only in degree from the higher animals, and that mentally and spiritually he had risen to his present eminence from the level of animalism pure and simple.

A time had come when everything in this materialistic edifice seemed to be right. Under a kind of coercion which the ideas of the time exercised on them, men thought as a faithful materialist has written: "The assiduous study of science has brought me to the point where I accept everything calmly, bear the inevitable patiently, and for the rest help in the work of gradually reducing the misery of mankind. The fantastic consolations which a credulous mind seeks in marvelous formulas I can renounce all the more easily since my imagination receives the most beautiful stimulation through literature and art.

When I follow the plot of a great drama or, under the guidance of scientists, make a journey to other stars, an excursion through prehistoric landscapes, when I admire the majesty of nature on mountain

peaks or venerate the art of man in tones and colors, do I not then have enough of the elevating? Do I then still need something which contradicts my reason? The fear of death, which torments so many of the pious, is completely unknown to me. I know that I no more survive after my body decays than I lived before my birth. The agonies of purgatory and of hell do not exist for me. I return to the boundless realm of Nature, who embraces all her children lovingly.

My life was not in vain. I have made good use of the strength which I possessed. I depart from earth in the firm belief that everything will become better and more beautiful." Vom Glauben zum Wissen. Ein lehrreicher Entwicklungsgang getreu nach dem Leben geschildert von Kuno Freidank. (On the Belief in Knowledge. An Instructive Course of Development Described in a Manner Faithfully True to Life by Kuno Freidank.) Many people who are still subject to the compulsive ideas which acted upon the representatives of the materialistic world conception in the time mentioned above, also think in this manner today.

Those however who tried to maintain themselves on the heights of scientific thought have come to other ideas. The first reply to scientific materialism, made by an eminent scientist at the Congress of Scientists in Leipzig (1876), has become famous. Du Bois-Reymond at that time made his "Ignorabimus speech." He tried to demonstrate that this scientific materialism could in fact do nothing but ascertain the movements of the smallest material particles, and he demanded that it should be satisfied with doing this. But he emphasized at the same time that in doing this it contributes absolutely nothing to an explanation of mental and spiritual processes. One may take whatever attitude one pleases toward these statements of Du Bois-Reymond, but this much is clear: they represented a rejection of the materialistic interpretation of the world. They showed how as a scientist one could lose confidence in this interpretation.

The materialistic interpretation of the world had thereby entered the stage where it declared itself to be unassuming as far as the life of the soul is concerned. It admitted its "ignorance" (agnosticism). It is true that it declared its intention of remaining "scientific" and of not having recourse to other sources of knowledge, but on the other hand it did not want to ascend with its means to a higher world-conception. In recent times Raoul Francé, a scientist, has shown in comprehensive fashion the inadequacy of scientific results for a higher world-conception. This is an undertaking to which we would like to refer again on another occasion.

The facts now steadily increased which showed the impossibility of the attempt to build up a science of the soul on the investigation of material phenomena. Science was forced to study certain "abnormal" phenomena of the life of the soul like hypnotism, suggestion, somnambulism. It became apparent that in the face of these phenomena a materialistic view is completely inadequate for a truly thinking person. The facts with which one became acquainted were not new. They were phenomena which had already been studied in earlier times and up to the beginning of the nineteenth Century, but which in the time of the materialistic flood had simply been put aside as inconvenient.

To this was added something else. It became more and more apparent on how weak a basis the scientists had built, even as far as their explanations of the origin of animal species and consequently of man were concerned. For a while, the ideas of "adaptation" and of the "struggle for existence" had exercised an attraction in the explanation of the origin of species. One learned to understand that in following them one had followed mirages.

A school was formed under the leadership of Weismann which denied that characteristics which an organism had acquired through adaptation to the environment could be transmitted by inheritance, and that in this way a transformation of organisms could occur. One therefore ascribed everything to the "struggle for existence" and spoke of an "omnipotence of natural selection." A stark contrast to this view was presented by those who, relying on unquestionable facts, declared that a "struggle for existence" had been spoken of in cases where it did not even exist. They wanted to demonstrate that nothing could be explained by it. They spoke of an "impotence of natural selection."

Moreover, in the last years de Vries was able to show experimentally that changes of one life-time into another can occur by leaps, mutation. With this, what was regarded as a firm article of faith by the Darwinists, namely that animal and plant forms change only gradually, was shaken. More and more the ground on which one had built for decades simply disappeared beneath one's feet.

Even earlier, thinking scientists had realized that they had to abandon this ground; thus W. H. Rolph, who died young, in 1884 declared in his book, *Biologische Probleme, zugleich als Versuch zur Entwicklung einer rationellen Ethik* (Biological Problems, with an Attempt at the Development of Rational Ethics): "Only through the introduction of insatiability does the Darwinian principle of the struggle for life become acceptable. Because it is only then that we have an explanation for the fact that wherever it can, a creature acquires more than it needs for maintaining the status quo, that it grows to excess where the occasion for this is given ... While for the Darwinists there is no struggle for existence wherever the existence of a creature is not threatened, for me the struggle is an omnipresent one. It is primarily a struggle for life, a struggle for the increase of life, not a struggle for existence."

It is only natural that in view of these facts the judicious confess to themselves: "The materialistic universe of thought is not fit for the construction of a world-conception. If we base ourselves on it, we cannot say anything about mental and spiritual phenomena." Today there are already numerous scientists who seek to erect a structure of the world for themselves, based on quite different ideas.

One need only recall the work of the botanist, Reineke, *Die Welt als Tat* (The World as Deed). However, it becomes apparent that such scientists have not been trained with impunity amidst purely materialistic ideas. What they utter from their new idealistic standpoint is inadequate, can satisfy them for a while, but not those who look more deeply into the enigmas of the world. Such scientists cannot bring themselves to approach those methods which proceed from a real contemplation of the mind and the soul. They have the greatest fear of "mysticism", or "gnosis" or "theosophy."

This appears clearly, for example, in the work of Verworn quoted above. He says: "There is a ferment in science. Things which seemed clear and transparent to everybody have become cloudy today. Long-tested symbols and ideas, with which everyone dealt and worked at every step without hesitation a short time ago, have begun to totter and are looked upon with suspicion. Fundamental concepts, such as those of matter, appear to have been shaken, and the firmest ground is beginning to sway under the scientist's steps. Certain problems alone stand with rocklike firmness, problems on which until now all attempts, all efforts of science have been shattered.

In the face of this knowledge one who is despondent resignedly throws himself into the arms of mysticism, which has always been the last refuge when the tormented intellect could see no way out. The sensible man looks for new symbols and attempts to create new bases on which he can build further." One can see that because of his habits of conceptualization the scientific thinker of today is not in a position to think of "mysticism" otherwise than as implying intellectual confusion and vagueness.

What concepts of the life of the soul does such a thinker not reach! At the end of the work referred to above, we read: "Prehistoric man formed the idea of a separation of body and soul in face of death. The soul separated itself from the body and led an independent existence. It found no rest and returned as a ghost unless it was banned by sepulchral ceremonies. Man was terrorized by fear and superstition. The remains of these ideas have come down to our time. The fear of death, that is, of what is to come after, is widespread today. How differently does all this appear from the standpoint of psychomonism! Since the psychic experiences of the individual only take place when certain regular connections exist, they cease when these connections are in any way disturbed, as happens numberless times in the course of a day.

With the bodily changes at death, these connections stop entirely. Thus, no sensation and conception, no thought and no feeling of the individual can remain. The individual soul is dead. Nevertheless the sensations and thoughts and feelings continue to live. They live beyond the transitory individual in other individuals, wherever the same complexes of conditions exist. They are transmitted from individual to individual, from generation to generation, from people to people. They weave at the eternal loom of the soul. They work at the history of the human spirit. Thus we all survive after death as links in the great interconnected chain of spiritual development." But is that something different from the survival of the wave in others which it has caused, itself meanwhile disappearing?

Does one really survive when one continues to exist only in one's effects? Does one not have such a survival in common with all phenomena, even those of physical nature? One can see that the materialistic world conception had to undermine its own foundations. As yet it cannot lay new ones.

Only a true understanding of mysticism, theosophy, and gnosis will enable it to do so. The chemist Osterwald spoke several years ago at the Congress of Scientists at Luebeck of the "overcoming of materialism," and for this purpose founded a new periodical dealing with the philosophy of nature. Science is ready to receive the fruits of a higher world-conception. All resistance will avail it nothing; it will have to take into account the needs of the longing human soul.

## 2 - From the Akasha Chronicle (Preface)

By means of ordinary history man can learn only a small part of what humanity experienced in prehistory. Historical documents shed light on but a few millennia. What archaeology, paleontology, and geology can teach us is very limited. Furthermore, everything built on external evidence is unreliable. One need only consider how the picture of an event or people, not so very remote from us, has changed when new historical evidence has been discovered.

One need but compare the descriptions of one and the same thing as given by different historians, and he will soon realize on what uncertain ground he stands in these matters. Everything belonging to the external world of the senses is subject to time. In addition, time destroys what has originated in time. On the other hand, external history is dependent on what has been preserved in time. Nobody can say that the essential has been preserved, if he remains content with external evidence.

Everything which comes into being in time has its origin in the eternal. But the eternal is not accessible to sensory perception. Nevertheless, the ways to the perception of the eternal are open for man. He can develop forces dormant in him so that he can recognize the eternal. In the essays, *Wie erlangt man Erkenntnisse der höheren Welten?* (How Does One Attain Knowledge of Higher Worlds?), which appear in this periodical, (\*) this development is referred to.

These present essays will also show that at a certain high level of his cognitive power, man can penetrate to the eternal origins of the things which vanish with time. A man broadens his power of cognition in this way if he is no longer limited to external evidence where knowledge of the past is concerned. Then he can see in events what is not perceptible to the senses, that part which time cannot destroy.

He penetrates from transitory to non-transitory history. It is a fact that this history is written in other characters than is ordinary history. In gnosis and in theosophy it is called the "Akasha Chronicle." Only a faint conception of this chronicle can be given in our language. For our language corresponds to the world of the senses. That which is described by our language at once receives the character of this sense world. To the uninitiated, who cannot yet convince himself of the reality of a separate spiritual world through his own experience, the initiate easily appears to be a visionary, if not something worse.

The one who has acquired the ability to perceive in the spiritual world comes to know past events in their eternal character. They do not stand before him like the dead testimony of history, but appear in full life. In a certain sense, what has happened takes place before him.

Those initiated into the reading of such a living script can look back into a much more remote past than is represented by external history; and — on the basis of direct spiritual perception — they can also describe much more dependably the things of which history tells. In order to avoid possible misunderstanding, it should be said that spiritual perception is not infallible. This perception also can err, can see in an inexact, oblique, wrong manner. No man is free from error in this field, no matter how high he stands.

Therefore one should not object when communications emanating from such spiritual sources do not always entirely correspond. But the dependability of observation is much greater here than in the external world of the senses. What various initiates can relate about history and prehistory will be in essential agreement. Such a history and prehistory does in fact exist in all mystery schools. Here for millennia the agreement has been so complete that the conformity existing among external historians of even a single century cannot be compared with it. The initiates describe essentially the same things at all times and in all places.

Following this introduction, several chapters from the Akasha Chronicle will be given. First, those events will be described which took place when the so-called Atlantean Continent still existed between America and Europe. This part of our earth's surface was once land.

Today this forms the floor of the Atlantic Ocean. Plato tells of the last remnant of this land, the island Poseidon, which lay westward of Europe and Africa. In *The Story of Atlantis and Lost Lemuria*, by W. Scott-Elliott, the reader can find that the floor of the Atlantic Ocean was once a continent, that for about a million years it was the scene of a civilization which, to be sure, was quite different from our modern ones, and the fact that the last remnants of this continent sank in the tenth millennium B.C.

In this present book the intention is to give information which will supplement what is said by Scott-Elliott. While he describes more the outer, the external events among our Atlantean ancestors, the aim here is to record some details concerning their spiritual character and the inner nature of the conditions under which they lived.

Therefore the reader must go back in imagination to a period which lies almost ten thousand years behind us, and which lasted for many millennia. What is described here however, did not take place only on the continent now covered by the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, but also in the neighboring regions of what today is Asia, Africa, Europe, and America. What took place in these regions later, developed from this earlier civilizations.

Today I am still obliged to remain silent about the sources of the information given here. One who knows anything at all about such sources will understand why this has to be so. But events can occur which will make a breaking of this silence possible very soon. How much of the knowledge hidden within the theosophical movement may gradually be communicated, depends entirely on the attitude of our contemporaries.

Now follows the first of the writings which can be given here.

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[\*] These essays were published in book form, Berlin, 1909.

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### 3 - Our Atlantean Ancestors

Our Atlantean ancestors differed more from present-day man than he would imagine whose knowledge is confined wholly to the world of the senses. This difference extended not only to the external appearance but also to spiritual faculties. Their knowledge, their technical arts, indeed their entire civilization differed from what can be observed today. If we go back to the first periods of Atlantean humanity we find a mental capacity quite different from ours.

Logical reason, the power of arithmetical combining, on which everything rests that is produced today, were totally absent among the first Atlanteans. On the other hand, they had a highly developed memory. This memory was one of their most prominent mental faculties. For example, the Atlantean did not calculate as we do, by learning certain rules which he then applied. A "multiplication table" was something totally unknown in Atlantean times. Nobody impressed upon his intellect that three times four is twelve.

In the event that he had to perform such a calculation he could manage because he remembered identical or similar situations. He remembered how it had been on previous occasions. One need only realize that each time a new faculty develops in an organism, an old faculty loses power and acuteness. The man of today is superior to the Atlantean in logical reasoning, in the ability to combine. On the other hand, memory has deteriorated. Nowadays man thinks in concepts; the Atlantean thought in images. When an image appeared in his soul he remembered a great many similar images which he had already experienced, He directed his judgment accordingly.

For this reason all teaching at that time was different from what it became later. It was not calculated to furnish the child with rules, to sharpen his reason. Instead, life was presented to him in vivid images, so that later he could remember as much as possible when he had to act under particular conditions. When the child had grown and had gone out into life, for everything he had to do he could remember something similar which had been presented to him in the course of his education.

He could manage best when the new situation was similar to one he had already seen. Under totally new conditions the Atlantean had to rely on experiment, while in this respect much has been spared modern man due to the fact that he is equipped with rules. He can easily apply these in those situations which are new to him. The Atlantean system of education gave a uniformity to all of life. For long periods things were done again and again in the same way. The faithful memory did not allow anything to develop which was even remotely similar to the rapidity of our present-day progress. One did what one had always "seen" before. One did not invent; one remembered.

He was not an authority who had learned much, but rather he who had experienced much and therefore could remember much. In the Atlantean period it would have been impossible for someone to decide an important matter before reaching a certain age. One had confidence only in a person who could look back upon long experience.

What has been said here was not true of the initiates and their schools. For they are in advance of the stage of development of their period. For admission into such schools, the decisive factor is not age, but whether in his previous incarnations the applicant has acquired the faculties for receiving higher

wisdom.

The confidence placed in the initiates and their representatives during the Atlantean period was not based on the richness of their personal experience, but rather on the antiquity of their wisdom. In the case of the initiate, personality ceases to have any importance. He is totally in the service of eternal wisdom. Therefore the characteristic features of a particular period do not apply to him.

While the power to think logically was absent among the Atlanteans (especially the earlier ones), in their highly developed memory they possessed something which gave a special character to everything they did. But with the nature of one human power others are always connected. Memory is closer to the deeper natural basis of man than reason, and in connection with it other powers were developed which were still closer to those of subordinate natural beings than are contemporary human powers. Thus the Atlanteans could control what one calls the life force.

As today one extracts the energy of heat from coal and transforms it into motive power for our means of locomotion, the Atlanteans knew how to put the germinal energy of organisms into the service of their technology. One can form an idea of this from the following. Think of a kernel of seed-grain. In this an energy lies dormant. This energy causes the stalk to sprout from the kernel.

Nature can awaken this energy which reposes in the seed. Modern man cannot do it at will. He must bury the seed in the ground and leave the awakening to the forces of nature. The Atlantean could do something else. He knew how one can change the energy of a pile of grain into technical power, just as modern man can change the heat energy of a pile of coal into such power. Plants were cultivated in the Atlantean period not merely for use as foodstuffs but also in order to make the energies dormant in them available to commerce and industry.

Just as we have mechanisms for transforming the energy dormant in coal into energy of motion in our locomotives, so the Atlanteans had mechanisms in which they — so to speak — burned plant seeds, and in which the life force was transformed into technically utilizable power. The vehicles of the Atlanteans, which floated a short distance above the ground travelled at a height lower than that of the mountain ranges of the Atlantean period, and they had steering mechanisms by the aid of which they could rise above these mountain ranges.

One must imagine that with the passage of time all conditions on our earth have changed very much. Today, the above-mentioned vehicles of the Atlanteans would be totally useless. Their usefulness depended on the fact that then the cover of air which envelops the earth was much denser than at present. Whether in face of current scientific beliefs one can easily imagine such greater density of air, must not occupy us here. Because of their very nature, science and logical thinking can never decide what is possible or impossible. Their only function is to explain what has been ascertained by experience and observation. The above-mentioned density of air is as certain for occult experience as any fact of today given by the senses can be.

Equally certain however is the fact, perhaps even more at that time the water on the whole earth was much thinner than today. Because of this thinness the water could be directed by the germinal energy used by the Atlanteans into technical services which today are impossible. As a result of the increased



density of the water, it has become impossible to move and to direct it in such be sufficiently clear that the civilization of the Atlantean period was radically different from ours. It will also be understood that the physical nature of an Atlantean was quite different from that of a contemporary man.

The Atlantean took into himself water which could be used by the life force inherent in his own body in a manner quite different from that possible in today's physical body. It was due to this that the Atlantean could consciously employ his physical powers in an entirely different way from a man of today. He had, so to speak, the means to increase the physical powers in himself when he needed them for what he was doing. In order to have an accurate conception of the Atlanteans one must know that their ideas of fatigue and the depletion of forces were quite different from those of present-day man.

An Atlantean settlement — as must be evident from everything we have described — had a character which in no way resembled that of a modern city. In such a settlement everything was, on the contrary, still in alliance with nature. Only a vaguely similar picture is given if one should say that in the first Atlantean periods — about to the middle of the third subrace — a settlement resembled a garden in which the houses were built of trees with artfully intertwined branches. What the work of human hands created at that time grew out of nature. And man himself felt wholly related to nature. Hence his social sense also was quite different from that of today. After all, nature is common to all men. What the Atlantean built up on the basis of nature he considered to be common property just as a man of today thinks it only natural to consider as his private property what his ingenuity, his intelligence have created for him.

One familiar with the idea that the Atlanteans were equipped with such spiritual and physical powers as have been described, will also understand that in still earlier times mankind presented a picture which reminds him in only a few particulars of what he is accustomed to see today. Not only men, but also the surrounding nature has changed enormously in the course of time. Plant and animal forms have become different. All of earthly nature has been subjected to transformations. Once inhabited regions of earth have been destroyed; others have come into existence.

The ancestors of the Atlanteans lived in a region which has disappeared, the main part of which lay south of contemporary Asia. In theosophical writings they are called the Lemurians. After they had passed through various stages of development the greatest part of them declined. These became stunted men, whose descendants still inhabit certain parts of the earth today as so-called savage tribes. Only a small part of Lemurian humanity was capable of further development. From this part the Atlanteans were formed.

Later, something similar again took place. The greatest part of the Atlantean population declined, and from a small portion are descended the so-called Aryans who comprise present-day civilized humanity. According to the nomenclature of the science of the spirit, the Lemurians, Atlanteans and Aryans are root races of mankind. If one imagines that two such root races preceded the Lemurians and that two will succeed the Aryans in the future, one obtains a total of seven. One always arises from another in the manner just indicated with respect to the Lemurians, Atlanteans, and Aryans. Each root race has physical and mental characteristics which are quite different from those of the preceding one. While, for example, the Atlanteans especially developed memory and everything connected with

it, at the present time it is the task of the Aryans to develop the faculty of thought and all that belongs to it.

In each root race various stages must also be gone through. There are always seven of these. In the beginning of a period identified with a root race, its principal characteristics are in a youthful condition; slowly they attain maturity and finally enter a decline. The population of a root race is thereby divided into seven sub-races. But one must not imagine that one subrace immediately disappears when a new one develops. Each one may maintain itself for a long time while others are developing beside it. Thus there are always populations which show different stages of development living beside each other on earth.

The first subrace of the Atlanteans developed from a very advanced part of the Lemurians who had a high evolutionary potential. The faculty of memory appeared only in its rudiments among the Lemurians, and then only in the last period of their development. One must imagine that while a Lemurian could form ideas of what he was experiencing, he could not preserve these ideas. He immediately forgot what he had represented to himself. Nevertheless, that he lived in a certain civilization, that, for example, he had tools, erected buildings and so-forth — this he owed not to his own powers of conception, but to a mental force in him, which was instinctive. However, one must not imagine this to have been the present-day instinct of animals, but one of a different kind.

Theosophical writings call the first subrace of the Atlanteans that of the Rmoahals. The memory of this race was primarily directed toward vivid sense impressions. Colors which the eye had seen, sounds which the ear had heard, had a long after-effect in the soul. This was expressed in the fact that the Rmoahals developed feelings which their Lemurian ancestors did not yet know. For example, the attachment to what has been experienced in the past is a part of these feelings.

With the development of memory was connected that of language. As long as man did not preserve what was past, a communication of what had been experienced could not take place through the medium of language. Because in the last Lemurian period the first beginnings of memory appeared, at that time it was also possible for the faculty of naming what had been seen and heard to have its inception. Only men who have the faculty of recollection can make use of a name which has been given to something.

The Atlantean period, therefore, is the one in which the development of language took place. With language a bond was established between the human soul and the things outside man. He produced a speech-word inside himself, and this speech-word belonged to the objects of the external world. A new bond is also formed among men by communications through the medium of language. It is true that all this existed in a still youthful form among the Rmoahals, but nevertheless it distinguished them profoundly from their Lemurian forefathers.

The soul powers of these first Atlanteans still possessed something of the forces of nature. These men were more closely related to the beings of nature which surrounded them than were their successors. Their soul powers were more connected with forces of nature than are those of modern man. Thus the speech-word which they produced had something of the power of nature. They not only named things, but in their words was a power over things and also over their fellow-men. The word of the Rmoahals

not only had meaning, but also power.

The magic power of words is something which was far truer for those men than it is for men of today. When a Rmoahals man pronounced a word, this word developed a power similar to that of the object it designated. Because of this, words at that time were curative; they could advance the growth of plants, tame the rage of animals, and perform other similar functions. All this progressively decreased in force among the later sub-races of the Atlanteans. One could say that the original fullness of power was gradually lost.

The Rmoahals men felt this plenitude of power to be a gift of mighty nature, and their relationship to the latter had a religious character. For them language was something especially sacred. The misuse of certain sounds, which possessed an important power, was an impossibility. Each man felt that such misuse must cause him enormous harm. The good magic of such words would have changed into its opposite; that which would have brought blessings if used properly would bring ruin to the author if used criminally. In a kind of innocence of feeling the Rmoahals ascribed their power not so much to themselves as to the divine nature acting within them.

This changed among the second subrace, the so-called Tlavatli peoples. The men of this race began to feel their own personal value. Ambition, a quality unknown to the Rmoahals, made itself felt among them. Memory was in a sense transferred to the conception of communal life. He who could look back upon certain deeds demanded recognition of them from his fellow-men. He demanded that his works be preserved in memory. Based upon this memory of deeds, a group of men who belonged together elected one as leader. A kind of regal rank developed.

This recognition was even preserved beyond death. The memory, the remembrance of the ancestors or of those who had acquired merit in life, developed. From this there emerged among some tribes a kind of religious veneration of the deceased, an ancestor cult. This cult continued into much later times and took the most varied forms. Among the Rmoahals a man was still esteemed only to the degree to which he could command respect at a particular moment through his powers. If someone among them wanted recognition for what he had done in earlier days, he had to demonstrate by new deeds that he still possessed his old power. He had to recall the old works to memory by means of new ones. What had been done was not esteemed for its own sake. Only the second subrace considered the personal character of a man to the point where it took his past life into account in the evaluation of this character.

A further consequence of memory for the communal life of man was the fact that groups of men were formed which were held together by the remembrance of common deeds. Previously the formation of groups depended wholly upon natural forces, upon common descent. Man did not add anything through his own mind to what nature had made of him. Now a powerful personality recruited a number of people for a joint undertaking, and the memory of this joint action formed a social group.

This kind of social communal life became fully developed only among the third subrace, the Toltec. It was therefore the men of this race who first founded what a state. The leadership, the government of these communities, was transmitted from one generation to the next. The father now gave over to the son what previously survived only in the memory of contemporaries. The deeds of the ancestors were

not to be forgotten by their whole line of descent. What an ancestor had done was esteemed by his descendants.

However, one must realize that in those times men actually had the power to transmit their gifts to their descendants. Education, after all, was calculated to mold life through vivid images. The effectiveness of this education had its foundation in the personal power which emanated from the educator — He did not sharpen the power of thought, but in fact, developed those gifts which were of a more instinctive kind. Through such a system of education the capacities of the father were generally transmitted to the son.

Under such conditions personal experience acquired more and more importance among the third subrace. When one group of men separated from another for the foundation of a new community, it carried along the remembrance of what it had experienced at the old scene. But at the same time there was something in this remembrance which the group did not find suitable for itself, in which it did not feel at ease. Therefore it then tried something new. Thus conditions improved with every one of these new foundations.

It was only natural that what was better was imitated. These are the facts which explain the development of those flourishing communities in the period of the third subrace, described in theosophic literature. The personal experiences which were acquired found support from those who were initiated into the eternal laws of spiritual development. Powerful rulers themselves were initiated, so that personal ability might have full support. Through his personal ability man slowly prepares himself for initiation. He must first develop his powers from below in order that the enlightenment from above can be given to him. In this way the initiated kings and leaders of the Atlanteans came into being. Enormous power was in their hands, and they were greatly venerated.

But in this fact also lay the reason for decline and decay. The development of memory led to the pre-eminent power of a personality. Man wanted to count for something through his power. The greater the power became, the more he wanted to exploit it for himself. The ambition which had developed turned into marked selfishness. Thus the misuse of these powers arose. When one considers the capabilities of the Atlanteans resulting from their mastery of the life force, one will understand that this misuse inevitably had enormous consequences. A broad power over nature could be put at the service of personal egotism.

This was accomplished in full measure by the fourth subrace, the Primal Turanians. The members of this race, who were instructed in the mastery of the above-mentioned powers, often used them in order to satisfy their selfish wishes and desires. But used in such a manner, these powers destroy each other in their reciprocal effects. It is as if the feet were stubbornly to carry a man forward, while his torso wanted to go backward.

Such a destructive effect could only be halted through the development of a higher faculty in man. This was the faculty of thought. Logical thinking has a restraining effect on selfish personal wishes. The origin of logical thinking must be sought among the fifth subrace, the Primal Semites. Men began to go beyond a mere remembrance of the past and to compare different experiences. The faculty of judgment developed. Wishes and appetites were regulated in accordance with this faculty of

judgment. One began to calculate, to combine. One learned to work with thoughts. If previously one had abandoned oneself to every desire, now one first asked whether thought could approve this desire. While the men of the fourth subrace rushed wildly toward the satisfaction of their appetites, those of the fifth began to listen to an inner voice. This inner voice checks the appetites, although it cannot destroy the claims of the selfish personality.

Thus the fifth subrace transferred the impulses for action to within the human being. Man wishes to come to terms within himself as to what he must or must not do. But what thus was won within, with respect to the faculty of thought, was lost with respect to the control of external natural forces. With this combining thought mentioned above, one can master only the forces of the mineral world, not the life force. The fifth subrace therefore developed thought at the expense of control of the life force. But it was just through this that it produced the germ of the further development of mankind. New personality, self-love, even complete selfishness could grow freely; for thought alone which works wholly within, and can no longer give direct orders to nature, is not capable of producing such devastating effects as the previously misused powers. From this fifth subrace the most gifted part was selected which survived the decline of the fourth root race and formed the germ of the fifth, the Aryan race, whose mission is the complete development of the thinking faculty.

The men of the sixth subrace, the Akkadians, developed the faculty of thought even further than the fifth. They differed from the so-called Primal Semites in that they employed this faculty in a more comprehensive sense than the former.

It has been said that while the development of the faculty of thought prevented the claims of the selfish personality from having the same devastating effects as among the earlier races, these claims were not destroyed by it. The Primal Semites at first arranged their personal circumstances as their faculty of thought directed. Intelligence took the place of mere appetites and desires. The conditions of life changed.

If preceding races were inclined to acknowledge as leader one whose deeds had impressed themselves deeply upon their memory, or who could look back upon a life of rich memories, this role was now conferred upon the intelligent. If previously that which lived in a clear remembrance was decisive, one now regarded as best what was most convincing to thought. Under the influence of memory one formerly held fast to a thing until one found it to be inadequate, and in that case it was quite natural that he who was in a position to remedy a want could introduce an innovation. But as a result of the faculty of thought, a fondness for innovations and changes developed.

Each wanted to put into effect what his intelligence suggested to him. Turbulent conditions therefore began to prevail under the fifth subrace, and in the sixth they led to a feeling of the need to bring the obdurate thinking of the individual under general laws. The splendor of the communities of the third subrace was based on the fact that common memories brought about order and harmony. In the sixth, this order had to be brought about by thought-out laws. Thus it is in this sixth subrace that one must look for the origin of regulations of justice and law.

During the third subrace, the separation of a group of men took place only when they were forced out of their community so to speak, because they no longer felt at ease in the conditions prevailing as a result of

memory In the sixth this was considerably different. The calculating faculty of thought sought the new as such; it spurred men to enterprises and new foundations. The Akkadians were therefore an enterprising people with an inclination to colonization. It was commerce, especially, which nourished the waxing faculty of thought and judgment.

Among the seventh subrace, the Mongols, the faculty of thought was also developed. But characteristics of the earlier sub-races, especially of the fourth, remained present in them to a much higher degree than in the fifth and sixth. They remained faithful to the feeling for memory. And thus they reached the conviction that what is oldest is also what is most sensible and can best defend itself against the faculty of thought.

It is true that they also lost the mastery over the life forces, but what developed in them as the thinking faculty also possessed something of the natural might of this life force. Indeed they had lost the power over life, but they never lost their direct, naive faith in it. This force had become their god, in whose behalf they did everything they considered right. Thus they appeared to the neighboring peoples as if possessed by this secret force, and they surrendered themselves to it in blind trust. Their descendants in Asia and in some parts of Europe manifested and still manifest much of this quality.

The faculty of thought planted in men could only attain its full value in relation to human development when it received a new impetus in the fifth root race. The fourth root race, after all, could only put this faculty at the service of that to which it was educated through the gift of memory. The fifth alone reached life conditions for which the proper tool is the ability to think.

## 4 - Transition of the Fourth into the Fifth Root Race

In this chapter we shall learn about the transition of the fourth, the Atlantean root race, into the fifth, the Aryan, to which contemporary civilized mankind belongs. Only he will understand it aright who can steep himself in the idea of development to its full extent and meaning.

Everything which man perceives around him is in process of development. In this sense, the use of thought, which is characteristic of the men of our fifth root race, had first to develop. It is this root race in particular which slowly and gradually brings the faculty of thought to maturity. In his thought, man decides upon something, and then executes it as the consequence of his own thought. This ability was only in preparation among the Atlanteans. It was not their own thoughts, but those which flowed into them from entities of a higher kind, that influenced their will. Thus, in a manner of speaking, their will was directed from outside.

The one who familiarizes himself with the thought of this development of the human being and learns to admit that man — as earthly man — was a being of a quite different kind in prehistory, will also be able to rise to a conception of the totally different entities which are spoken of here. The development to be described required enormously long periods of time.

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What has previously been said about the fourth root race, the Atlanteans, refers to the great bulk of mankind. But they followed leaders whose abilities towered far above theirs. The wisdom these leaders possessed and the powers at their command were not to be attained by any earthly education.

They had been imparted to them by higher beings which did not belong directly to earth. Therefore it was only natural that the great mass of men felt their leaders to be beings of a higher kind, to be "messengers" of the gods. For what these leaders knew and could do would not have been attainable by human sense organs and by human reason. They were venerated as "divine messengers," and men received their orders, their commandments, and also their instruction.

It was by beings of this kind that mankind was instructed in the sciences, in the arts, and in the making of tools. Such "divine messengers" either directed the communities themselves or instructed men who were sufficiently advanced in the art of government. It was said of these leaders that they "communicate with the gods" and were initiated by the gods themselves into the laws according to which mankind had to develop. This was true. In places about which the average people knew nothing, this initiation, this communication with the gods, actually took place. These places of initiation were called temples of the mysteries. From them the human race was directed.

What took place in the temples of the mysteries was therefore incomprehensible to the people. Equally little did the latter understand the intentions of their great leaders. After all, the people could grasp with their senses only what happened directly upon earth, not what was revealed from higher worlds for the welfare of earth. Therefore the teachings of the leaders had to be expressed in a form unlike communications about earthly events. The language the gods spoke with their messengers in the mysteries was not earthly, and neither were the shapes in which these gods revealed themselves.

The higher spirits appeared to their messengers "in fiery clouds" in order to tell them how they were to lead men. Only man can appear in human form; entities whose capacities tower above the human must reveal themselves in shapes which are not to be found on earth.

Because they themselves were the most perfect among their human brothers, the "divine messengers" could receive these revelations. In earlier stages they had already gone through what the majority of men still had to experience. They belonged among their fellow humans only in a certain respect. They could assume human form. But their spiritual-mental qualities were of a superhuman kind. Thus they were divine-human hybrid beings. One can also describe them as higher spirits who assumed human bodies in order to help mankind forward on their earthly path. The real home of these beings was not on earth.

These divine-human beings led men, without being able to inform them of the principles by which they directed them. For until the fifth subrace of the Atlanteans, the Primal Semites, men had absolutely no capacities for understanding these principles. The faculty of thought, which developed in this subrace, was such a capacity. But this evolved slowly and gradually. Even the last sub-races of the Atlanteans could understand very little of the principles of their divine leaders. They began, at first quite imperfectly, to have a presentiment of such principles. Therefore their thoughts and also the laws which we have mentioned among their governmental institutions, were guessed at rather than clearly thought out.

The principal leader of the fifth Atlantean subrace gradually prepared it so that in later times, after the decline of the Atlantean way of life, it could begin a new one which was to be wholly directed by the faculty of thought.

One must realize that at the end of the Atlantean period there existed three groups of man-like beings:

1. The above-mentioned "divine messengers," who in their development were far ahead of the great mass of the people, and who taught divine wisdom and accomplished divine deeds.
2. The great mass of humanity, among which the faculty of thought was in a dull condition, although they possessed natural abilities which modern men have lost.
3. A small group of those who were developing the faculty of thought.

While they gradually lost the natural abilities of the Atlanteans through this process, they were advancing to the stage where they could grasp the principles of the "divine messengers" with their thoughts.

The second group of human beings was doomed to gradual extinction. The third however could be trained by a being of the first kind to take its direction into its own hands.

From this third group the above-mentioned principal leader, whom occult literature designates as Manu, selected the ablest in order to cause a new humanity to emerge from them. These most capable ones existed in the fifth subrace. The faculty of the sixth and seventh sub-races had already gone



astray in a certain sense and was not fit for further development.

The best qualities of the best had to be developed. This was accomplished by the leader through the isolation of the selected ones in a certain place on earth — in inner Asia — where they were freed from any influence of those who remained behind or of those who had gone astray.

The task which the leader imposed upon himself was to bring his followers to the point where, in their own soul, with their own faculty of thought, they could grasp the principles according to which they had hitherto been directed in a way vaguely sensed, but not clearly recognized by them. Men were to recognize the divine forces which they had unconsciously followed. Hitherto the gods had led men through their messengers; now men were to know about these divine entities. They were to learn to consider themselves as the implementing organs of divine providence.

The isolated group thus faced an important decision. The divine leader was in their midst, in human form. From such divine messengers men had previously received instructions and orders as to what they were or were not to do. Human beings had been instructed in the sciences which dealt with what they could perceive through the senses. Men had vaguely sensed a divine control of the world, had felt it in their own actions, but they had not known anything of it clearly.

Now their leader spoke to them in a completely new way. He taught them that invisible powers directed what confronted them visibly, and that they themselves were servants of these invisible powers, that they had to fulfill the laws of these invisible powers with their thoughts.

Men heard of the supernatural-divine. They heard that the invisible spiritual was the creator and preserver of the visible physical. Hitherto they had looked up to their visible divine messengers, to the superhuman initiates, and through the latter was communicated what was and was not to be done. But now they were considered worthy of having the divine messenger speak to them of the gods themselves.

Mighty were the words which again and again he impressed upon his followers: "Until now you have seen those who led you: but there are higher leaders whom you do not see. It is these leaders to whom you are subject. You shall carry out the orders of the god whom you do not see; and you shall obey one of whom you can make no image to yourselves." Thus did the new and highest commandment come from the mouth of the great leader, prescribing the veneration of a god whom no sensory-visible image could resemble, and therefore of whom none was to be made.

Of this great fundamental commandment of the fifth human root race, the well-known commandment which follows is an echo: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth ... " (Exodus 20:1).

The principal leader, Manu, was assisted by other divine messengers who executed his intentions for particular branches of life and worked on the development of the new race. For it was a matter of arranging all of life according to the new conception of a divine administration of the world. Everywhere the thoughts of men were to be directed from the visible to the invisible. Life is

determined by the forces of nature.

The course of human life depends on day and night, on winter and summer, on sunshine and rain. How these influential visible events are connected with the invisible, divine powers and how man was to behave in order to arrange his life in accordance with these invisible powers, was shown to him. All knowledge and all labor was to be pursued in this sense. In the course of the stars and of the weather, man was to see divine decrees, the emanation of divine wisdom. Astronomy and meteorology were taught with this idea.

Man was to arrange his labor, his moral life in such a way that they would correspond to the wise laws of the divine. Life was ordered according to divine commandments, just as the divine thoughts were explored in the course of the stars and in the changes of the weather. Man was to bring his works into harmony with the dispensations of the gods through sacrificial acts.

It was the intention of Manu to direct everything in human life toward the higher worlds. All human activities, all institutions were to bear a religious character. Through this, Manu wanted to initiate the real task imposed upon the fifth root race. This race was to learn to direct itself by its own thoughts. But such a self-determination can only lead to good if man also places himself at the service of the higher powers. Man should use his faculty of thought, but this faculty of thought should be sanctified by being devoted to the divine.

One can only understand completely what happened at that time if one knows that the development of the faculty of thought, beginning with the fifth subrace of the Atlanteans, also entailed something else. From a certain quarter men had come into possession of knowledge and of arts, which were not immediately connected with what the above-mentioned Manu had to consider as his true task.

This knowledge and these arts were at first devoid of religious character. They came to man in such a way that he could think of nothing other than to place them at the service of self-interest, of his personal needs (\*) ... To such knowledge belongs for example that of the use of fire in human activities. In the first Atlantean time man did not use fire since the life force was available for his service. But with the passage of time he was less and less in a position to make use of this force, hence he had to learn to make tools, utensils from so-called lifeless objects. He employed fire for this purpose. Similar conditions prevailed with respect to other natural forces.

Thus man learned to make use of such natural forces without being conscious of their divine origin. So it was meant to be. Man was not to be forced by anything to relate these things which served his faculty of thought to the divine order of the world. Rather was he to do this voluntarily in his thoughts. It was the intention of Manu to bring men to the point where, independently, out of an inner need, they brought such things into a relation with the higher order of the world. Men could choose whether they wanted to use the insight they had attained purely in a spirit of personal self-interest or in the religious service of a higher world.

If man was previously forced to consider himself as a link in the divine government of the world, by which for example, the domination over the life force was given to him without his having to use the faculty of thought, he could now employ the natural forces without directing his thoughts to the

divine.

Not all men whom Manu had gathered around him were equal to this decision, but only a few of them. It was from this few that Manu could really form the germ of the new race. He retired with them in order to develop them further, while the others mingled with the rest of mankind. From this small number of men who finally gathered around Manu, everything is descended which up to the present, forms the true germs of progress of the fifth root race. For this reason also, two characteristics run through the entire development of this fifth root race. One of these characteristics is peculiar to those men who are animated by higher ideas, who regard themselves as children of a divine universal power; the other belongs to those who put everything at the service of personal interests, of egotism.

The small following remained gathered around Manu until it was sufficiently fortified to act in the new spirit, and until its members could go out to bring this new spirit to the rest of mankind, which remained from the earlier races. It is natural that this new spirit assumed a different character among the various peoples, according to how they themselves had developed in different fields. The old remaining characteristics blended with what the messengers of Manu carried to the various parts of the world. Thus a variety of new cultures and civilizations came into being.

The ablest personalities from the circle around Manu were selected for a gradual direct initiation into his divine wisdom, so that they could become the teachers of the others. A new kind of initiate thus was added to the old divine messengers. It consisted of those who had developed their faculty of thought in an earthly manner just as their fellow-men had done. The earlier divine messengers — and also Manu — had not done this.

Their development belonged to higher worlds. They introduced their higher wisdom into earthly conditions. What they gave to mankind was a "gift from above." Before the middle of the Atlantean period men had not reached the point where by their own powers they could grasp what the divine decrees were. Now — at the time indicated — they were to attain this point. Earthly thinking was to elevate itself to the concept of the divine. The human initiates united themselves with the divine. This represents an important revolution in the development of the human race.

The first Atlanteans did not as yet have a choice as to whether or not they would consider their leaders to be divine messengers. For what the latter accomplished imposed itself as the deed of higher worlds. It bore the stamp of a divine origin. Thus the messengers of the Atlantean period were entities sanctified by their power, surrounded by the splendor which this power conferred upon them. From an external point of view, the human initiates of later times are men among men. But they remain in relation with the higher worlds, and the revelations and manifestations of the divine messengers come to them.

Only exceptionally, when a higher necessity arises, do they make use of certain powers which are conferred upon them from above. Then they accomplish deeds which men cannot explain by the laws they know and which therefore they rightly regard as miracles.

But in all this the higher intention is to put mankind on its own feet, fully to develop its faculty of thought. Today the human initiates are the mediators between the people and the higher powers, and

only initiation can make one capable of communication with the divine messengers.

The human initiates, the sacred teachers, became leaders of the rest of mankind in the beginning of the fifth root race. The great priest kings of prehistory, who are not spoken of in history, but rather in the world of legend, belong among these initiates. The higher divine messenger's retired from the earth more and more, and left the leadership to these human initiates, whom however they assisted in word and deed. Were this not so, man would never attain free use of his faculty of thought.

The world is under divine direction, but man is not to be forced to admit this; he is to realize and to understand it by free reflection. When he reaches this point, the initiates will gradually divulge their secrets to him. But this cannot happen all at once. The whole development of the fifth root race is a slow road to this goal.

At first Manu himself led his following like children. Then the leadership was gradually transferred to the human initiates. Today progress still consists in a mixture of the conscious and unconscious acting and thinking of men. Only at the end of the fifth root race, when throughout the sixth and seventh sub-races a sufficiently great number of men are capable of knowledge, will the greatest among the initiates be able to reveal himself to them openly.

Then this human initiate will be able to assume the principal leadership just as Manu did at the end of the fourth root race. Thus the education of the fifth root race consists in this, that a greater part of humanity will become able freely to follow a human Manu as the germinal race of this fifth root race followed the divine one.

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[\*] For the present it is not permitted to make public communications about the origin of this knowledge and these arts. A passage from the Akasha Chronicle must therefore be omitted here.

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## 5 - The Lemurian Race

A passage from the Akasha Chronicle referring to a very distant prehistoric period in the development of mankind, will be set forth in this chapter. This period precedes the one depicted in the descriptions given above. We are here concerned with the third human root race, of which it is said in theosophical books that it inhabited the Lemurian Continent. According to these books this continent was situated south of Asia, and extended approximately from Ceylon to Madagascar. What is today southern Asia and parts of Africa also belonged to it.

While all possible care has been taken in the deciphering of the Akasha Chronicle it must be emphasized that nowhere is a dogmatic character to be claimed for these communications. If, to begin with, the reading of things and events so remote from the present is not easy, the translation of what has been seen and deciphered into the language of today presents almost insuperable obstacles.

Dates will be given later. They will be better understood when the whole Lemurian period and also the period of our fifth root race up to the present, have been discussed.

The things which are communicated here are surprising even for the occultist who reads them for the first time — although the word "surprising" is not quite exact. Therefore he should only communicate them after the most careful examination.

The fourth, the Atlantean root race, was preceded by the so-called Lemurian. During its development, events of the very greatest importance occurred with respect to the earth and to men. Here, however, something will first be said of the character of this root race after these events, and only then will the latter be discussed. By and large, memory was not yet developed among this race. While men could have ideas of things and events, these ideas did not remain in the memory. Therefore they did not yet have a language in the true sense. Rather what they could utter were natural sounds which expressed their sensations, pleasure, joy, pain and so forth, but which did not designate external objects.

But their ideas had a quite different strength from those of later men. Through this strength they acted upon their environment. Other men, animals, plants, and even lifeless objects could feel this action and could be influenced purely by ideas. Thus the Lemurian could communicate with his fellow-men without needing a language. This communication consisted in a kind of "thought reading."

The Lemurian derived the strength of his ideas directly from the objects which surrounded him. It flowed to him from the energy of growth of plants, from the life force of animals. In this manner he understood plants and animals in their inner action and life. He even understood the physical and chemical forces of lifeless objects in the same way. When he built something he did not first have to calculate the load-limit of a tree trunk, the weight of a stone; he could see how much the tree trunk could bear, where the stone in view of its weight and height would fit, where it would not. Thus the Lemurian built without engineering knowledge on the basis of his faculty of imagination which acted with the sureness of a kind of instinct.

Moreover, to a great extent, he had power over his own body. When it was necessary, he could increase the strength of his arm by a simple effort of the will. For example, he could lift enormous

loads merely by using his will. If later the Atlantean was helped by his control of the life force, the Lemurian was helped by his mastery of the will. He was — the expression should not be misinterpreted — a born magician in all fields of lower human activities.

The goal of the Lemurians was the development of the will, of the faculty of imagination. The education of children was wholly directed toward this. The boys were hardened in the strongest manner. They had to learn to undergo dangers, to overcome pain, to accomplish daring deeds. Those who could not bear tortures, who could not undergo dangers, were not regarded as useful members of mankind. They were left to perish under these exertions. What the Akasha Chronicle shows with respect to this raising of children surpasses everything contemporary man can picture to himself in his boldest imaginings — The bearing of heat, even of a searing fire, the piercing of the body with pointed objects, were quite common procedures.

The raising of girls was different. While the female child was also hardened, everything else was directed toward her developing a strong imagination. For example, she was exposed to the storm in order calmly to feel its dreadful beauty; she had to witness the combats of the men fearlessly, filled only with a feeling of appreciation of the strength and power she saw before her. Thereby propensities for dreaming and for fantasy developed in the girl, and these were highly valued. Because no memory existed, these propensities could not degenerate. The dream or fantasy conceptions in question lasted only as long as there was a corresponding external cause. Thus they had a real basis in external things. They did not lose themselves in bottomless depths. It was, so to speak, nature's own fantasy and dreaming which were put into the female soul.

The Lemurians did not have dwellings in our sense, except in their latest times. They lived where nature gave them the opportunity to do so. The caves which they used were only altered and extended insofar as necessary. Later they built such caves themselves and at that time they developed great skill for such constructions. One must not imagine, however, that they did not also execute more artful constructions. But these did not serve as dwellings. In the earliest times they originated in the desire to give to the things of nature a man-made form. Hills were remodeled in such a way that the form afforded man joy and pleasure. Stones were put together for the same purpose, or in order to be used for certain activities. The places where the children were hardened were surrounded with walls of this kind.

Toward the end of this period, the buildings which served for the cultivation of "divine wisdom and divine art" became more and more imposing and ornate. These institutions differed in every respect from what temples were later, for they were educational and scientific institutions at the same time.

He who was found fit was here initiated into the science of the universal laws and into the handling of them. If the Lemurian was a born magician, this talent was here developed into art and insight. Only those could be admitted who, through all kinds of discipline, had acquired the ability to overcome themselves to the greatest extent. For all others what went on in these institutions was the deepest secret. Here one learned to know and to control the forces of nature through direct contemplation of them. But the learning was such that in man the forces of nature changed into forces of the will. He himself could thereby execute what nature accomplishes.

What later mankind accomplished by reflection, by calculation, at that time had the character of an instinctive activity. But here one must not use the word "instinct" in the same sense in which one is accustomed to apply it to the animal world. For the activities of Lemurian humanity towered high above everything the animal world can produce through instinct. They even stood far above what mankind has since acquired in the way of arts and sciences through memory, reason and imagination. If one were to use an expression for these institutions which would facilitate an understanding of them, one could call them "colleges of will power and of the clairvoyant power of the imagination."

From them emerged the men who, in every respect, became rulers of the others. Today it is difficult to give in words a true conception of all these conditions. For everything on earth has changed since that time. Nature itself and all human life were different, therefore human labor and the relationship of man to man differed greatly from what is customary today.

The air was much thicker even than in later Atlantean times, the water much thinner. And what forms the firm crust of our earth today was not yet as hard as it later became. The world of plants and animals had developed only as far as the amphibians, the birds, and the lower mammals, and as far as vegetable growths which resemble our palms and similar trees. However, all forms were different from what they are today.

What now exists only all in forms was then developed to gigantic sizes. At that time our small ferns were trees and formed mighty forests. The modern higher mammals did not exist. On the other hand a great part of humanity was on such a low stage of development that one cannot but designate it as animal. What has been described here was true only of a small part of mankind, The rest lived their life in animalism. In their external appearance and in their way of life these animal men were quite different from the small group. They were not especially different from the lower mammals, which resembled them in form in certain respects.

A few more words must be said about the significance of the above-mentioned temple localities. What was cultivated there was not really religion. It was "divine wisdom and art." Man felt that what was given to him there was a direct gift from the spiritual universal forces. When he received this gift he considered himself a "servant" of these universal forces. He felt himself "sanctified" from everything unspiritual.

If one wishes to speak of religion at this stage of the development of mankind, one could call it "religion of the will." The religious temper and dedication lay in the fact that man guarded the powers granted to him as a strict, divine "secret," and that he led a life through which he sanctified his power. Persons who had such powers were regarded by others with great awe and veneration. And this awe and veneration were not called forth by laws or something similar, but by the immediate power which these persons exercised.

The uninitiated of course stood under the magical influence of the initiated. It was also natural that the latter considered themselves to be sanctified personages. For in their temples they participated in direct contemplation of the active forces of nature. They looked into the creative workshop of nature. They experienced a communion with the beings which build the world itself. One can call this communication an association with the gods. What later developed as "initiation," as "mystery,"

emerged from this original manner of communication of men with the gods. In subsequent times this communication had to become different, since the human imagination, the human spirit, took other forms.

Of special importance is something which occurred in the course of Lemurian development by virtue of the fact that the women lived in the manner described above. They thereby developed special human powers. Their faculty of imagination which was in alliance with nature, became the basis for a higher development of the life of ideas. They took the forces of nature into themselves, where they had an after-effect in the soul. Thus the germs of memory were formed. With memory was also born the capacity to form the first and simplest moral concepts.

The development of the will among the male element at first knew nothing of this. The man followed instinctively either the impulses of nature or the influences emanating from the initiated.

It was from the manner of life of the women that the first ideas of "good and evil" arose. There one began to love some of the things which had made a special impression on the imagination, and to abhor others. While the control which the male element exercised was directed more toward the external action of the powers of the will, toward the manipulation of the forces of nature, beside it in the female element there developed an action through the soul, through the inner, personal forces of man.

The development of mankind can only be correctly understood by the one who takes into consideration that the first progress in the life of the imagination was made by women. The development connected with the life of the imagination, with the formation of memory, of customs which formed the seeds for a life of law, for a kind of morals, came from this side. If man had seen and exercised the forces of nature, woman became the first interpreter of them. It was a special new manner of living through reflection which developed here.

This manner had something much more personal than that of the men. One must imagine this manner of the women to have been also a kind of clairvoyance, although it differed from the magic of the will of the men. In her soul woman was accessible to another kind of spiritual powers. The latter spoke more to the feeling element of the soul, less to the spiritual, to which man was subject. Thus there emanated from men an effect which was more natural-divine, from women one which was more soul-divine.

The development which woman went through during the Lemurian period had the result that at the appearance of the next — the Atlantean — root race on earth, an important role devolved upon her. This appearance took place under the influence of highly developed entities, who were familiar with the laws of the formation of races and capable of guiding the existing forces of human nature into such paths that a new race could come into being. These beings will be specially mentioned further on.

May it suffice for the moment to say that they possessed superhuman wisdom and power. They now isolated a small group out of Lemurian mankind and designated these to be the ancestors of the coming Atlantean race. The place where they did this was situated in the tropical zone. Under their



direction the men of this group had been trained in the control of the natural forces. They were very strong, and knew how to win the most diverse treasures from the earth. They could cultivate the fields and use their fruits for their subsistence.

They had become characters of strong will through the discipline to which they had been subjected. Their souls and hearts were developed only in small measure. On the other hand these had been developed among the women. Memory and fantasy and everything connected with them were to be found among the latter.

The above-mentioned leaders caused the group to divide itself into smaller groups. They put the women in charge of ordering and establishing these groups. Through her memory, woman had acquired the capacity to make the experiences and adventures of the past useful for the future. What had proved helpful yesterday she used today and realized that it would also be useful tomorrow.

The institutions for communal life therefore emanated from her. Under her influence the concepts of "good and evil" developed. Through her thoughtful life she had acquired an understanding for nature. Out of the observation of nature, those ideas developed in her according to which she directed the actions of men. The leaders had arranged things in such a way that through the soul of woman, the willful nature, the vigorous strength of man were ennobled and refined. Of course one must represent all this to oneself as childish beginnings. The words of our language all too easily call up ideas which are taken from the life of the present.

By way of the awakened soul life of the women the leaders first developed the soul life of the men. In the colony we have described, the influence of the women was therefore very great. One had to go to them for advice when one wanted to interpret the signs of nature. The whole manner of their soul life however was still dominated by the "hidden" human soul forces. One does not describe the matter quite exactly, but fairly closely, if one speaks of a somnambulistic contemplating among these women.

In certain higher dreams the secrets of nature were divulged to them and they received the impulses for their actions. Everything was animated for them and showed itself to them in soul powers and apparitions. They abandoned themselves to the mysterious weaving of their soul forces. That which impelled them to their actions were "inner voices," or what plants, animals, stones, wind and clouds, the whispering of the trees, and so on, told them.

From this state of soul originated that which one can call human religion. The spiritual in nature and in human life gradually came to be venerated and worshiped. Some women attained a special preeminence because out of special mysterious depths they could interpret what the world contained.

Thus it could come to pass among such women that that which lived within them could transpose itself into a kind of natural language. For the beginning of language lies in something which is similar to song. The energy of thought was transformed into audible sound. The inner rhythm of nature sounded from the lips of "wise" women. One gathered around such women and in their songlike sentences felt the utterances of higher powers. Human worship of the gods began with such things.

For that period there can be no question of "sense" in that which was spoken. Sound, tone, and rhythm were perceived. One did not imagine anything along with these, but absorbed in the soul the power of what was heard. The whole process was under the direction of the higher leaders. They had inspired the "wise" priestesses with tones and rhythms in a manner which cannot now be further discussed. Thus they could have an ennobling effect on the souls of men. One can say that in this way the true life of the soul first awakened.

In this realm, beautiful scenes are shown by the Akasha Chronicle. One of these will be described. We are in a forest, near a mighty tree. The sun has just risen in the east. The palmlike tree, from around which the other trees have been removed, casts mighty shadows. The priestess, her face turned to the east, ecstatic, sits on a seat made of rare natural objects and plants. Slowly in rhythmical sequence, a few strange, constantly repeated sounds stream from her lips. A number of men and women are sitting in circles around her, their faces lost in dreams, absorbing inner life from what they hear.

Other scenes too can be seen. At a similarly arranged place a priestess "sings" in a similar manner, but her tones have in them something mightier, more powerful. Those around her move in rhythmic dances. For this was the other way in which "soul" entered into mankind. The mysterious rhythms which one had heard from Nature were imitated by the movements of the limbs. One thereby felt at one with nature and with the powers acting in her.

The place on earth in which this stock of a coming race of men was developed was especially suited for this purpose. It was one where the then still turbulent earth had become fairly calm. For Lemuria was turbulent. After all, the earth at that time did not yet have its later density. The thin ground was everywhere undermined by volcanic forces which broke forth in smaller or larger streams. Mighty volcanos existed almost everywhere and developed a continuous destructive activity. Men were accustomed to reckoning with this fiery activity in everything they did. They also used this fire in their labors and contrivances. Their occupations were often such that the fire of nature served as a basis for them in the same way as artificial fire does in human labor today.

It was through the activity of this volcanic fire that the destruction of the Lemurian land came about. While the part of Lemuria from which the parent race of the Atlanteans was to develop had a hot climate, it was by and large free of volcanic activity.

Human nature could unfold more calmly and peacefully here than in the other regions of the earth. The more nomadic life of former times was abandoned, and fixed settlements became more and more numerous.

One must represent to oneself that at that time the human body still had very malleable and pliant qualities. This body still changed form whenever the inner life changed. Not long before, men had still been quite diverse as regards their external form. At that time the external influence of region and climate were still decisive in respect to their form. Only in the colony described did the body of man increasingly become an expression of his inner soul life. Moreover, this colony had an advanced externally more nobly formed race of men.

One must say that through the things which they had done, the leaders had really first created what is

the true human form. This occurred quite slowly and gradually. It happened in such a way that the soul life of man was first developed and that the still soft and malleable body adapted itself to this. It is a law in the development of mankind that, as progress continues, man has less and less of a molding influence on his physical body. This physical human body in fact received a fairly unchanging form only with the development of the faculty of reason and with the hardening of the rock, mineral, and metal formations of earth connected with this development. For in the Lemurian and even in the Atlantean period, stones and metals were much softer than later.

This is not contradicted by the fact that there exist descendants of the last Lemurians and Atlanteans who today exhibit forms as fixed as the human races which were formed later. These remnants had to adapt themselves to the changed environmental conditions of earth and thus became more rigid. Just this is the reason for their decline. They did not transform themselves from within; instead, their less developed interior was forced into rigidity from the outside and thus compelled to stagnation. This stagnation is really a regression, for the inner life, too, has degenerated because it could not fulfill itself within the rigid external bodily structure.

Animal life was subject to even greater changeability. We shall speak further about the animal species existing at the time of the development of man and about their origin, as well as about the development of new animal forms after man already existed. Here we shall say only that the existing animal species continually transformed themselves and that new ones were developing. This transformation was of course a gradual one. The reasons for the transformation lay in part in a change of habitat and of the manner of life.

The animals had a capacity of extraordinarily rapid adaptation to new conditions. The malleable body changed its organs comparatively rapidly, so that after a more or less brief period the descendants of a particular animal species resembled their ancestors only slightly. The same was the case in even greater measure for the plants. The greatest influence on the transformation of men and animals was exercised by man himself. This was true whether he instinctively brought organisms into such an environment that they assumed certain forms, or whether he achieved this by experiments in breeding.

The transforming influence of man on nature was immeasurably great at that time, compared with the conditions of today. This was especially the case in the colony we have described. For there the leaders directed this transformation in a way of which men were not conscious. This was the case to such a degree that when men left the colony in order to found the different Atlantean races, they could take with them a highly developed knowledge of the breeding of animals and plants. The labor of cultivation in Atlantis was then essentially a consequence of the knowledge thus brought along. But here again it must be emphasized that this knowledge had an instinctive character. In this state essentially it remained among the first Atlantean races.

The preeminence of the feminine soul, which has been described, was especially strong in the last Lemurian period and continued into the Atlantean times, during which the fourth subrace was preparing itself. But one must not imagine that this was the case among all of mankind. It was true, however, for that part of the population of earth from which the truly advanced races later emerged. This influence exercised the strongest effect upon all that which in man is "unconscious."

The development of certain constant gestures, the refinements of sensory perception, the feeling for beauty, a good part of the general life of sensations and feelings which is common to all men — all this originally emanated from the spiritual influence of woman. It is not an over-statement if one interprets the reports in such a way as to affirm, "The civilized nations have a bodily form and expression, as well as certain bases of physical-soul life, which were imprinted upon them by woman."

In the next chapter we shall go back to earlier periods of the development of mankind, during which the population of earth still belonged to only one sex. The development of the two sexes will then be described.

## 6 - The Division into Sexes

Much as the human form in those ancient times described in the preceding chapters differed from the form of present-day man, one comes to conditions still more dissimilar if one goes even further back in the history of mankind. For only in the course of time did the forms of man and woman develop from an older, basic form in which human beings were neither the one nor the other, but rather were both at once. He who wants to form an idea of these enormously distant periods of the past must however liberate himself completely from the habitual conceptions taken from what man sees around him.

The times into which we now look back lie somewhat before the middle of the epoch which in the preceding passages was designated as the Lemurian. At that time the human body still consisted of soft and malleable materials. The other forms of earth also were still soft and malleable. As opposed to its later hardened condition, earth was still in a welling, more fluid one. As the human soul at that time embodied itself in matter, it could adapt this matter to itself in a much greater degree than later. That the soul takes on a male or a female body is due to the fact that the development of external terrestrial nature forces the one or the other upon it.

While the material substances had not yet become rigid, the soul could force these substances to obey its own laws. It made of the body an impression of its own nature. But when became denser the soul had to submit to the laws impressed upon this matter by external terrestrial nature. As long as the soul could still control matter, it formed its body as neither male nor female, but, instead gave it qualities which embraced both at the same time. For the soul is simultaneously male and female. It carries these two natures in itself its male element — is related to what is called will, its female element to what is called imagination.

The external formation of earth resulted in that the body assumed a one-sided form. The male body has taken a form which is conditioned by the element of will; the female body on the other hand, bears the stamp of imagination. Thus it comes about that the two-sexed, male-female soul inhabits a single-sexed, male or female body. In the course of development the body had taken a form determined by the external terrestrial forces, so that it was no longer possible for the soul to pour its whole inner energy into this body. The soul had to retain something of this energy within itself and could let only a part of it flow into the body.

If one continues with the Akasha Chronicle, the following becomes apparent. In an ancient period, human forms appear before us which are soft, malleable and quite different from later ones. They still carry the nature of man and woman within themselves to an equal degree. In the course of time, the material substances become denser; the human body appears in two forms, one of which begins to resemble the subsequent shape of man, the other that of woman. When this difference had not yet appeared, every human being could produce another human being out of himself. Impregnation was not an external process, but was something which took place inside the human body itself. By becoming male or female, the body lost this possibility of self-impregnation. It had to act together with another body in order to produce a new human being.

The division into sexes takes place when the earth enters a certain stage of its densification. The

density of matter inhibits a portion of the force of reproduction. That portion of this force which is still active needs an external complementation through the opposite force of another human being. The soul however must retain a portion of its earlier energy within itself, in man as well as in woman. It cannot use this portion in the physical external world.

This portion of energy is now directed toward the interior of man. It cannot emerge toward the exterior; therefore it is freed for inner organs.

Here an important point in the development of mankind appears. Previously that which is called spirit, the faculty of thought, could not find a place in man. For this faculty would have found no organs for exercising its functions. The soul had employed all its energy toward the exterior, in order to build up the body. But now the energy of the soul, which finds no external employment, can become associated with the spiritual energy, and through this association those organs are developed in the body which later make of man a thinking being. Thus man could use a portion of the energy which previously he employed for the production of beings like himself, in order to perfect his own nature.

The force by which mankind forms a thinking brain for itself is the same by which man impregnated himself in ancient times. The price of thought is single-sexedness. By no longer impregnating themselves, but rather by impregnating each other, human beings can turn a part of their productive energy within, and so become thinking creatures. Thus the male and the female body each represent an imperfect external embodiment of the soul, but thereby they become more perfect inwardly.

This transformation of man takes place very slowly and gradually. Little by little, the younger, single-sexed male or female forms appear beside the old double-sexed ones.

It is again a kind of fertilization which takes place in man when he becomes a creature endowed with spirit. The inner organs which can be built up by the surplus soul energy are fructified by the spirit. In itself the soul is two-sided: male-female. In ancient times it also formed its body on this basis. Later it can form its body only in such a way that for the external it acts together with another body; thereby the soul itself receives the capacity to act together with the spirit. For the external, man is henceforward fertilized from the outside, for the internal, from the inside, through the spirit. One can say that the male body now has a female soul, the female body a male soul.

This inner one-sidedness of man is compensated by fertilization through the spirit. The one-sidedness is abolished. Both the male soul in the female body and the female soul in the male body again become double-sexed through fructification by the spirit. Thus man and woman are different in their external form; internally their spiritual one-sidedness is rounded out to a harmonious whole. Internally, spirit and soul are fused into one unit. Upon the male soul in woman the action of the spirit is female, and thus renders it male-female; upon the female soul in man the action of the spirit is male, and thus renders it male-female also. The double-sexedness of man has retired from the external world where it existed in the pre-Lemurian period, into his interior.

One can see that the higher inner essence of a human being has nothing to do with man or woman. The inner equality, however, does result from a male soul in woman, and correspondingly from a female soul in man. The union with the spirit finally brings about the equality; but the fact that before

the establishment of this equality there exists a difference involves a secret of human nature. The understanding of this secret is of great significance for all mystery science. It is the key to important enigmas of life. For the present we are not permitted to lift the veil which is spread over this secret ...

Thus physical man has developed from double-sexedness to single-sexedness, to the separation into male and female. In this way man has become a spiritual being of the kind which he is now. But one must not suppose that no beings which possessed cognition had been in contact with the earth before then. When one follows the Akasha Chronicle it does indeed appear that in the first Lemurian period, later physical man, because of his double sex, was a totally different being from that which one today designates as man. He could not connect any sensory perceptions with thoughts; he did not think. His life was one of impulses. His soul expressed itself only in instincts, in appetites, in animal desires and so on. His consciousness was dreamlike; he lived in dullness.

But there were other beings among these men. These of course were also double-sexed. For at the stage of terrestrial development of that time no male or female human body could be produced. The external conditions did not yet exist for this. But there were other beings which could acquire knowledge and wisdom in spite of their double-sexedness. This was possible because they had gone through a quite different development in a still more remote past. It was possible for their soul to be fructified by the spirit without first awaiting the development of the inner organs of the physical body of man. By means of the physical brain, the soul of contemporary man can think only that which it receives from the outside through the physical senses.

This is the condition to which the development of man's soul has led. The human soul had to wait until a brain existed which became the mediator with the spirit. Without this detour, this soul would have remained spiritless. It would have remained arrested at the stage of dreamlike consciousness. This was different among the superhuman beings mentioned above. In previous stages their soul had developed organs which needed nothing physical in order to enter into contact with the spirit. Their knowledge and wisdom were supersensibly acquired. Such knowledge is called intuitive. Contemporary man attains such intuition only at a later stage of his development; this intuition makes it possible for him to enter into contact with the spirit without sensory mediation. He must make a detour through the world of sensory substance. This detour is called the descent of the human soul into matter, or popularly, "the fall of man."

Because of a different earlier development, the superhuman beings did not have to take part in this descent. Since their soul had already attained a higher stage, their consciousness was not dreamlike, but inwardly clear. Their acquisition of knowledge and wisdom was a clairvoyance which had no need of senses or of an organ of thought. The wisdom according to which the world is built shone into their soul directly. Therefore they could become the leaders of youthful humanity which was still sunk in dullness. They were the bearers of a "primeval wisdom," toward the understanding of which mankind is only now struggling along the detour mentioned above.

They differed from what one calls "man" through the fact that wisdom shone upon them as the sunlight does upon us, as a free gift "from above." "Man" was in a different position. He had to acquire wisdom by the work of the senses and of the organ of thought. Originally it did not come to him as a free gift. He had to desire it. Only when the desire for wisdom lived in man, did he acquire it

through his senses and his organ of thought. Thus a new impulse had to awaken in the soul: the desire, the longing for knowledge. In its earlier stages the human soul could not have had this longing. The impulses of the soul were directed only toward materialization in that which assumed form externally — in what took place in it as a dreamlike life — but not toward cognition of the external world, nor toward knowledge. It is with the division into sexes that the impulse toward knowledge first appears.

The superhuman beings received wisdom by way of clairvoyance just because they did not have this desire for it. They waited until wisdom shone into them, as we wait for the sunlight, which we cannot produce at night, but which must come to us by itself in the morning.

The longing for knowledge is produced by the fact that the soul develops inner organs, the brain and so forth, by means of which it gains possession of knowledge. This is a consequence of the circumstance that a part of the energy of the soul is no longer directed toward the outside, but toward the inside. The superhuman beings however, which have not carried out this separation of their spiritual forces, direct all the energy of their soul toward the outside. Therefore that force is also available to them externally for fructification by the spirit, which "man" turns inward for the development of the organs of cognition.

Now that force by means of which one human being turns toward the outside in order to act together with another is love. The superhuman beings directed all their love outward in order to let universal wisdom flow into their soul. "Man" however can only direct a part of it outward. "Man" became sensual, and thereby his love became sensual. He draws away from the outside world that part of his nature which he directs toward his inner development. And thus that arises which one calls selfishness. When he became man or woman in the physical body, "man" could surrender himself with only a part of his being; with the other part he separated himself from the world around him. He became selfish. And his action toward the outside became selfish; his striving after inner development also became selfish. He loved because he desired, and likewise he thought because he desired wisdom.

The selfless, all-loving natures, the leaders, the superhuman beings, confronted man, who was still childishly selfish.

The soul, which among these beings does not reside in a male or female body, is itself male-female. It loves without desire. Thus the innocent soul of man loved before the division into sexes, but at that time it could not understand, because it was still at an inferior stage, that of dream consciousness. The soul of the superhuman beings also loves in this manner, however, with understanding because of its advanced development. "Man" must pass through selfishness in order to attain selflessness again at a higher stage, where, however, it will be combined with completely clear consciousness.

The task of the superhuman natures, of the great leaders, was that they impressed upon youthful man their own character, that of love. They could do this only for that part of the spiritual energy which was directed outward. Thus sensual love was produced. It is therefore a consequence of the activity of the soul in a male or female body. Sensual love became the force of physical human development. This love brings man and woman together insofar as they are physical beings. Upon this love rests the progress of physical humanity.



It was only over this love that the superhuman natures had power. That part of human soul energy which is directed inward and is to bring about cognition by the detour through the senses — that part is withdrawn from the power of those superhuman beings. However, they themselves had never descended to the development of corresponding inner organs. They could clothe the impulse toward the external in love, because love acting toward the external was part of their own nature. Because of this, a gulf opened between them and youthful mankind. Love, at first in sensual form, they could plant in man; knowledge they could not give, for their own knowledge had never made the detour through the inner organs which man was now developing. They could speak no language which a creature with a brain could have understood.

The inner organs of man mentioned above first became ripe for a contact with the spirit only at that stage of terrestrial existence which lies in the middle of the Lemurian period; but they had already been formed incompletely, at a much earlier stage of development. For the soul had already gone through physical embodiments in preceding times. It had lived in dense substance, not on earth but on other celestial bodies.

Details about this must be given later. At present we shall say only that the terrestrial beings previously lived on another planet, where, in accordance with the prevailing conditions, they developed up to the point at which they were when they arrived on earth. They put off the substances of this preceding planet like clothing and, at the level of development which they thus attained, became pure soul germs with the capacity to perceive, to feel and so forth — in short, to lead that dreamlike life which remained peculiar to them in the first stages of their terrestrial existence.

The superhuman entities previously mentioned, the leaders in the field of love, had already been so perfect on the preceding planet that they did not have to descend to develop the rudiments of those inner organs.

But there were other beings, not as far advanced as these leaders of love, who on the preceding planet were still numbered among "men," but at that period were hurrying ahead of men. Thus, at the beginning of the formation of the earth, they were further advanced than men, but still were at the stage where knowledge must be acquired through inner organs. These beings were in a special position.

They were too far advanced to pass through the physical human body, male or female, but on the other hand, were not so far advanced that they could act through full clairvoyance like the leaders of love. They could not yet be beings of love; they could no longer be "men." Thus they could only continue their own development as half superhuman beings, in which they were aided by men. They could speak to creatures with a brain in a language which the latter could understand.

Thereby the human soul energy which was turned inward was stimulated, and could connect itself with knowledge and wisdom. It was thus that wisdom of a human kind first appeared on earth. The "half superhuman beings" mentioned above could use this human wisdom in order to achieve for themselves that of perfection which they still lacked. In this manner they became the stimulators of human wisdom. One therefore calls them bringers of light (Lucifer). Youthful mankind thus had two kinds of leaders: beings of love and beings of wisdom. Human nature was balanced between love and

wisdom when it assumed its present form on this earth. By the beings of love it was stimulated to physical development, by the beings of wisdom to the perfection of the inner nature. As a consequence of physical development, humanity advances from generation to generation, forms new tribes and races; through inner development individuals grow toward inner perfection, become knowing and wise men, artists, technicians etc.

Physical mankind strides from race to race; each race hands down its sensorily perceptible qualities to the following one through physical development. Here the law of heredity holds sway. The children carry within themselves the physical characteristics of the fathers. Beyond this lies a process of spiritual-soul perfection which can only take place through the development of the soul itself.

With this we stand before the law of the development of the soul within terrestrial existence. This development is connected with the law and mystery of birth and death.

## 7 - The Last Periods before the Division into Sexes

We shall now describe the state of man before his division into male and female. At that time the body consisted of a soft malleable mass. The will had a much greater power over this mass than later. When man separated from his parent entity he appeared as a truly articulated organism, but as an incomplete one. The further development of the organs took place outside the parent entity.

Much of what later matured inside the mother organism was at that time brought to completion outside of it by a force which was akin to our will power. In order to bring about such an external maturation the care of the parent being was necessary. Man brought certain organs into the world which he later cast off. Others, which were quite incomplete at his first appearance, developed more fully. The whole process had something which can be compared with the emergence from an egg-form and the casting off of an eggshell, but here one must not think of a firm eggshell.

The body of man was warm-blooded. This must be stated explicitly, for in even earlier times it was different, as will be shown later. The maturation which took place outside the mother organism occurred under the influence of an increased warmth which also was supplied from the outside. But one must by no means think that the egg-man — as he will be called for the sake of brevity — was brooded. The conditions of heat and fire on the earth of that time were different from those of later times. By means of his powers man could confine fire, or respectively, heat, to a certain space. He could, so to speak, contract, (concentrate) heat. He was thus in a position to supply the young organism with the warmth which it needed for its maturation.

The most highly developed organs of man at that time were the organs of motion. The sense organs of today were as yet quite undeveloped. The most advanced among them were the organs of hearing and of perception of cold and hot, the sense of touch; the perception of light lagged far behind. Man came into the world with the senses of hearing and touch; the perception of light developed somewhat later.

Everything which is said here applies to the last periods before the division into sexes. This division took place slowly and gradually. Long before its actual occurrence, human beings were already developing in such a way that one individual would be born with more male, another with more female characteristics. Each human being however also possessed the opposite sexual characteristics, so that self-impregnation was possible. But the latter could not always take place, because it depended on the influences of external conditions in certain seasons.

With respect to many things and to a great extent, man was generally dependent on such outer conditions. Therefore he had to regulate all his institutions in accordance with such external conditions, for example, in accordance with the course of the sun and the moon. But his regulation did not take place consciously in the modern sense, but was accomplished in a manner which one must call instinctive. With this we already indicate the soul life of man of that time.

This soul life cannot be described as a true inner life. Physical and soul activities and qualities were not yet strictly separated. The outer life of nature was still experienced by the soul. Each single disturbance in the environment acted powerfully on the sense of hearing especially Every disturbance of the air, every movement was "heard." In their movements wind and water spoke an "eloquent

language" to man.

In this manner a perception of the mysterious activity of nature penetrated into him. This activity reverberated in his soul. His own activity was an echo of these impressions. He transformed the perceptions of sound into his own activity. He lived among such tonal movements and expressed them by his will. In this way he was impelled to all his daily labors.

He was influenced in a somewhat lesser degree by the influences which act upon the touch. But they also played an important role. He "felt" the environment in his body and acted accordingly. From such influences upon the touch he could tell when and how he had to work. He knew from them where he should rest. In them he recognized and avoided dangers which threatened his life. In accordance with these influences he regulated his food intake.

The remainder of the soul life took its course in a manner quite different from that of later periods. In the soul lived images of external objects, not conceptions of them. For instance, when man entered a warmer space from a colder one, a certain colored image arose in his soul. But this colored image had nothing to do with any external object.

It originated in an inner force which was akin to the will. Such images continuously filled the soul. One can compare this only with the flowing dream impressions of man. At that time the images were not completely irregular, but proceeded according to law. Therefore, in relation to this stage of mankind, one should speak of an image consciousness rather than of a dream consciousness. For the most part, colored images filled this consciousness. But these were not the only kind. Thus man wandered through the world, and through his hearing and touch participated in the events of this world: but in his soul life this world was mirrored in images which were very unlike what existed in the external world. Joy and sorrow were associated with the images of the soul to a much lesser degree than is the case today with the ideas of men which reflect their perceptions of the external world. It is true that one image awakened happiness, another displeasure, one hate, another love; but these feelings had a much paler character.

On the other hand, strong feelings were aroused by something else. At that time man was much more active than later. Everything in his environment as well as the images in his soul, stimulated him to activity, to movement. When his activity could proceed without hindrance, he experienced pleasure, but when this activity was hindered in any way, he felt displeasure and discomfort. It was the absence or presence of hindrances to his will which determined the content of his sensations, his joy and his pain. This joy, or this pain were again released in his soul in a world of living images. Light, clear, beautiful images lived in him when he could be completely free in his actions; dark, misshapen images arose in his soul when his movements were hindered.

Until now the average man has been described. Among those who had developed into a kind of superhuman beings, (cf. page 96) soul life was different. Their soul life did not have this instinctive character. Through their senses of hearing and touch they perceived deeper mysteries of nature, which they could interpret consciously. In the rushing of the wind, in the rustling of the trees, the laws, the wisdom of nature were unveiled to them. The images in their souls did not merely represent reflections of the external world, but were likenesses of the spiritual powers of the world. They did

not perceive sensory objects, but spiritual entities. For example, the average man experienced fear, and an ugly, dark image arose in his soul. By means of such images the superhuman being received information and revelation about the spiritual entities of the world.

The processes of nature did not appear to him as dependent on lifeless natural laws, as they do to the scientist of today, but rather as the actions of spiritual beings. External reality did not yet exist, for there were no external senses. But spiritual reality was accessible to the higher beings. The spirit shone into them as the sun shines into the physical eye of man today. In these beings, cognition was what one may call intuitive knowledge in the fullest sense of the word. For them there was no combining and speculating, but an immediate perception of the activity of spiritual beings. Therefore, these superhuman individuals could receive communications from the spiritual world directly into their will. They consciously directed the other men. They received their mission from the world of spirits and acted accordingly.

When the time came in which the sexes separated, these beings considered it their task to act upon the new life in accordance with their mission. The regulation of sexual life emanated from them. Everything which relates to the reproduction of mankind originated with them. In this they acted quite consciously, but the other men could only feel this influence as an instinct implanted in them. Sexual love was implanted in man by immediate transference of thought. At first all its manifestations were of the noblest character. Everything in this area which has taken on an ugly character comes from later times, when men became more independent and when they corrupted an originally pure impulse. In these older times there was no satisfaction of the sexual impulse for its own sake. Then, everything was a sacrificial service for the continuation of human existence. Reproduction was regarded as a sacred matter, as a service which man owes to the world. Sacrificial priests were the directors and regulators in this field.

Of a different kind were the influences of the half superhuman beings (cf. page 96/97). The latter were not developed to the point of being able to receive the revelations of the spiritual world in an entirely pure form. Along with these impressions of the spiritual world, the effects of the sensible earth also arose among the images of their souls. The truly superhuman beings received no impressions of joy and pain through the external world. They were wholly given over to the revelations of the spiritual powers.

Wisdom flowed to them as light does to sensory beings; their will was directed toward nothing but acting in accordance with this wisdom. In this acting lay their highest joy. Wisdom, will, and activity constituted their nature. This was different among the half superhuman entities. They felt the impulse to receive impressions from the outside, and with the satisfaction of this impulse they connected joy, with its frustration, displeasure. Through this they differed from the superhuman entities. To these entities, external impressions were nothing but confirmations of spiritual revelations. They could look out into the world without receiving anything more than a reflection of what they had already received from the spirit. The half-superhuman beings learned something new, and therefore they could become leaders of men when in human souls mere images changed into likenesses and conceptions of external objects.

This happened when a portion of the previous reproductive energy of man turned inward, at the time

when entities with brains were developed. With the brain man also received the capacity to transform external sensory impressions into conceptions.

It must therefore be said that by half-superhuman beings man was brought to the point of directing his inner nature toward the sensuous external world. He was not permitted to open the images of his soul directly to pure spiritual influences. The capacity of perpetuating the existence of his kind was implanted in him as an instinctive impulse by superhuman beings. Spiritually, he would at first have had to continue a sort of dream existence if the half-superhuman beings had not intervened.

Through their influence the images of his soul were directed toward the sensuous, external world. He became a being which was conscious of itself in the world of the senses. Thereby it came about that man could consciously direct his actions in accordance with his perceptions of the world of the senses. Before this he had acted from a kind of instinct. He had been under the spell of his external environment and of the powers of higher individualities, which acted on him. Now he began to follow the impulses and enticements of his conceptions. Therewith free choice became possible for man. This was the beginning of "good and evil."

Before we continue in this direction, something will be said concerning the environment of man on earth. In addition to man there existed animals, which, for their kind, were at the same stage of development as he. According to current ideas one would include them among the reptiles. Apart from them, lower forms of animal life existed. Between man and the animals there was an essential difference. Because of his still malleable body, man could live only in those regions of the earth which had not yet passed over into the most solid material form. And in these regions animal organisms which had a similarly plastic body lived with him. But in other regions lived animals which already had dense bodies and also had developed separate sexedness and the senses.

Where they had come from, will be explained later. These animals could not develop further because their bodies had taken on this denser materiality too soon. Some species of these became extinct, others have perpetuated their kind to the point of contemporary forms. Man could attain higher forms because he remained in the regions which corresponded to his state at that time. Thereby his body remained so pliant and soft that he could develop the organs which were to be fructified by the spirit. With this development his external body had reached the point where it could pass over into denser materiality and become a protective envelope for the more delicate spiritual organs.

Not all human bodies, however, had reached this point. There were few advanced ones. These were first animated by spirit. Others were not animated. If the spirit had penetrated into them it could have developed only in a defective manner because of the as yet incomplete inner organs. Therefore, at first these human beings were compelled to develop further without spirit. A third kind had reached the point where weak spiritual impulses could act in them. They stood between the two other kinds. Their mental activity remained dull.

They had to be led by higher spiritual powers. All possible transitions existed between these three kinds. Further development was now possible only in that a portion of the human beings attained higher forms at the expense of the others. First, the completely mindless ones had to be abandoned. A mingling with them for the purpose of reproduction would have pulled the more highly developed

down to their level. Everything which had been given a mind was therefore separated from them. Thereby the latter descended more and more to the level of animalism. Thus, alongside man there developed manlike animals. Man left a portion of his brothers behind on his road in order that he himself might ascend higher. This process had by no means come to an end.

Among the men with a dull mental life those who stood somewhat higher could advance only if they were raised to an association with higher ones, and separated themselves from those less endowed with spirit. Only thus could they develop bodies which would be fit to receive the full human spirit. After a certain time the physical development had come to a kind of stopping-point, in that everything which lay above a certain boundary remained human. Meanwhile, the conditions of life on earth had changed in such a way that a further thrusting down would no longer produce animal-like creatures, but such as were no longer capable of living. That which had been thrust down into the animal world has either become extinct or survives in the different higher animals.

Therefore, one must consider these animals as beings which had to stop at an earlier stage of human development. They have not retained the form which they had at the time of their separation, however, but have gone from a higher to a lower level. Thus the apes are men of a past epoch who have regressed. As man was once less perfect than he is at present, they were once more perfect than they are now.

That which has remained in the field of the human, has gone through a similar process, but within these human limits. Many savage tribes must be considered to be the degenerated descendants of human forms which were once more highly developed. They did not sink to the level of animalism, but only to that of savagery.

The immortal part of man is the spirit. It has been shown when the spirit entered the body. Before this, the spirit belonged to other regions. It could only associate itself with the body when the latter had attained a certain level of development. Only when one understands completely how this association came about, can one recognize the significance of birth and death, and can understand the nature of the eternal spirit.

## 8 - The Hyperborean and the Polarean Epoch

The following passages from the Akasha Chronicle go back to the periods which precede what was described in the last chapters. In view of the materialistic ideas of our time, the risk we undertake with these communications is perhaps even greater than that connected with what has been described in the preceding passages. Today such things are readily met with the accusation of fantasy and baseless speculation.

When one knows how far from even taking these things seriously someone can be who has been trained scientifically in the contemporary sense, then only the consciousness that one is reporting faithfully in accordance with spiritual experience can lead one to write about them. Nothing is said here which has not been carefully examined with the means provided by the science of the spirit.

The scientist need only be as tolerant toward the science of the spirit as the latter is toward the scientific way of thinking. [Compare my *Welt-und Lebensanschauungen im neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (Conception's of the World and of Life in the Nineteenth Century), where I think I have shown that I am able to appreciate the materialistic-scientific view.\*] For those however who incline toward these matters of the science of the spirit, I would like to make a special remark concerning the passages reproduced here. Especially important matters will be discussed in what follows. And all this belongs to periods which are long past.

The deciphering of the Akasha Chronicle is not exactly easy in this area. The author of this present book in no way claims that he should be believed blindly. He merely wishes to report what his best efforts have enabled him to discover. He will welcome any correction based on competent knowledge. He feels obliged to communicate these events concerning the development of mankind because the signs of the times urge it. Moreover, a long period of time had to be described in outline here in order to afford a general view. Further details on much that is only indicated now will follow later.

Only with difficulty can the writings in the Akasha Chronicle be translated into our colloquial language. They are more easily communicated in the symbolical sign language used in mystery schools, but as yet the communication of this language is not permitted. Therefore the reader is requested to bear with much that is dark and difficult to comprehend, and to struggle toward an understanding, just as the writer has struggled toward a generally understandable manner of presentation. Many a difficulty in reading will be rewarded when one looks upon the deep mysteries, the important human enigmas which are indicated. A true self-knowledge of man is, after all, the result of these "Akasha Records," which for the scientist of the spirit are realities as certain as are mountain ranges and rivers for the eye of sense. An error of perception is of course possible, here and there.

It should be noted that in the present section only the development of man is discussed. Parallel to it, of course, runs that of the other natural realms, of the mineral, the botanical, the animal. The next sections will deal with these. Then much will be spoken of which will make the discussion concerning man appear in a clearer light. On the other hand, one cannot speak of the development of the terrestrial realms in the sense of the science of the spirit, until the gradual progress of man has been described.



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If one traces the development of the earth even further back than was done in the preceding essays, one comes upon increasingly refined material conditions of our planet. The substances which later became solid were previously in a fluid, still earlier, in a vaporous and steam-like, and in an even more remote past, in the most refined (etheric) condition. The decreasing temperature caused the hardening of substances.

Here we shall go back to the most refined etheric condition of the substances of our earthly dwelling place. Man first entered upon the earth in this epoch of its development. Before that, he belonged to other worlds, which will be discussed later. Only the one immediately preceding will be indicated here. This was a so-called astral or soul world. The beings of this world did not lead an external, (physical) bodily existence. Neither did man. He had already developed the image consciousness mentioned in the previous essay. He had feelings and desires. But all this was enclosed in a soul body. Only to the clairvoyant eye would such a man have been perceptible.

As a matter of fact, all the more highly developed human beings of that time possessed clairvoyance, although it was quite dull and dreamlike. It was not a self-conscious clairvoyance.

These astral beings are in a certain sense the ancestors of man. What is today called "man" carries the self-conscious spirit within him. This spirit united with the being which had developed from the astral ancestor in about the middle of the Lemurian period. This union has already been indicated in the previous essays. In the description of the course of development of the ancestors of man up to that period which is to follow here, the matter will be discussed again in greater detail.

The soul or astral ancestors of man were transported to the refined or etheric earth. So to speak, they sucked the refined substance into themselves like a sponge, to speak coarsely. By thus becoming penetrated with substance, they developed etheric bodies. These had an elongated elliptical form, in which the limbs and other organs which were to be formed later were already indicated by delicate shadings of the substance. All processes in this mass were purely physical-chemical, but they were regulated and dominated by the soul.

When such a mass of substance had attained a certain size it split into two masses, each of which was similar to the form from which it had sprung, and in it the same processes took place as in the original mass of substance.

Each new form was as much endowed with soul as the mother being. This was due to the fact that it was not a certain number of human souls which entered upon the earthly scene, but rather a kind of soul tree which could produce innumerable single souls from its common root. As a plant sprouts ever anew from innumerable seeds, so the soul life appeared in the countless shoots produced by the continual divisions. It is true that from the beginning there was a narrowly circumscribed number of kinds of souls, of which fact we shall speak later. But within these kinds the development proceeded in the manner which we have described. Each kind of soul put forth innumerable off-shoots.

With their entry into terrestrial materiality, an important change had taken place within the souls

themselves. As long as the souls were not connected with anything material, no external material process could act on them. Any action upon them was purely of the nature of soul, was a clairvoyant one. They thus shared in the life of everything pertaining to soul in their environment — All that existed at that time was experienced in this way. The actions of stones, plants, and animals, which then existed only as astral (soul-like) forms, were felt as inner soul experiences.

With the entering upon the earth, something totally new was added to this. External material processes exercised an effect on the soul, which now appeared in material garb. At first it was only the processes of motion in this material outside world which produced movements within the etheric body. As today we perceive the vibration of the air as sound, these etheric beings perceived the vibrations of the etheric matter which surrounded them. Such a being was basically a single organ of hearing. This sense developed first. But one can see from this that separate organs of hearing developed only later.

With the increasing densification of terrestrial matter, the spiritual being gradually lost the ability to mold this matter. Only the bodies which had already been formed could produce their like out of themselves. A new manner of reproduction arose. The daughter being appeared as a considerably smaller form than the mother being and only gradually grew to the size of the latter. While before there had been no organs of reproduction, these now made their appearance.

At this time, however, it is no longer merely a physical-chemical process which takes place in these forms. Such a chemical-physical process could not effect reproduction now. Because of its densification, external matter is no longer such that the soul can give life to it without mediation. Therefore, a certain portion within the form is isolated. This portion is withdrawn from the immediate influences of external matter.

Only the body outside of this isolated portion remains exposed to these influences. It is in the same condition in which the whole body was before. In the separated portion, the soul element continues to act. Here the soul becomes the carrier of the life principle, called Prana in theosophical literature. Thus the bodily ancestor of man now appears endowed with two organs. One is the physical body, the physical envelope. It is subject to the chemical and physical laws of the surrounding world. The other is the sum of the organs which are subject to the special life principle.

A portion of soul activity is freed in this manner. This activity no longer has any power over the physical part of the body. This part of the soul activity now turns inward and forms a portion of the body into special organs. With this an inner life of the body begins. The body no longer merely participates in the vibrations of the outside world, but begins to perceive them within itself as special experiences. Here is the starting point of perception. This perception at first appears as a kind of sense of touch. The organism feels the movements of the outside world; the pressure which substances exercise, and so forth. The beginnings of a perception of heat and cold also appear.

With this an important stage in the development of mankind is reached. The immediate influence of the soul has been withdrawn from the physical body. The latter is totally given over to the physical and chemical world of matter. It disintegrates at the moment the soul can no longer dominate it with its activity. Thereupon occurs that which one calls "death." In connection with the preceding conditions, there could be no question of death.

When a division took place, the mother form survived wholly in the daughter forms. For in these the entire transformed soul energy acted as it did before in the mother form. In the division there was nothing left which did not contain soul. Now this becomes different. As soon as the soul no longer has any power over the physical body, the latter becomes subject to the chemical and physical laws of the outside world, that is, it dies away. As activity of the soul there remains only that which acts in reproduction and in the developed inner life.

This means that descendants are produced by the force of reproduction, and at the same time these descendants are endowed with a surplus of organ-forming energy. In this surplus the soul being is constantly reviving. As previously at the time of division, the whole body was filled with soul activity, so the organs of reproduction and perception are now filled with it. We are thus dealing with a reincarnation of the soul life in the newly-developing daughter organism.

In theosophical literature these two stages of the development of man are described as the first two root races of our earth. The first is called the Polarean, the second, the Hyperborean race.

One must imagine the perceptual world of these ancestors of man to have been a quite general and indefinite one. Only two of the types of perception of today had already become separated: the sense of hearing and the sense of touch. Because of the changes that had taken place in the body as well as in the physical environment, the entire human form was no longer capable of being, in a manner of speaking, an "ear." A special part of the body remained capable of reverberating to delicate vibrations. It furnished the material from which our organ of hearing gradually developed. However, approximately the whole remainder of the body continued to be the organ of touch.

It can be seen that up to this point the entire process of the development of man is connected with a change in the temperature conditions of earth. It was the heat in man's environment which had brought him to the level we have described. But now the external temperature had reached a point where further progress of the human form would no longer have been possible. Within the organism a counter-action against the further cooling of the earth now begins.

Man starts to produce his own source of heat. Up to this point he had shared the temperature of his environment. Now organs develop in him which make him able to create the degree of heat necessary for his life. Previously, the circulating substances which passed through him had been dependent on the environment in this respect. Now he himself could develop heat for these substances. The bodily fluids now became warm blood. With this he attained a much higher degree of independence as a physical being than he had possessed before.

The whole inner life became more active. Perception still depended entirely on the influences of the outside world. Filled with its own heat, the body acquired an independent physical inner life. Now the soul had a basis inside the body upon which it could develop a life which was no longer merely a participation in the life of the outside world.

Through this process, the life of the soul was drawn into the realm of the earthly-material. Previously, desires, wishes, passions, joy and grief of the soul could only be produced by something that was itself soul-like. That which proceeded from another soul-being awakened sympathy or aversion in the

soul, excited the passions, and so forth. No external physical object could have had such an effect.

Now only did it become possible for such external objects to have a significance for the soul. For the latter experienced the enhancement of the inner life, which had awakened when the body produced its own heat, as something pleasant, the disturbance of this inner life as something disagreeable. An external object suitable for contributing to physical well-being could be desired, could be wished for. What in theosophical literature is called Kama — the body of wishes — became connected with earthly man. The objects of the senses could now become objects of desire. Through his body of wishes man became tied to earthly existence.

This fact coincides with a great event in the universe, with which it is causally connected. Up to this point there had been no material separation between sun, earth, and moon. In their effect on man these three were one body. Now the separation took place; the more delicate substantiality, which includes everything which had previously made it possible for the soul to act in an immediately vitalizing manner, separated itself as the sun; the coarsest part was extruded as the moon; and the earth, with respect to its substantiality, stood in the middle between the two others.

This separation was of course not a sudden one; rather the whole process proceeded gradually while man was advancing from the stage of reproduction by division to the one described last. It was indeed by the universal processes just mentioned that this development of man was brought about. The sun first withdrew its substance from the common heavenly body. Thereby it became impossible for the soul element to vitalize the remaining earthly matter without mediation. Then the moon began to form itself. Thus the earth entered the condition which made possible the capacity for perception characterized above.

In association with this process, a new sense developed. The temperature conditions of earth became such that bodies gradually took on the fixed limits which separated the transparent from the opaque. The sun, which had been extruded from the terrestrial mass, received its task as light giver. In the human body the sense of seeing developed. At first this seeing was not as we know it today.

Light and darkness acted upon man as vague sensations. For instance, under certain conditions he experienced light as pleasant, as promoting his physical life, and sought it, strove toward it. At the same time his soul life proper still continued in dreamlike pictures. In this life, colored images which had no immediate relation to external objects arose and vanished. Man still related these colored images to spiritual influences. Light images appeared to him when he was affected by pleasant soul influences, dark images when he was touched by unpleasant soul influences.

Up to now, what was caused by the development of bodily heat has been described as "inner life." But it can be seen that it was not an inner life in the sense of the later development of mankind. Everything proceeds by stages, including the development of the inner life. As it was meant in the preceding essay, this true inner life begins only with the fertilization by the spirit, when man begins to think about that which acts upon him from the outside.

Everything which has been described here shows how man grew into the condition pictured in the preceding chapter. Essentially one is already moving in the period which was characterized there

when one describes the following: The soul learns more and more to apply to external bodily existence that which it had previously experienced within itself and related only to the soul-like.

This now happens with the colored images. As before, a pleasing impression of something soul-like had been connected with a luminous image in the soul, now a bright impression of light from the outside became connected with such an image. The soul began to see the objects around it in colors. This was connected with the development of new instruments of sight. At previous stages, for the perception of light and darkness, the body had had an eye which no longer exists today. (The legend of the Cyclops with one eye is a recollection of these conditions-)

The two eyes developed when the soul began to connect the light impressions from the outside more intimately with its own life. With this, the capacity for the perception of the soul-like in the environment disappeared. More and more the soul became the mirror of the external world. The outside world is repeated within the soul as image.

Hand in hand with this went the division into sexes. On one side, the human body became receptive only to fertilization by another human being; on the other side there developed the physical "soul organs" (the nervous system) through which the sense impressions of the outside world were mirrored in the soul.

With this, the entry of the thinking spirit into the human body had been prepared.

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[\*] In 1914 a new edition of this work appeared, which was completed by a Vorgeschichte über abendländische Philosophie und bis zur Gegenwart fortgesetzt (Previous History of Occidental Philosophy and its Continuation to the Present), the work appearing under the title, Die Rätsel der Philosophie in ihrer Geschichte als Umriss dargestellt (The Riddles of Philosophy, etc.), two volumes, Stuttgart, 1955.

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## 9 - Beginning of the Present Earth - Extrusion of the Sun

We shall now follow the Akasha Chronicle back into that remote past in which our present earth had its beginning. By "earth" is to be understood that condition of our planet by virtue of which it can support minerals, plants, animals, and men in their form of today. For this condition was preceded by others in which the natural realms just mentioned existed in considerably different forms.

That which one now calls earth went through many changes before it could become the carrier of our present mineral, plant, animal, and human worlds. Minerals for instance also existed under the preceding conditions, but they looked quite different from those of today. These past conditions will be discussed further below. Now we shall only call attention to the manner in which the immediately preceding condition changed into the present one.

One can conceive of such a transformation to some extent by comparing it to the passage of a plant through the seed stage. Imagine a plant with root, stalk, leaves, blossom, and fruit. It takes in substances from its environment and secretes others. But everything in it which is substance, form, and process disappears, except for the small seed. Life develops by passing through it, and in the new year it rises again in the same form. Thus everything which existed on our earth in its preceding condition has disappeared, only to arise again in its present condition. What for the preceding condition one might call mineral, plant, animal has passed away, as in the plant, root, stalk, and so forth, pass away. There as well as here, a germinal stage has remained, from which the old form develops anew. The forces which will cause the new form to emerge lie hidden in the seed.

At the period discussed here we are dealing with a kind of earth germ. This contained within itself the forces which led to the earth of today. These forces were acquired through earlier conditions. This earth germ however must not be imagined as a densely material one, like that of a plant. It was rather of a soul character. It consisted of that delicate, malleable, mobile substance which is called "astral" in occult literature.

In this astral germ of earth there are only human rudiments at first. These are the rudiments of the later human souls. Everything in preceding conditions which was already present as a mineral; plant, or animal nature has been drawn into these human rudiments and become fused with them. Before man enters upon the earth he is a soul, an astral entity. As such he appears on earth. The latter exists in a state of the most highly-refined substantiality, which in occult literature is called the most refined ether. Whence this etheric earth originated will be described in the next essays.

The astral human beings combine with this ether. They impress their nature upon this ether, in order that it can become a likeness of the astral human entity. In this initial condition we are dealing with an ether earth which really consists only of these ether men, which is only a conglomerate of them.

Actually the astral body or the soul of man is for the most part still outside the ether body and organizes it from without. To the scientist of the spirit, the earth appears approximately as follows. It is a sphere which in turn is composed of innumerable small ether spheres — the ether men — and is surrounded by an astral envelope just as the present earth is surrounded by an envelope of air.

It is in this astral envelope (atmosphere) that the astral men live and whence they act upon their ether likenesses. The astral human souls create organs in their ether likenesses and produce a human ether life in them. Within the whole earth there exists only one condition of matter, the refined living ether. In theosophical books this first humanity is called the first (the Polarean) root race.

The further development of earth takes place in such that from the one condition of matter there develop two. A denser substantiality is secreted, so to speak, and leaves a thinner one behind. The denser substantiality resembles our present air; the thinner one is that which causes chemical elements to develop from previously undifferentiated substance. Along with these, a remainder of the previous substantiality, the living ether, continues to exist. Only a part of it is transformed into the so-called material conditions.

We now are dealing with three substances within the physical earth. While the astral human beings in the envelope of earth previously acted only upon one kind of substantiality, they must now act upon three. They act upon them in the following way: That which has become airlike at first resists their activity. It does not accept everything which is rudimentarily present in the complete astral men. As a consequence, astral humanity must divide itself into two groups. One group works on the air-like substantiality and creates in it a likeness of two other substantialities; it can create a likeness of itself which consists of the living ether and of the other kind of ether which brings the elementary chemical substances into being. This ether will here be called the chemical ether.

This second group of astral men has acquired its higher capacity, however, only by separating from itself a part of the astral nature — the first group — and condemning it to a lower kind of labor. Had it retained within itself the forces which accomplish this lower labor, it could not have risen higher itself. here we are dealing with a process which consists in the development of the higher at the expense of something else, which is separated from it.

Within the physical earth the following picture now presents itself. Two kinds of entities have come into being First, entities which have an airlike body on which the astral being belonging to it is working from the outside. These beings are animal-like. They form a first animal realm on earth. These animals have shapes which, were they to be described here, would strike mankind of today as very peculiar.

Their shape — one must keep in mind that this shape is based only on an airlike substance — does not resemble any of the animal forms existing now. At most they have a remote similarity to the shells of certain snails and mussels which exist today. Beside these animal forms the development of physical man progresses. The astral man, who has now ascended higher, produces a physical likeness of himself which consists of the two kinds of matter, of the life ether and of the chemical ether. One thus deals with a man who consists of the astral body and is working himself into an ether body which in turn consists of two kinds of ether: life ether and chemical ether.

Through the life ether this physical likeness of man is endowed with the capacity to reproduce itself, to cause beings of its own kind to emerge from it. Through the chemical ether it develops certain forces which are similar to the present forces of chemical attraction and repulsion. Thereby this likeness of man is in a position to attract certain substances from the environment and to combine

them with itself, secreting them again later by means of the repelling forces. These substances, of course, can only be taken from the animal realm described above, and from the realm of man. This constitutes a beginning of nutrition. Thus these first likenesses of man were eaters of animals and of men.

Besides these beings, the descendants of the earlier beings, composed merely of life ether, continue to exist, but they become atrophied, since they have to adapt to the new terrestrial conditions. After they have undergone many transformations, the unicellular animal beings develop from them, and also the cells which later make up the more complicated living organisms.

The following process then takes place. The airlike substantiality divides itself into two, of which one becomes denser, watery, while the other one remains airlike. The chemical ether also divides itself into two conditions of matter; one of them becomes denser and forms that which we shall here call the light ether. It endows the entities which possess it with the gift of luminosity. On the other hand, a portion of the chemical ether continues to exist as such.

We are now dealing with a physical earth which is composed of the following kinds of matter: water, air, light ether, chemical ether. and life ether. In order that the astral entities can act on these kinds of matter, another process takes place by which the higher develops at the expense of the lower, which becomes separated from it. Thereby physical entities of the following kind are produced. First, those whose physical body consists of water and air. Now coarse astral entities which have been split off, act on these. Thus a new group of animals of coarser materiality than the earlier ones is produced.

Another new group of physical entities has a body which consists of air and light ether mixed with water. These are plantlike entities, which however are very different in form from the plants of today. Finally, the third new group represents man of that period. His physical body consists of three kinds of ether: the light ether, the chemical ether, and the life ether. If one considers that descendants of the old groups also continue to exist, one can judge what a variety of living beings there already were at that stage of terrestrial existence.

There now follows an important cosmic event. The sun is extruded. Thereby certain forces simply leave the earth. These forces are composed of a part of what hitherto had existed on earth in the life ether and in the chemical and light ether. These forces, so to speak, were withdrawn from the earth. A radical change thereby took place among groups of terrestrial beings which previously had contained these forces within themselves.

They all suffered a transformation. Those which have been called plant beings above, first suffered such a transformation. A part of their light ether forces was taken from them. They could then develop as organisms only when the force of light, which had been withdrawn from them, acted upon them from the outside. Thus the plants came under the influence of the sunlight.

Something similar happened with human bodies. From then onward, their light ether also had to act together with the light ether of the sun in order to be capable of life. But not only those beings themselves which lost the light ether were affected; the others were affected too. For in the world everything interacts. Those animal forms, too, which did not contain light ether themselves had



previously been irradiated by their fellow beings on earth and had developed under this irradiation. Now they also came under the immediate influence of the external sun.

The human body in particular developed organs receptive to the sunlight, that is, the first rudiments of human eyes.

The consequence of the extrusion of the sun was a further material densification of the earth. Solid matter developed from fluid; likewise the light ether separated into another kind of light ether, and into an ether which gives bodies the capacity to increase temperature. With this, the earth became an entity which developed heat within itself. All its beings came under the influence of heat.

In the astral element a process similar to the previous ones again had to take place; some beings developed to a higher level at the expense of others. A group of beings split off which were well suited to work on coarse solid substantiality. With this there had developed the firm skeleton of the mineral realm of earth. At first the higher natural realms did not act upon this rigid mineral skeleton. Thus, on the earth there exist a mineral realm which is solid, and a plant realm which has water and air as its densest substantiality. In the latter realm, through the events we have described, the air body had become condensed to a water body.

There also existed animals of the most varied forms, some with water and some with air bodies. The human body itself had become subject to a process of densification. It had condensed its most compact corporeality to the point of wateriness. The newly-developed heat ether coursed through this water body. This gave to his body a substantiality which could perhaps be called gas-like. This material condition of the human body is described in works on mystery science as that of the fire mist. Man was embodied in this body of fire mist.

With this, the examination of the Akasha Chronicle has reached a point shortly before the cosmic catastrophe caused by the extrusion of the moon from the earth.

## 10 - Extrusion of the Moon

One must be quite clear about the fact that only later did man assume the dense substantiality which he has today, and that he did this very gradually. If one wants to form an idea of his corporeality on the level of development which is being discussed, one can best do this by imagining it as similar to water vapor or to a cloud suspended in the air. But of course this idea approaches reality in a completely external way. For the fire cloud "man" is internally alive and organized.

In comparison to what man became later, however, one must imagine him at this stage as in a state of soul slumber, and as only very dimly conscious. Everything which can be called intelligence, understanding, reason is lacking in this being. Floating rather than striding, it moves forward, aside, backward, to all sides, by means of four limb-like organs. For the rest, something has already been said about the soul of this being.

One must not think however that the movements or vital activities of these beings occurred in an irrational or irregular fashion. On the contrary, they were completely regular. Everything which happened had sense and significance. But the directing force of understanding was not in the beings themselves.

They were directed by an understanding which was outside of them. Higher, more mature beings than they, surrounded and directed them. For the important, basic quality of the fire mist was that on the level of their existence which we have characterized, human beings could embody themselves in it, but that at the same time higher beings also could take on a body in it and could enter into a fully reciprocal relationship with men.

Man had brought his impulses, instincts, and passions to the point where they could be formed in the fire mist. The other beings mentioned, however, could create within this fire mist by means of their reason and their intelligent activity. These beings had higher capacities by which they reached into the upper regions. Their decisions and impulses emanated from these regions, but the actual effects of these decisions appeared in the fire mist. Everything men did on earth resulted from the regular association of the fire mist body with that of these higher beings.

One can say that man was striving to ascend. He was to develop qualities in the fire mist which in a human sense were higher than those he had previously possessed. The other beings, however, were striving downward toward the material. They were on the way to bringing their creative powers to bear on increasingly dense material forms. This does not represent a degradation for them in the broader sense of the term.

One must be quite clear on this point. It requires a higher power and capacity to direct denser forms of substantiality than to control those less dense. In earlier periods of their development, these higher beings too had had a limited power like that of man today. Like present-day man, they once had power only over what took place "within them." At that time, coarse, external matter did not obey them. Now they were striving toward a condition in which they were to direct outer events magically. Thus they were ahead of man in the period described.

Man strove upward in order that he might first embody the understanding in more refined matter, so that later it could act toward the external; they had already incorporated the understanding into themselves at an earlier period, and now received magic power in order to articulate the understanding into the world around them. Man was moving upward through the stage of the fire mist; they were penetrating downward through the same stage, toward an extension of their power.

Those forces especially, which man knows as the forces of his lower passions or impulses, can be active in the fire mist. Man, as well as the higher beings, makes use of these forces at the stage of the fire mist. These forces act in such a way within the human form described above that man can develop the organs which enable him to think, and thus to develop a personality.

On the other hand, these forces work in the higher beings at this stage in such a manner that they can employ them impersonally to create the arrangements of the earth. In this way, forms which are images of the rules of the understanding, come into existence on earth through these beings. Through the action of the forces of passion, organs of personal understanding develop in man; through the same forces, organizations filled with wisdom develop around him.

One should now imagine this process to be somewhat further advanced; or rather, one should represent to oneself what is written in the Akasha Chronicle concerning a somewhat later point in time. At that moment the moon split off from the earth. This event caused a great revolution. The objects which surround man lost a great part of their heat. These objects thereby entered into a coarser and denser substantiality.

Man must live in this cooler environment. He can do this only if he changes his own substantiality. With this densification of substance is connected a change in form. For the condition of fire mist on earth has been replaced by a completely different state. As a consequence, the higher beings which we have described no longer have the fire mist available to them as a medium for their activity. Now they can no longer exercise their influence on those soul activities of man which had previously constituted their main field of action. They have received power over the forms of man which they themselves had previously created from the fire mist.

This change in influence goes hand in hand with a transformation of the human form. One half of this form, together with two organs of movement, now becomes the lower half of the body, which functions mainly as the carrier of nutrition and reproduction. The other half of this form is turned upward, so to speak. The remaining two organs of movement become the rudiments of hands. Those organs which previously had served for nutrition and reproduction are transformed into organs of speech and thought. Man has become upright.

This is the immediate consequence of the extrusion of the moon. With the moon all those forces disappeared from the earth through which, during his fire mist period, man could still impregnate himself and produce beings like himself without external influence. His whole lower half — that which one often calls the lower nature — now came under the rationally formative influence of the higher entities. What these entities previously could regulate within man, since the mass of forces now split off with the moon was then still combined with the earth, they now have to organize through the interaction of the two sexes.

It is therefore understandable that the moon is regarded by the initiates as the symbol of the force of reproduction. After all, these forces do inhere in it, so to speak. The higher beings we have described have an affinity with the moon, are in a sense, moon gods. Before the separation of the moon and, through its power, they acted within man; afterwards, their forces acted from outside on the reproduction of man. One could also say that those noble spiritual forces which previously had acted on the still higher impulses of man through the medium of the fire mist, had now descended in order to exercise their power in the area of reproduction. Indeed, noble and divine forces exercise a regulating and organizing action in this area.

With this an important proposition of the secret doctrine has been expressed, namely, the higher, more noble divine forces have an affinity with the — apparently — lower forces of human nature. The word "apparently" must here be understood in its full significance. For it would be a complete misconception of occult truths if one were to see something base in the forces of reproduction as such. Only when man misuses these forces, when he compels them to serve his passions and instincts, is there something pernicious in them, but not when he ennobles them through the insight that a divine spiritual power lies in them.

Then he will place these forces at the service of the development of the earth, and through his forces of reproduction he will carry out the intentions of the higher entities we have characterized. Mystery science teaches that this whole subject is to be ennobled, is to be placed under divine laws, but is not to be mortified. The latter can only be the consequence of occult principles which have been understood in a purely external fashion and distorted into a misconceived asceticism.

It will be seen that in his second, his upper half, man has developed something upon which the higher beings we have described have no influence. Other beings now acquire power over this upper half. In earlier stages of their development, these beings advanced further than men, but not as far as the moon gods. They could not exercise their power in the fire mist. But now that something they themselves had lacked previously has been formed in the human organs of understanding through the fire mist, their time has come.

At an earlier time, the moon gods had attained an understanding capable of acting externally. This understanding already existed in them when the period of the fire mist began. They could act externally on the things of earth. In earlier times, the lower beings we have just mentioned had not attained such an understanding which acts outwardly. Therefore, the time of the fire mist found them unprepared.

Now, however, an understanding is present. It exists in men. These beings seize upon this human understanding in order to act on the things of earth by means of it. As the moon gods previously had acted on the whole man, they now act only on his lower half, while the influence of the lower entities just mentioned acts on his upper half. Thus man comes under a double leadership. In his lower part he is under the power of the moon gods; in his developed personality, however, he comes under the leadership of those entities which are summed up under the name "Lucifer," the name of their regent. The Luciferic gods thus complete their own development by making use of the awakened human powers of understanding. Previously they had not been able to attain this level.

At the same time they give man the predisposition to freedom, to the discrimination between "good" and "evil." While it is true that the human organ of understanding has been formed entirely under the leadership of the moon gods, these gods would have left it to slumber; they were not interested in making use of it. They possessed their own powers of understanding. In their own interest, the Luciferic beings were concerned with developing the human understanding and directing it toward the things of earth.

Thereby for men they became the teachers of all that can be accomplished by the human understanding. But they could not be anything more than stimulators. They could not develop an understanding within themselves, but only in man. Thus there developed two directions of activity on earth. One proceeded directly from the moon divinities and was lawfully regulated and rational from the very beginning. The moon gods had already served their apprenticeship and were now beyond the possibility of error. The Luciferic gods which acted on men had yet to win their way to such illumination. With their guidance man had to learn to find the laws of his being. Under Lucifer's leadership he himself had to become as "one of the gods."

Here the question arises: If in their development the Luciferic entities had not reached the stage of intelligent creation in the fire mist, at what stage had they stopped? To what point in earth development were they able to work together with the moon gods? The Akasha Chronicle gives information on this. They could participate in earthly creation up to the point at which the sun split off from the earth.

It appears that while they performed somewhat lesser work than the moon gods up to this time, nevertheless they belonged to the host of divine creators. After the separation of earth and sun, an activity began on the earth — the work in the fire mist — for which only the moon gods, but not the Luciferic spirits, were prepared. Therefore, a period of pause and of waiting began for these spirits.

The Luciferic spirits could emerge once more from their state of rest when the human beings began to work at the development of their organs of understanding, after the ebbing of the general fire mist. For the creation of the understanding is related to the activity of the sun. The dawn of the understanding in human nature is the lighting up of an inner sun. This is said not only in a metaphorical, but also in a quite real sense. When the epoch of the fire mist had ebbed from the earth, these spirits found within man an opportunity to resume their activity connected with the sun.

It now becomes clear whence the name Lucifer, that is, "the bearer of light," originates, and why these beings are designated as "sun gods" in mystery science.

All that follows can only be understood if one looks back to periods preceding the development of the earth. This will be done in the next chapters of the "Akasha Chronicle." The development through which the beings connected with earth passed on other planets before appearing on the earth, will be shown there. In addition, one will become more fully acquainted with the nature of the "moon gods" and of the "sun gods." Simultaneously, the development of the animal, plant and mineral realms will become entirely clear.

## 11 - Some Necessary Points of View

We shall next consider the development of man and of the entities connected with him in the time which preceded the "earthly period." For when man began to unite his destiny with the planet one calls "earth," he had already passed through a series of developmental steps in the course of which he had prepared himself for earthly existence, as it were.

One must distinguish three such steps, which are designated as three planetary developmental stages. The names used in mystery science for these stages are the Saturn, Sun and Moon periods. It will become apparent that these designations at first have nothing to do with the heavenly bodies of today which bear these names in physical astronomy, although in a broader sense a relationship to them exists, which is known to the advanced mystic.

One will sometimes say that man inhabited other planets before he appeared upon earth. But under these "other planets" one must only understand earlier developmental conditions of the earth itself and of its inhabitants. Before it became "earth," the earth with all the beings which belong to it passed through the three conditions of the Saturn, Sun, and Moon existence.

Saturn, Sun, and Moon are, as it were, the three incarnations of the earth in primeval times. What in this connection is called Saturn, Sun, and Moon no more exists today as a physical planet than the previous physical incarnations of a human being continue to exist alongside his present one.

This "planetary development" of man and of the other beings belonging to earth will form the subject of the following discussions "From the Akasha Chronicle." By this we do not wish to say that the three conditions were not preceded by others. But everything which precedes these three is lost in a darkness which for the present the research of mystery science cannot illuminate. For this research is not based on speculation, on a day dreaming in terms of mere concepts, but on actual spiritual experience.

As our physical eye can see outdoors only as far as a certain boundary line and cannot look beyond the horizon, so the "spiritual eye" can look only as far as a certain point in time. Mystery science is based on experience and is content to remain within this experience. Only in a conceptual splitting of hairs will one want to find out what was "at the very beginning" of the world, or "why God really created the world." For the scientist of the spirit it is rather a matter of realizing that at a certain stage of cognition one no longer poses such questions.

Everything man needs for the fulfillment of his destiny on our planet is revealed to him within spiritual experience. The one who patiently works his way into the experiences of scientists of the spirit will see that within spiritual experience man can obtain full satisfaction concerning all those questions which are vital to him. In the following essays for example, one will see how completely the question concerning the "origin of evil" is resolved, as well as much else which man must desire to know.

We by no means intend to imply that man can never receive enlightenment concerning questions about the "origin of the world" and similar matters. He can. But in order to be able to be enlightened,

he must first absorb the knowledge revealed within more proximate spiritual experience. He then comes to realize that he must ask these questions in a different manner than heretofore.

The more deeply one works his way into true mystery science, the more modest he becomes. Only then does he realize how one must very gradually make oneself ready and worthy for certain insight. Pride and arrogance finally become names for human qualities which no longer make sense at a certain level of cognition. When one has understood a little, he sees how immeasurably long is the road which lies ahead of him. Through knowledge one gains insight into "how little one knows." He also acquires a feeling for the immense responsibility he assumes when he speaks of supersensible cognition. But mankind cannot live without the latter. However, he who promulgates such knowledge needs modesty and true self-criticism, an unshakable striving for self-knowledge and the utmost caution.

Such remarks are necessary here, since now the ascent toward even higher knowledge than is to be found in the preceding sections of the "Akasha Chronicle," is to be undertaken.

To the vistas which in the following essays will be opened toward the past of man, others will be added upon the future. For the future can be revealed to true spiritual cognition, if only to the extent to which this is necessary for man in order that he can fulfill his destiny.

The one who will have nothing to do with mystery science and from the judgment-seat of his prejudices, simply consigns everything coming from that quarter to the realm of fantasy and dreams — he will understand this relationship to the future least of all. Yet a simple logical consideration could make clear what is in question here. But such logical considerations are accepted only when they coincide with the preconceptions of men. Prejudices are mighty enemies of logic.

If sulphur, oxygen, and hydrogen are brought together under certain definite conditions, sulphuric acid must be produced, according to an inevitable law. The student of chemistry can predict what must happen when these three elements come into contact with one another under given conditions. Thus, such a student of chemistry is a prophet in the limited field of the material world.

His prophecy could only prove false if the laws of nature were suddenly to change. Now the scientist of the spirit investigates spiritual laws in which the physicist or the chemist investigates material laws. He does this in the manner and with the exactness which are requisite in the spiritual field. However, the development of mankind depends on these great spiritual laws. Just as little as oxygen, hydrogen, and sulphur will combine at some future time in a manner contrary to laws of nature, so little will anything occur in the spiritual life which is contrary to spiritual laws. The one who knows these spiritual laws can look into the orderliness of the future.

The use of precisely this comparison for the prophetic prediction of the coming destinies of mankind is intentional here, because true mystery science really understands this prediction in just this sense. For the one who forms a clear idea of this conviction of occultism, the objection that any human freedom is made impossible because events can be predicted in a certain sense, becomes void.

That can be predicted which is in accordance with a law. But the will is not determined by a law. Just

as it is certain that in each case oxygen, hydrogen, and sulphur are combined into sulphuric acid only according to a definite law, just so is it equally certain that the establishing of the conditions under which the law will act, can depend on the human will. Thus it will be with the great world events and human destinies of the future. As a scientist of the spirit, one foresees them, although they are to be brought about only by human choice. He foresees what is accomplished by the freedom of man. The following essays will show that this is possible.

However, one must be clear about one essential difference between the prediction of events through physical science and that through spiritual cognition. Physical science is based on the insights of the understanding, and therefore its prophecy is only based on the intellect, which has to rely on judgments, deductions, combinations, and so forth. Prophecy through spiritual cognition, on the contrary, proceeds from an actual higher seeing or perceiving.

The scientist of the spirit must strictly avoid even representing anything to himself which is based on mere reflecting, combining, speculating, and so forth. Here he must practice the most far-reaching renunciation and be quite clear that all speculating, intellectual philosophizing, and so forth is a hindrance to true seeing.

These activities still belong entirely to the lower nature of man, and truly higher cognition begins only when this nature raises itself to the higher nature in man. Here nothing is really said against these activities which are not only wholly justified in their field, but are there the only justified ones. In itself, a thing is neither higher nor lower; it is higher or lower only in relation to something else. What is high in one respect can be very low in another.

However, what must be understood through seeing, cannot be understood through mere reflection or through even the most magnificent combinations of the intellect. A person may be ever so "ingenious" in the usual sense of the word, but this "ingenuity" will avail him absolutely nothing with respect to the cognition of supersensible truths. He must even renounce it, and abandon himself solely to the higher seeing. Then he will perceive things without his "ingenious" reflecting, just as he perceives the flowers in the fields without further reflection. It does not help one to reflect about the appearance of a meadow; all intellect is powerless there. The same is true of the seeing into higher worlds.

What can be said prophetically in this way about the future of man is the basis for all ideals which have a real, practical significance. If they are to have value, ideals must be rooted as deeply in the spiritual world as are natural laws in the natural world. Laws of development must be such true ideals. Otherwise they spring from a gushing enthusiasm and a fantasy which are valueless, and can never be fulfilled.

In the broadest sense, all great ideals of world history have proceeded from clear cognition. For, in the final analysis, all these great ideals originate with the great scientists of the spirit or initiates, and those lesser ones who collaborate in the development of humanity direct themselves either consciously or — most often — unconsciously in accordance with the instructions of the spiritual scientists.

Everything unconscious must finally have its origin in something conscious. The bricklayer who



works on a house "unconsciously," directs himself according to matters of which others are conscious who have determined the place where the house is to be built, the style in which it is to be erected, and so forth. But this determining of place and style is based on something of which the determiners remain unconscious, but of which others are or were conscious. An artist, for example, knows why a particular style requires a straight line here, a curved line there, and so forth. The one who uses this style for his house perhaps does not become conscious of this "why."

This is also the case with the great events in the development of the world and of mankind. Behind those who work in a certain field stand higher, more conscious workers, and thus the scale of consciousness goes up and down.

Behind the general mass of men stand the inventors, artists, scientists, and so forth. Behind them stand the initiates of mystery science, and behind them stand superhuman beings. The development of the world and of mankind becomes comprehensible only if one realizes that ordinary human consciousness is but one form of consciousness, and that there are higher and lower forms. But here too one must not misapply the expressions "higher" and "lower."

They have a significance only in relation to the point where one happens to be standing. It is no different with this than with "right and left." When one stands at a certain place, some objects are "right" or "left" of him. If one moves a little to the "right," objects which before were on the right, are now on the left. The same is true of the levels of consciousness which lie "higher" or "lower" than ordinary human consciousness. When man himself develops more highly, his relations to the other levels of consciousness change. But these changes are connected with his development. It is therefore important to indicate such other levels of consciousness here by means of examples.

The beehive or that magnificent commonwealth embodied in an ant hill provide bases of such an indication. The collaboration of the various kinds of insects (females, males, workers) proceeds in a completely systematic fashion. The distribution of tasks among the several categories can only be described as an expression of true wisdom. What happens here is just as much the result of a consciousness as the institutions of man in the physical world (technology, art, state, and so forth) are an effect of his consciousness.

However, the consciousness at the base of the beehive or the ant society is not to be found in the same physical world in which the ordinary human consciousness exists. In order to describe the situation, one can express oneself somewhat as follows. One finds man in the physical world. His physical organs, his whole structure are such that at first one looks for his consciousness also in this physical world. It is otherwise with the beehive or the ant hill. Here it would be quite wrong to confine oneself to the physical world with respect to the consciousness in question, as was done in the case of man. No, here one must say that to find the ordering principle of the beehive or the ant hill, one cannot confine oneself to the world where the bees or ants live in their physical bodies.

In this case, the "conscious mind" must be sought directly in another world. The same conscious mind which in man lives in the physical world, in the case of these animal colonies must be sought in a supersensible world. If with his consciousness man could raise himself into this supersensible world, he would be able to greet the "ant or bee spirit" there in full consciousness as his sister being. The seer

can actually do this. Thus, in the examples given above, we are confronted by beings which are conscious in other worlds and which reach into the physical world only through their physical organs — the individual bees and ants.

It is quite possible that a consciousness like that of the beehive or of the ant hill existed in the physical world in earlier periods of its development, as that of man does now, but then raised itself and left behind in the physical world only its acting organs, that is, the individual ants and bees. Such a course of development will actually take place in the future with respect to man. In a certain manner it has already taken place among the seers in the present. That the consciousness of contemporary man functions in the physical world is due to the fact that its physical particles — the molecules of brain and nerves — exist in a quite definite relation with one another.

What has been discussed in greater detail in another connection in my book. *Wie erlangt man Erkenntnisse der höheren Welten?* (How Does One Attain Knowledge of Higher Worlds?) will also be indicated briefly here. In the course of the higher development of man the ordinary connection of the brain molecules is dissolved. They are then connected more "loosely," so that the brain of a seer can really be compared with an ant hill in a certain respect, although the segmentation is not demonstrable anatomically. In different activities of the world these processes occur in quite different ways.

At a time long past, the individual molecules of the ant hill — that is, the ants themselves — were firmly connected, just as are the molecules of the human brain today. At that time, the consciousness corresponding to them was in the physical world, as that of man is today. When human consciousness will travel into "higher" worlds in the future, the connection between the material parts in the physical world will be as loose as is that between the individual ants today.

What in time will occur physically in all men, already takes place today in the brain of the clairvoyant, but no instrument of the world of the senses is sufficiently delicate to show the loosening which comes about through this anticipatory development. Just as among the bees three categories, queens, drones, workers, are formed, so three categories of molecules are formed in the "seer brain," molecules which are actually individual, living beings, brought into conscious collaboration by the consciousness of the seer, which is in a higher world.

Another level of consciousness is represented by what one usually calls the folk- or racial spirit, without representing anything very definite to oneself by this. For the scientist of the spirit, a consciousness also exists at the base of the common and wise influences which appear in the communal life of the members of a people or of a race. Through occult research, one finds this consciousness to be in another world, just as was the case with the consciousness of a beehive or of an ant hill.

However, there are no organs for this "folk" or "racial consciousness" in the physical world; rather these organs are to be found only in the so-called astral world. As the consciousness of the beehive works through the physical bees, so the folk-consciousness works by means of the astral bodies of the human beings belonging to a people. In these "folk and racial spirits" one is therefore confronted with kinds of entities quite different from those in man or in the beehive. Many more examples would have to be given in order to show clearly how subordinate and superior entities exist in relation to man.

But it is hoped that what has been given will be sufficient to introduce the avenues of human development described in the following chapters. For the development of man himself can only be understood when one considers that he develops together with beings whose consciousness exists in other worlds than his own. What happens in his world is also dependent on these beings who are connected with other levels of consciousness, and therefore can be understood only in relation to this fact.

## 12 - On the Origin of the Earth

As individual man has to pass through different stages after his birth, as he must ascend from infancy through childhood and so on to the age of the mature adult, so too must mankind as a whole go through a similar process. Humanity has developed to its present condition by passing through other stages. With the methods of the clairvoyant one can discern three principal stages of this development of mankind which were passed through before the formation of the earth took place and before this sphere became the scene of that development.

Therefore at present we are concerned with the fourth stage in the great universal life of man. For now we shall relate the relevant facts here. The deeper explanation will appear in the course of the description, insofar as is possible in the words of ordinary language, that is, without having recourse to the form of expression of mystery science.

Man existed before there was an earth. But one must not imagine — as has already been suggested — that perhaps he had previously lived on other planets and then at a certain time migrated to earth. Rather, the earth has developed together with man. Just as man has passed through three main stages of development, so has the earth, before becoming that which one now calls "earth." For the time being, as has been indicated above, one must completely liberate oneself from the significance which contemporary science connects with the names "Saturn," "Sun," and "Moon," if one wants to see the explanations of the scientist of the spirit in this area in their proper light. For the present one should connect with these names no other significance than that directly given to them in the following communications.

Before the heavenly body on which the life of man takes place became "earth," it had had three other forms which one designates as Saturn, Sun, and Moon. One can thus speak of four planets on which the four principal stages of the development of mankind take place Moon, before that Sun, and yet earlier, Saturn. One is justified, as will appear from the following communications, to assume three further principal stages which the earth, or better the heavenly body which developed into the present earth, still has to pass through. In mystery science these have been named Jupiter, Venus, and Vulcan. Thus the heavenly body with which human destiny is connected has passed through three stages in the past is now in its fourth, and will in the future have to pass through three more until all the talents which man has within himself are developed, until he arrives at the peak of his perfection.

One must realize that the development of man and of his heavenly body does not proceed as gradually as for instance the passage of an individual human being through infancy, adolescence and so forth, where one condition goes over into another more or less imperceptibly. Rather there are certain interruptions. The Saturn condition does not go over immediately into the Sun stage. Between Saturn development and Sun development, and similarly between the subsequent forms of the heavenly body inhabited by man, there are intermediate conditions which can be compared with the night between two days or with the sleeplike condition of a plant seed before it again develops into a full plant.

In imitation of oriental descriptions of this state of affairs, contemporary theosophy calls a stage of development in which life is externally furthered, Manvantara, the intermediate condition of rest, Pralaya. In accordance with the usage of European mystery science, one can use the word "open

cycle" for the former condition, and on the other hand, "hidden or closed cycle" for the latter. But other designations are also in common use. Saturn, Sun, Moon, earth, and so forth, are "open cycles," and the periods of rest between them are "closed" ones.

It would be quite erroneous to think that in the periods of rest all life is extinct, although today this idea can be encountered in many theosophical circles. Just as little as man ceases to live during his sleep, so little does his life and that of his heavenly body become extinct during a "closed cycle" (Pralaya). It is only that the conditions of life in the periods of rest cannot be perceived with the senses which have been developed during the "open cycles," just as during his sleep man does not perceive what is taking place around him. Why one uses the expression "cycle" for the stages of development will become sufficiently clear in the course of the following discussion. Only later can we speak about the enormous periods of time which are required for these "cycles."

One can find a thread through the course of the cycles by following for a moment the development of human consciousness through them. Everything else can suitably arise out of this consideration of consciousness.

The consciousness which man develops during his life-course on earth will be called — in accordance with European mystery science — the "clear consciousness of day." The latter consists in the fact that through his present senses, man perceives the things and beings of the world and that he forms conceptions and ideas concerning these things and beings with the help of his understanding and of his reason. He then acts in the world of the senses according to these perceptions, conceptions, and ideas. Man formed this consciousness only in the fourth principal stage of his cosmic development; on Saturn, Sun, and Moon it did not yet exist. There he lived in other conditions of consciousness. As a result, one can describe the three previous stages of development as the unfolding of lower conditions of consciousness.

The lowest condition of consciousness was passed through during the Saturn development; the Sun condition is higher, then follows the Moon consciousness and finally that of earth.

These former consciousnesses are primarily distinguished from the earthly one by two characteristics: by the degree of clarity, and by the area over which the perception of man extends.

The Saturn consciousness has the lowest degree of clarity. It is entirely dull. It is difficult to give an exact idea of this dullness, since even the dullness of sleep is somewhat clearer than this consciousness. In abnormal, so-called deep states of trance, modern man can still fall back into this state of consciousness.

The clairvoyant in the sense of mystery science can also form a correct conception of it. But by no means does he himself live in this state of consciousness. On the contrary, he ascends to a much higher one, which however in certain respects is similar to the original one. In the ordinary man at the contemporary terrestrial stage, this condition, through which he once passed, has been effaced by the "clear consciousness of day." The "medium" who falls into a deep trance, however, is transported back into it, so that he perceives in the same way in which all men perceived during the "Saturn period."

Either during the trance or after awaking, such a medium can then tell of experiences which are similar to those of the Saturn stage. One must be careful to say that they are "similar," not "identical," for the events which took place on Saturn are once and for all past; only events which have a certain affinity with them still take place in the environment of man. These can only be perceived by a "Saturn consciousness."

Like the medium, the clairvoyant in the above sense acquires such a Saturn consciousness, but in addition to it he keeps his "clear consciousness of day," which man did not yet have on Saturn, and which the medium loses in the state of trance. Such a clairvoyant is not in the Saturn consciousness itself, but he can form a conception of it.

While this Saturn consciousness is by some degrees inferior to the one of today with respect to clarity, it is superior to the latter with respect to the extent of what it can perceive. In its dullness it can not only perceive everything which takes place on its own heavenly body down to the last detail, but it can also observe the objects and beings on other heavenly bodies which are connected with Saturn.

It can also exercise a certain influence on these objects and beings. (It hardly need be said that this observation of other heavenly bodies is quite different from that which contemporary man can undertake by means of his scientific astronomy. This astronomical observation is based on the "clear consciousness of day" and therefore perceives other heavenly bodies from the outside. The Saturn consciousness, on the other hand, is immediate sensation, an experiencing of what takes place on other heavenly bodies. One does not speak altogether accurately, but still fairly so, if one says that an inhabitant of Saturn experienced objects and events of other heavenly bodies — and of his own — as a man of today experiences his heart and his heartbeat or something similar in his own body.)

This Saturn consciousness developed slowly. As the first principal stage in the development of mankind it passed through a series of subordinate stages, which in European mystery science are called "small cycles." In theosophical literature it has become customary to call these "small cycles," "rounds," and their further sub-divisions — still smaller cycles — "globes." These subordinate cycles will be dealt with in subsequent discussions. For the sake of greater clarity, we shall first follow here the principal stages of development. For the moment we shall speak only of man, although the development of subordinate and superior entities and objects proceeds concurrently with his own. That which concerns the development of other entities will then follow the discussion of man's progress.

When the development of the Saturn consciousness was completed, there occurred one of the long rest periods (a Pralaya) mentioned above. After this there developed out of the heavenly body of man what in mystery science is called the "Sun." On the Sun, the human beings again emerged from their sleep. The previously developed Saturn consciousness was present in them as a predisposition. First they again developed it from this germ. One can say that on the Sun man repeated the condition of Saturn before ascending to a higher one. However, it is not a simple repetition which is meant here, but one in another form. These transformations of forms will be discussed later when we deal with the smaller cycles. At that time the differences between the individual "repetitions" will also become apparent. Now we shall describe only the development of consciousness.

After the repetition of the Saturn condition, the "Sun consciousness" of man appears. This is somewhat clearer than the preceding consciousness, but on the other hand it has lost something with respect to broadness of vision. In the deep, dreamless sleep of his present life, man has a condition of consciousness similar to that which he once had on the Sun. However, he who is not a clairvoyant or a medium cannot perceive the objects and beings corresponding to the Sun consciousness. With the trance of a medium reduced to this condition, and with the higher consciousness of the true clairvoyant, the case here is similar to what has been said with respect to the Saturn consciousness.

The extent of the Sun consciousness is limited to the Sun and the heavenly bodies most closely connected with it. It is only these and their events which the inhabitant of the Sun can experience as — to use once again the simile employed above — man of today experiences his heartbeat. In this way the inhabitant of Saturn could also participate in the life of those heavenly bodies which did not belong to the immediate sphere of Saturn.

When the Sun stage has, passed through the appropriate subordinate cycles, it also enters a period of rest. From this the heavenly body of man awakes to its "Moon existence." Before ascending higher, again man passes through the Saturn and Sun stage in two smaller cycles. Then he enters his Moon consciousness.

One can more easily form an idea of the latter, for there is a certain similarity between this stage of consciousness and a sleep filled with dreams. It must be explicitly stated that here again one can only speak of a similarity, not of an identity. It is true that the Moon consciousness is composed of images such as appear in dreams, but these images correspond to the objects and events around man in a way similar to the ideas of the present "clear consciousness of day." But everything in this correspondence is still dull, in fact, image-like.

One can represent this state of affairs to oneself in approximately the following way. Assume that a Moon-being comes near an object, let us say near salt. (Of course, at that time there was no "salt" in its present form, but after all, in order to be understood, one must remain in the area of images and similes.)

This Moon-being — the precursor of present-day man — does not perceive an object with spatial extension and a definite coloring and form outside itself; instead, the approach to this object causes a certain image — similar to a dream image — to arise as it were within this being.

This image has a certain coloring which depends on the characteristics of the object. If the object is agreeable to the being and useful for its existence, the coloring is light in yellow nuances, or in green; if the object is disagreeable or is one which is harmful to the being, a blood-like, reddish color nuance appears. The clairvoyant also sees in this way today, only he is fully conscious during this seeing, while the Moon inhabitant had only a dreamlike, dim consciousness.

The images appearing "within" these inhabitants had an exactly defined relationship to the environment. There was nothing arbitrary in them. It was possible to direct oneself by them; one acted under the impression of these images as today one acts under the impression of sensory perceptions.

The development of this dreamlike consciousness — the third principal stage — was the task of the "Moon cycle." When the "Moon" had passed through the appropriate "small cycles," a period of rest (Pralaya) again occurred. After this, the "Earth" emerged from the darkness.



### 13 - The Earth and Its Future

The fourth principal stage of human development is lived on earth. This is that condition of consciousness in which man finds himself at present. But before he attained it, he, and with him the whole earth, first had to repeat successively the Saturn, Sun, and Moon stages in three smaller cycles (the so-called "rounds" of theosophical literature).

Man now lives in the fourth earth cycle. He has already advanced a little past the middle of this cycle. At this stage of consciousness man no longer perceives in a dreamlike manner the images which arise in his soul through the influence of his environment only, but objects appear to him "outside in space."

On the Moon and also during the stages of repetition on earth, there arose for example, a colored image in his soul when a particular object came near him. All of consciousness consisted of such images, tones, and so forth, which flowed and ebbed in the soul. Only with the appearance of the fourth condition of consciousness does color no longer appear merely in the soul, but on an external, spatially circumscribed object; sound is no longer merely an inner reverberating of the soul, but the resounding of an object in space.

In mystery science therefore, one also calls this fourth, the earthly condition of consciousness, the "objective consciousness." It has been formed slowly gradually in the course of development in the way that the physical organs of sense slowly arose and thus made perceptible the most diverse sensory qualities in external objects.

Apart from the senses which are already developed, others exist in an as yet germinal state which will become fully developed in the subsequent earth period, and which will show the world of the senses in a diversity still greater than is the case today. The gradual growth of this earth consciousness has been described in the preceding pages, and in the discussions which are to follow this description will be amplified and supplemented in essential points.

The colored world, the sounding world, and so forth, which earlier man had perceived within himself, confronts him outside in space during his life on earth. But on the other hand, a new world appears within him: the world of ideas or thoughts. One cannot speak of ideas and thoughts in relation to the Moon consciousness. The latter consists solely of the images we have described.

Around the middle of the development of earth — although this state of affairs was already preparing itself at a somewhat earlier time — there developed in man the capacity to form ideas and thoughts about objects. This capacity constitutes the basis for memory and for self-consciousness. Only conceptualizing man can develop a memory of that which he has perceived; and only thinking man reaches the point where he differentiates himself from his environment as an independent, self-conscious being, where he recognizes himself as an "I." The first three stages we have described were stages of consciousness; the fourth is not only consciousness, but self-consciousness.

But within the self-consciousness, the present-day life of thoughts, there is already developing a disposition toward still higher states of consciousness. Man will live through these states of consciousness on the next planets into which the earth will change after its present form. It is not

absurd to say something about these future conditions of consciousness, and therewith about life on the following planets.

For in the first place, the clairvoyant — for certain reasons which are to be given elsewhere — strides ahead of his fellows in his development. Thus those states of consciousness which all of mankind must attain with the advance of planetary development are already developing in him at this time. In the consciousness of the clairvoyant one finds an image of the future stages of mankind. Moreover, the three subsequent conditions of consciousness are now already present in all men in germinal states; and clairvoyant research has means for indicating what will emerge from these germinal states.

When it is said that the clairvoyant is already developing in himself the states of consciousness to which in future all of mankind will advance, this must be understood with one restriction. The clairvoyant, for example, is developing a seeing in the spiritual world today which in future will appear in man in a physical way. But this future physical condition of man will be a faithful likeness of the corresponding contemporary spiritual one in the clairvoyant.

The earth itself is going to develop, and therefore quite different forms from those which exist today will appear in its future physical inhabitants; but these physical forms are being prepared in the spiritual and mental ones of today. For example, what the clairvoyant today sees in the form of a cloud of light and color around the human physical body as a so-called "aura," will later change into a physical form; and other organs of sense than those of today will give the man of the future the capacity to perceive other forms.

However, already today the clairvoyant sees the spiritual models of the later material entities with his spiritual senses (thus for example, the aura). A view into the future is possible for him, although it is very difficult to give an idea of the character of this view through the language of today and for present-day human conceptions.

The conceptions of the present state of consciousness are shadowy and pale in comparison with the colorful and sounding objects of the external world. Man therefore speaks of conceptions as of something which is "not real." A "mere thought" — is contrasted with an object or a being which is "real" because it can be perceived through the senses. But conceptions and thoughts bear within themselves the potentiality of again becoming real and image-like. If man speaks of the conception "red" today without having a red object before him, then this conception is, as it were, only a shadow image of real "redness."

Later, man will reach the point where he can not only let the shadowy conception of the "red" arise in his soul, but where, when he thinks "red," "red" will actually be before him. He will be able to create images, not merely conceptions. Thereby something will be achieved by him similar to that which already existed for the Moon consciousness. But the images will not ebb and flow in him like dreams; instead he will evoke them in full self-consciousness, as he does today's conceptions. The thought of a color will be the color itself; the conception of a sound will be the sound itself, and so forth. In the future, a world of images will flow and ebb in the soul of man through his own power, whereas during the Moon existence such a world of images filled him without his acting.

In the meantime the spatial character of the objective external world will not disappear. The color which arises together with the conception of color will not be merely an image in the soul but will appear in outside space. The consequence of this will be that man will be able to perceive beings and objects of a higher kind than those of his present environment. These are objects and beings which are of a more delicate spiritual and soul nature, hence they do not clothe themselves in the objective colors which are perceptible to the present physical sense organs; however, these are objects and beings which will reveal themselves through the more delicate spiritual and mental colors and sounds which the man of the future will be able to create from his soul.

Man is approaching a condition in which he will have a self-conscious image consciousness\* appropriate for such perceptions. On the one hand, the coming development of earth will raise the present life of conceptions and thoughts to an ever higher, more delicate, and more perfect condition; on the other hand, the self-conscious image consciousness will gradually develop itself during this time.

The latter, however, will attain full life in man only on the next planet into which the earth will transform itself, and which is called "Jupiter" in mystery science. Then man will be able to enter into intercourse with beings which are completely hidden from his present sensory perception. It will be understood that not only does the life of perception thereby become totally different, but that actions, feelings, and all relations to the environment, are completely transformed. While today man can consciously influence only sensory beings, he will then be able to act consciously on very different forces and powers; he himself will receive what to him will be fully recognizable influences from very different realms than at present.

At that stage there can no longer be any question of birth and death in the present sense. For "death" occurs only because the consciousness has to depend on an external world with which it enters into communication through the physical sense organs. When these physical sense organs fail, every relation to the environment ceases. That is to say, the man "has died." However, when his soul is so far advanced that it does not receive the influences of the outside world through physical instruments, but receives them through the images which the soul creates out of itself, then it will have reached the point where it can regulate its intercourse with the environment independently, that is, its life will not be interrupted against its will. It has become lord over birth and death. All this will come to be with the developed self-conscious image consciousness on "Jupiter." This state of the soul is also called the "psychic consciousness."

The next condition of consciousness to which man develops on a further planet, "Venus," is distinguished from the previous one by the fact that the soul can now create not only images, but also objects and beings. This occurs in the self-conscious object consciousness or supra-psychic consciousness. Through the image consciousness man can perceive something of supersensible beings and objects, and he can influence them through the awakening of his image conceptions. But in order for that to take place which he desires of such a supersensible being, at his instigation, this being must use its own forces. Thus man is the ruler over images, and he can produce effects through these images. But he is not yet lord over the forces themselves. When his self-conscious object consciousness is developed, he will also be ruler over the creative forces of other worlds. He will not only perceive and influence beings, but he himself will create.

This is the course of the development of consciousness: at first it begins dimly; one perceives nothing of other objects and beings, but only the inner experiences (images) of one's own soul; then perception is developed. At last the perceptive consciousness is transformed into a creative one. Before the condition of earth goes over into the life of Jupiter — after the fourth earthly cycle — there are three more smaller cycles to be passed through. These serve for the further perfection of the consciousness of earth in a manner to be described in the following essays, when the development of the smaller cycles and of their subdivisions will be described for all seven planets. When, after a period of rest (Pralaya), earth has changed into Jupiter, and when man has arrived on the latter planet, then the four preceding conditions — Saturn, Sun, Moon, and earth condition — must again be repeated during four smaller cycles; and only during the fifth cycle of Jupiter does man attain the stage which has been described above as the real Jupiter consciousness. In a corresponding manner does the "Venus consciousness" appear during the sixth cycle of Venus.

A fact which will play a certain role in the following essays will be briefly indicated here. This concerns the speed with which the development on the different planets takes place. For this is not the same on all the planets. Life proceeds with the greatest speed on Saturn, the rapidity then decreases on the Sun, becomes still less on the Moon and reaches its slowest phase on the earth. On the latter it becomes slower and slower, to the point at which self-consciousness develops. Then the speed increases again.

Therefore, today man has already passed the time of the greatest slowness of his development. Life has begun to accelerate again. On Jupiter the speed of the Moon, on Venus that of the Sun will again be attained. The last planet which can still be counted among the series of earthly transformations, and hence follows Venus, is called "Vulcan" by mystery science. On this planet the provisional goal of the development of mankind is attained. The condition of consciousness into which man enters there is called "piety" or spiritual consciousness. Man will attain it in the seventh cycle of Vulcan after a repetition of the six preceding stages.

Not much can be publicly communicated about the life on this planet. In mystery science one speaks of it in such a way that it is said, "No soul which, with its thinking is still tied to a physical body, should reflect about Vulcan and its life." That is, only the mystery students of the higher order, who may leave their physical body and can acquire supersensible knowledge outside of it, can learn something about Vulcan.

The seven stages of consciousness are thus expressed in the course of the development of mankind in seven planetary developments. At each stage, the consciousness must now pass through seven subordinate conditions. These are realized in the smaller cycles already mentioned. (In theosophical writings these seven cycles are called "rounds.")

These subordinate states are called "conditions of life" by the mystery science of the Occident, in contrast with the super-ordinated "conditions of consciousness." Or, one says that each condition of consciousness moves through seven "realms." According to this calculation, one must distinguish seven times seven in the whole development of mankind, that is, forty-nine small cycles or "realms" (according to common theosophical usage, "rounds"). And again, each small cycle has to pass through seven yet smaller ones, which are called "conditions of form" (in theosophical language, "globes").

For the full cycle of humanity this amounts to seven times forty-nine or three hundred and forty-three different "conditions of form."

The following discussions which deal with this development, will show that a survey of the whole is not as complicated as might at first appear at the mention of the number three hundred and forty-three. It will become apparent how man can only truly understand himself when he knows his own development.

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[\*] The combination, "self-conscious image consciousness," may appear odd, but it probably best expresses the state of affairs. If one wished, one could also say, "image self-consciousness."

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## 14 - The Life of Saturn

In one of the preceding descriptions, the great development of humanity through the seven stages of consciousness from Saturn to Vulcan has been compared with the progress through life between birth and death, through infancy, childhood, and so on, to old age. One can extend this comparison further. As among contemporary humanity, men of different ages do not only follow upon one another, but also exist side by side, so it is with the development of the stages of consciousness, The aged man, the mature man or the mature woman, the youth, travel through life side by side.

Thus the ancestors of man existed on Saturn not only as beings with the dull Saturn consciousness, but also along with these as beings which had already developed the higher stages of consciousness. When the Saturn development began, there already existed natures with Sun consciousness, others with image consciousness (Moon consciousness) those with a consciousness similar to the present consciousness of man, then a fourth kind with self-conscious (psychic) image consciousness, a fifth with self-conscious (supra-psychic) object consciousness, and a sixth with creative (spiritual) consciousness. This does not exhaust the series of beings.

After the Vulcan stage, man will develop yet further, and will ascend to still higher levels of consciousness. As the external eye looks into misty gray distances, so the inner eye of the seer looks upon five more forms of consciousness, as far off as distant spirits, of which a description, however, is quite impossible. In all, one can speak of twelve stages of consciousness.

The Saturn man was surrounded by eleven other kinds of beings. The four highest had had their tasks on levels of development which preceded the life of Saturn. When this life began they had already arrived at such a high stage of development that their further existence took place in worlds which lie beyond the realms of man. Therefore, we cannot and need not speak of them here.

The other kinds of beings, however — seven of them in addition to the Saturn man — are all concerned in the human development. In this they act as creative powers, performing their services in a way which will be described in the following pages.

When the Saturn development began, the most sublime of these beings already had attained a level of consciousness which man will reach only after his Vulcan life, that is, a high creative (supra-spiritual) consciousness. These "creators," too, once had to pass through the stages of man. This took place on heavenly bodies which preceded Saturn. However, the connection of these beings with the development of mankind lasted until the middle of the life of Saturn. Because of their sublime, delicate body of rays, in mystery science they are called "Radiating Lives" or "Radiating Flames." Because the substance of which this body consisted had a remote resemblance to the will of man, they are also called "Spirits of Will."

These spirits are the creators of the man of Saturn. From their bodies they pour the substance which becomes the carrier of the human Saturn consciousness. The period of development during which this takes place is called the first small Saturn cycle. (In the language of theosophy, this is the "first round.") The material body which man receives in this way is the first rudiment of his later physical body. One can say that the germ of the physical human body is planted during the first Saturn cycle by

the Spirits of Will, and that at that time this germ has the dull Saturn consciousness.

This first smaller Saturn cycle is followed by six others. In the course of these cycles man does not attain a higher degree of consciousness. But the material body which he has received is further elaborated. The other kinds of beings indicated above participate in this elaboration in the most diverse ways.

After the "Spirits of Will" there follow beings with a creative (spiritual) consciousness, similar to that which man will attain on Vulcan. They are called "Spirits of Wisdom." Christian mystery science calls them "Dominions" (Kyriotetes), while it calls the "Spirits of Will." "Thrones."\* During the second cycle of Saturn they advance their own development to some extent, and at the same time work on the human body in such a way that a "wise arrangement," a rational structure is implanted in it. To be more exact, their work on man already begins shortly after the middle of the first cycle and is completed in about the middle of the second.

The third kind of spirits with the self-conscious (supra-psychic) object consciousness is called "Spirits of Motion" or of "Activity." In Christian mystery science they are called "Principalities" (Dynamis). (In theosophical literature, the expression Mahat is to be found for them.) From the middle of the second Saturn cycle onward they combine with the progress of their own development, the further elaboration of the human material body, in which they implant the capacity of movement and of forceful activity. This task comes to a conclusion around the middle of the third Saturn cycle.

After this point, the work of the fourth kind of beings, the so-called "Spirits of Form," begins. They have a self-conscious image consciousness (psychic consciousness). Christian esoteric teaching names them "Powers" (Exusiai). Through their work, the human material body, which previously was a kind of mobile cloud, receives a bounded, plastic form. This activity of the "Spirits of Form" is completed around the middle of the fourth Saturn cycle.

Then follows the activity of the "Spirits of Darkness," which are also called "Spirits of Personality" or of "Self-hood" (Egoism). At this stage they have a consciousness similar to the present human earthly consciousness. They inhabit the formed human material body as "souls" in a way similar to that in which the human soul inhabits its body today. They implant a kind of sensory organs in the body, which are the germs of the sensory organs which later develop in the human body in the course of the development of earth.

One must realize, however, that these "sensory germs" are still substantially different from the present sensory instruments of man. Earth man could not perceive through such "sensory germs." For him, the images of the sensory instruments must first pass through a more refined ether body, which forms on the Sun, and through an astral body, which owes its existence to the Moon development (All this will become clear in the following chapters) But the "Spirits of Personality" can treat the images of the "sensory germs" through their own soul in such a way that, with their aid, they can perceive external objects, as does man during his earthly development. In their work on the human body, the "Spirits of Personality" pass through their own "stage of humanity." Thus they are men from the middle of the fourth to the middle of the fifth Saturn cycle.

These spirits implant selfhood, egoism in the body of man. Since they only attain their stage of humanity on Saturn, they remain connected with the development of mankind for a long time. Thus they have important work to perform on man in subsequent cycles as well. This work always acts as an inoculation with selfhood. The degenerations of selfhood into selfishness must be ascribed to their activity, while on the other hand they are the originators of all of man's independence. Without them man would never have become a self-enclosed entity, a "personality." Christian esoteric teaching uses the expression "Primal Beginnings" (Archai) for them, and in theosophical literature they are designated as Asuras.

The work of these spirits is succeeded around the middle of the fifth Saturn cycle by that of the "Sons of Fire," who, at this stage, still have a dull image consciousness, similar to the Moon consciousness of man. They attain the stage of humanity only on the next planet, the Sun. Their work here is therefore to a certain degree still unconscious and dreamlike. But it is through them that the activity of the "sensory germs" from the previous cycle is enlivened. The light images produced by the "fire spirits" shine outward through these sensory germs. The ancestor of man is thereby elevated to a kind of shining entity. While the life of Saturn is otherwise dark, man now shines in the general darkness.

The "Spirits of Personality" on the other hand, were still awakened to their human existence in this general darkness.

The human being himself can make no use of his luminosity on Saturn. The luminosity of his sensory germs could not express anything in itself, but through it other more exalted beings are given the possibility to reveal themselves to the life of Saturn. Through the sources of light of the ancestors of man, these beings radiate something of their nature down to the planet. These are exalted beings from among those four ranks of which it has been said above that they have grown beyond all connection with human existence in their development.

Without any necessity for them to do it, they now radiate something of their nature out of "free will." Christian esoteric teaching here speaks of the revelation of the Seraphime (Seraphim), the "Spirits of Love." This condition lasts until the middle of the sixth Saturn cycle.

After this begins the work of those beings which at this stage have a dull consciousness such as is found in man today when he is in a deep, dreamless sleep. These beings are the "Sons of Twilight," the "Spirits of Dusk." (In theosophical writings they are called Lunar Pitris or Barhishad-Pitris.) They attain the stage of humanity only on the Moon. On earth they, as well as their predecessors, the Sons of Fire, have already grown beyond the stage of humanity. On earth they are higher beings which Christian esoteric teaching calls "Angels" (Angeloi), while for the Sons of Fire it uses the expression "Archangels" (Archangeloi). These Sons of Twilight develop in the ancestor of man a kind of understanding, of which however, in his dull consciousness, he himself cannot yet make use. Through this understanding, exalted entities now again reveal themselves, as previously the Seraphim did through the sensory germs. Through the human bodies, understanding is now poured out over the planet by those spirits whom Christian esoteric teaching calls Cherubime (Cherubim).

Around the middle of the seventh Saturn cycle a new activity begins. Man has now reached the point where he can work unconsciously on his own material body. Through his activity in the utter dullness



of Saturn existence, man produces the first germinal predisposition to the true "spirit man," who reaches his full development only at the end of the development of mankind. In theosophical literature this is called Atma.

It is the highest member of the so-called monad of man. In itself it would be quite dull and unconscious at this stage. But as the Seraphim and the Cherubim reveal themselves out of their free will in the two preceding human stages, so the Thrones now reveal themselves, those beings who, at the very beginning of Saturn existence, radiated the human body out of their own nature. The germinal predisposition of "spirit man" (Atma) is completely penetrated by the power of these Spirits of Will and retains this power through all subsequent stages of development. In his dull consciousness at this stage man as yet cannot realize anything of this germinal predisposition; but he develops further, and later this germinal predisposition becomes clear to his own consciousness.

This work is not yet completed at the end of the life of Saturn; it continues into the first Sun cycle. One should consider that the labor of the higher spirits which has been described here does not coincide with the beginning and end of a smaller cycle (of a round), but that it continues from the middle of one to the middle of the next. Its greatest activity is developed in the periods of rest between the cycles. It increases from the middle of a cycle (Manvantara) onward, becomes strongest in the middle of a period of rest (Pralaya), and then ebbs in the next. (It has already been mentioned in the preceding chapters that life by no means ceases during the periods of rest.)

From the above it also becomes apparent in what sense Christian esoteric science says that in the "beginning of time" the Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones first revealed themselves.

With this, the course of Saturn has been followed to the time where its life develops through a period of rest into that of the Sun. Of this we shall speak in the following discussions.

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For the sake of greater clarity, here we shall give a summary of the facts of development of the first planet.

1 This planet is the one on which the dullest human consciousness develops (a deep trance consciousness). Together with this, the first rudiment of the physical human body develops.

2 This development passes through seven subsidiary stages (smaller cycles or "rounds"). At each of these stages higher spirits begin their work on the development of the human body, namely in the:

- 1st cycle, the Spirits of Will (Thrones),
- 2nd cycle, the Spirits of Wisdom (Dominions),
- 3rd cycle, the Spirits of Motion (Principalities),
- 4th cycle, the Spirits of Form (Powers),
- 5th cycle, the Spirits of Personality (Primal Beginnings),
- 6th cycle, the Spirits of the Sons of Fire (Archangels),
- 7th cycle, the Spirits of the Sons of Twilight (Angels).

3 In the fourth cycle, the Spirits of Personality raise themselves to the stage of humanity.

4 From the fifth cycle onward, the Seraphim reveal themselves.

5 From the sixth cycle onward, the Cherubim reveal themselves.

6 From the seventh cycle onward, the Thrones, the true "creators of man," reveal themselves.

7 Through the latter revelation, there develops in the seventh cycle of the first planet, the predisposition to the "spiritual man," to Atma.

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[\*] He who really knows Christian doctrine is aware that the conceptions of these spiritual beings superordinated to man form an integral part of it. Only for some time they have been lost by an externalized religious teaching. The one who really enters into these matters and looks deeper will realize that there is not the slightest reason for Christianity to combat mystery science, but that on the contrary the latter is in complete harmony with true Christianity.

If, for the sake of their Christianity, the theologians and teachers of religion were to agree to study mystery science, they would have to recognize in it their best helper and means of advancement today. But many theologians think in a completely materialistic manner, and it is characteristic that in a popular publication intended for the furthering of a knowledge of Christianity, today one can even read that "Angels" are for "children and nurses."

Such a statement springs from a complete misunderstanding of the true Christian spirit. Only the man who sacrifices true Christianity to a supposedly advanced "science" can make such a statement. But the time will come when a higher science will go beyond the childishness of such utterances to matters of real importance.

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## 15 - The Life of the Sun

After the great cosmic era of Saturn, which has been described in the preceding pages, there follows that of the Sun. Between them lies a period of rest (Pralaya). During this period, everything human which has developed on Saturn takes on a character which stands in the same relation to the subsequently to be developed Sun man as the seed to the plant which emerges from it. Saturn man, as it were, has left behind his seed, which is sunk in a kind of sleep, after which it will develop into Sun man.

Man now passes through his second stage of consciousness on the Sun. It resembles that into which today man sinks during a calm and dreamless sleep. This condition, which interrupts man's state of wakefulness today, is a remainder, as it were, a memory of the time of the Sun development. One can also compare it with that dull state of consciousness in which the world of plants exists today. As a matter of fact, in the plant one must see a sleeping being.

In order to understand the development of mankind, one must realize that in this second great cycle the Sun was still a planet, and that only later did it advance to the existence of a fixed star. In the sense of mystery science, a fixed star is one which sends life forces to one or several planets situated at a distance from it. During the second cycle this was not yet the case with the Sun.

At that time it was still united with the beings to which it gave force. These beings — and also man at his level of development of that time — still lived on it. A planetary earth, separated from Sun and Moon, did not exist. Everything in the way of substances, forces, and beings which exists on and in the earth today, and everything which now belongs to the Moon, was still within the Sun. It formed a part of its substances, forces, and beings. Only during the next (third) great cycle did that detach itself from the Sun which in mystery science is called the Moon. This is not the present moon, but the predecessor of our earth, its previous embodiment (reincarnation), as it were.

This Moon became the earth, after it in turn had detached from its substance and cast off what one today designates as moon. In the third cycle two bodies thus existed in place of the former planetary Sun, namely, the fixed star Sun and the split-off planetary Moon. Man and the other beings which had developed as man's companions during the course of the Sun, had been taken out of the Sun along with the Moon. The Sun now provided the Moon beings from the outside with those forces which they had previously obtained directly from it as their dwelling-place.

After the third (Moon) cycle there occurred another period of rest (Pralaya). During this period the two separate bodies (Sun and Moon) became united and together passed through the condition of the sleeping seed. In the fourth cyclic period, Sun and planetary Moon at first emerged from the obscurity of sleep as one body. During the first half of this cycle our earth, along with man and his companions, split off from the Sun. A little later it cast off the present moon, so there now exist three members as descendants of the former Sun planet.

On the Sun planet, man and the other beings mentioned in the course of the discussion of Saturn passed through another stage of their development in the second great cosmic era. The rudiment of the later physical body of man, which had gradually developed on Saturn, emerges like a plant from the

seed at the beginning of the Sun cycle. But here it does not remain in the same state in which it was previously. It is permeated by a second, more delicate, but in itself more powerful body, the ether body. While the Saturn body of man was a kind of automaton (quite lifeless), now, through the ether body which gradually permeates it completely, it becomes an animated being.

Man thereby becomes a kind of plant. His appearance, however, is not that of the plants of today. Rather in his forms he already somewhat resembles present-day man. But, the rudiment of the head like the plant root of today, is turned downward, toward the center of the Sun, and the rudiments of the feet turned upward like the blossom of the plant. This plant-man organism has as yet no capacity of voluntary movement.\*

But man only develops into this form during the second of the seven smaller cycles (rounds) through which the Sun passes. For the duration of the first of these small cycles there is as yet no ether body in the human organism. Everything which occurred during the Saturn era is then repeated in brief. The physical body of man still retains its automatic character, but it changes its previous form somewhat. If it were to remain as it was on Saturn, it would not be capable of harboring an ether body. It is changed in such a way that it can become a carrier of this body. During the following six cycles the ether body is developed further and further, and through its forces, which act on the physical body, the latter also gradually receives a more and more perfect form.

The work of transformation which is performed on man here is carried out by the spirits which have already been mentioned in connection with man in our discussion of the Saturn development.

Those spirits which are called "Radiating Lives" or "Flames" (in Christian esoteric science, "Thrones"), are now no longer in question. They have performed their labor in this respect during the first half of the first Saturn cycle. What can be observed during the first Sun cycle (round) is the labor of the "Spirits of Wisdom" (Dominions or Kyriotetes in Christian esoteric doctrine). They have intervened in the development of man around the middle of the first Saturn cycle (see the previous chapter). They now continue their labor during the first half of the first Sun cycle by repeating in successive stages the wise arrangement of the physical body.

A little later this labor is joined by that of the "Spirits of Motion" (Dynamis in Christianity. Mahat in theosophical literature). Thereby that period of the Saturn cycle is repeated during which the human body received the capacity of motion. It thus again becomes mobile. In the same way the "Spirits of Form" (Exusiai), those of "Darkness" (in Christianity, Archai, in theosophy, Asuras), then the "Sons of Fire" (Archangels), and finally the "Spirits of Twilight" (Angels, Lunar Pitris) successively repeat their labors. Therewith we have characterized six smaller periods of the first course of the Sun (of the first solstice).

In a seventh of these smaller periods the "Spirits of Wisdom" again intervene. While in their preceding period of labor they had given a wise structure to the human body, they now bestow on the limbs, which have become mobile, the capacity to render their motion a wisdom directed one. Previously it was only the structure which was an expression of inner wisdom; now the motion too becomes such an expression. With this, the first Sun cycle attains its end. It consists of seven successive smaller cycles, of which each one is a short repetition of a Saturn cycle (a Saturn round). In

theosophical literature one has become accustomed to calling these seven smaller cycles, which make up a so-called "round," "globes." (A round thus takes place in seven "globes.")

Now, after a period of rest (Pralaya), the first Sun cycle is succeeded by the second. The individual "smallest cycles" or "globes" will be discussed in detail later; at present we shall proceed to the subsequent course of the Sun cycle.

At the end of the first, the human body is already prepared for the reception of the ether body, because the "Spirits of Wisdom" have given him the possibility of wisdom-filled motion.

In the meantime however, these "Spirits of Wisdom" themselves have developed further. Through the labor which they have performed, they have become capable of pouring their substance out of themselves just as the "Flames" poured theirs out in the beginning of the Saturn cycle, thereby giving the physical body its material basis. The substance of the "Spirits of Wisdom" is the "ether," that is, mobile and power-filled wisdom, in other words, "life." The ether or life body of man is thus an emanation of the "Wisdom Spirits."

This emanation continues until around the middle of the second Sun cycle, when the "Spirits of Motion" can again begin with a new activity. Their labor previously could only extend to the physical body of man; now it is transferred to the ether body and implants a powerful activity in it. This continues until the middle of the third Sun cycle. Then the action of the "Spirits of Form" begins. Through them the ether body, which before had had only a cloudlike mobility, receives a definite shape (form).

In the middle of the fourth course of the Sun, these "Spirits of Form" receive a consciousness like that which man will have on "Venus." the second planet on which he will appear after his earthly existence. This is a supra-psychic consciousness. These spirits attain this as a fruit of their activity during the third and fourth course of the Sun. Thereby they acquire the capacity to transform the sensory germs developed during and after the Saturn period, and which until this time were only physical instruments, into animated senses by means of the ether.

Through a similar process the "Spirits of Darkness" (in Christianity, Archai, in theosophy, Asuras) have at this time attained the level of psychic consciousness, which man will develop only on Jupiter as conscious image consciousness. Thereby they become capable of acting consciously from the astral world. Now the ether body of a being can be influenced from the astral world. The "Spirits of Darkness" did this with respect to the ether body of man. They now implanted in it the Spirit of selfhood (independence and selfishness), as they had previously done in the physical body. One can see how these spirits imparted egoism in all the members of the human entity in turn.

At the same time the "Sons of Fire" attained the stage of consciousness which man today possesses as his waking consciousness. One can say of them that they now become men. Now they can make use of the physical human body for a kind of intercourse with the outside world. In similar fashion the "Spirits of Personality" made use of the physical body from the middle of the fourth Saturn cycle on. But they had used the sensory germs for a kind of perception. The nature of the "Sons of Fire," however, is such that they pour the warmth of their soul out into their environment.

The physical human body is now so far advanced that they can do this through it. Their warmth acts approximately like the warmth of the hen on the egg which she is hatching, that is, it has a life-awakening power. Everything of such a life-awakening power that lies in man and in his companions was implanted into the ether body at that time by the Sons of Fire. We are dealing here with the origin of that warmth which is a condition for the reproduction of all living beings. Later it will become apparent what kind of a transformation this power of warmth went through when the Moon split off from the Sun.

Around the middle of the fifth cycle the "Sons of Fire" have developed so far that they can inoculate the ether body with the capacity which they previously exercised through the physical human body. They now relieve the "Spirits of Personality" in the work on this ether body, which thereby becomes the initiator of a reproductive activity.

In this period they abandon the physical body to the Sons of Twilight (in Christianity, Angels, in theosophy, Lunar Pitris). In the meantime, the latter have acquired a dull image consciousness such as man will have on the Moon. On Saturn they had given the ancestor of man a kind of organ of understanding. Now they further develop the physical instruments of the human spirit, which he will consciously use at later stages of his development. Thereby, through the human body the Seraphim can already reveal themselves on the Sun before the middle of the fifth cycle in a more complete manner than was possible on Saturn.

From the middle of the sixth course of the Sun onward, man himself is so far advanced that he can unconsciously work on his physical body. In this respect he now relieves the "Sons of Twilight." Through this activity in dullness, he creates the first germinal predisposition to the living spiritual being, which one calls life-spirit (Buddhi). Only at later stages of his development will he become conscious of this spirit of life. As from the seventh Saturn cycle onward, the Thrones voluntarily poured their power into the predisposition to spirit-man which was formed at that time, so the Cherubim now pour out their wisdom, which thenceforward is preserved for the life-spirit of man through all subsequent stages of development. From the middle of the seventh course of the Sun onward, the germ of spirit-man (Atma), already formed on Saturn, appears again. It combines with the life-spirit (Buddhi), and the animated monad (Atma-Buddhi) thus comes into being.

While man works unconsciously on his physical body in this time, the Sons of Twilight take over what must now be done on the ether body in order to develop it further. In this respect they are the successors of the Sons of Fire. They radiate the images of their consciousness into this ether body and thereby, in a kind of dreamlike condition, enjoy the power of reproduction of this body, which has been stimulated by the Sons of Fire. By this, they prepare the development of the pleasure in this power, which later (on the Moon) appears in man and in his fellow-beings.

On Saturn, man's physical body had been formed. The latter was completely lifeless at that time. Such a lifeless body is called mineral by mystery science. One can therefore also say that on Saturn man was mineral, or he passed through the mineral realm. This human mineral did not have the form of a present-day mineral. Minerals as they are at present, did not yet exist at that time.

As has been shown, this human mineral which reemerged from the obscurity of sleep as from a germ,

was animated on the Sun. It became a human plant; man passed through the realm of plants.

But not all human minerals are animated in this manner. This could not have happened, for the plant man needed the mineral basis for his life. As today there can be no plants without a mineral realm from which they take in their substances, so was it on the Sun with respect to the plant man. For the sake of his further development, the latter had to leave a portion of the human rudiments behind at the level of the minerals.

Since on the Sun conditions were quite different from those of Saturn, these minerals which had been thrust back assumed forms quite different from those they had had on Saturn. Thus, alongside the human plant realm, a second province, a special mineral realm came into being. It can be seen that man ascends into a higher realm by thrusting a part of his companions down into a lower. We shall see this process repeating itself many times in the subsequent stages of development. It corresponds to a fundamental law of development.

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Here again, for the sake of greater clarity, we shall give a summary of the facts of development on the Sun.

I

The Sun is the planet on which develops the second human condition of consciousness, that of dreamless sleep. The physical human body rises to a kind of plant existence through the incorporation of an ether body into it.

II

This development passes through seven subsidiary stages (smaller cycles or "rounds").

1. In the first of these cycles the stages of development of Saturn are repeated, with respect to the physical body, in a somewhat altered form.
2. At the end of the first cycle begins the pouring out of the ether body by the "Spirits of Wisdom."
3. In the middle of the second cycle, the work of the "Spirits of Motion" on this body begins.
4. In the middle of the third cycle the action of the "Spirits of Form" on the ether body has its beginning.
5. From the middle of the fourth cycle onward, this body receives selfhood through the "Spirits of Personality."
6. In the meantime, the physical body has advanced so far through the action of the forces which have

been working on it since earlier periods that from the fourth cycle onward the "Spirits of Fire" can elevate themselves to humanity through it.

7. In the middle of the fifth cycle the "Spirits of Fire," which have previously passed through the stage of humanity, take over the work on the ether body. The "Sons of Twilight" are active in the physical body at this time.

8. Around the middle of the sixth cycle the work on the ether body is transferred to the "Sons of Twilight." Man himself now works on the physical body.

9. In the course of the seventh cycle the animated monad has come into existence.

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[\*] For someone who clings to the sensory perceptions of today, it will of course be difficult to imagine that man lived as a plant being in the Sun itself. It seems inconceivable that a living being could exist in the physical conditions which must be assumed for this state. But it is only a plant of today which is adapted to the present physical earth. It has only developed in this way because its environment is a corresponding one. The Sun plant-being existed under other conditions of life, which correspond to the physical solar conditions of that time.

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## 16 - Life on the Moon

In the universal era of the Moon, which follows that of the Sun, man develops the third of his seven states of consciousness. The first had developed during the seven Saturn cycles, the second during the Sun development; the fourth is that which man is at present developing during the course of the earth; three others will come into being on subsequent planets.

The condition of consciousness of Saturn man cannot be compared with any state of consciousness of present-day man, for it was duller than that of dreamless sleep. The Sun consciousness, however, can be compared to this condition of dreamless sleep, or to the present consciousness of the sleeping plant world. But in all these instances one is dealing only with similarities. It would be quite erroneous to think that in the great universal eras anything repeats itself in a completely identical manner.

It is to be understood in this way if the Moon consciousness is now compared with one with which it has some similarity, namely with that of dream-filled sleep. Man attains the so-called image consciousness on the Moon. The similarity consists in that in the Moon consciousness as well as in dream consciousness, images arise within a being which have a certain relation to objects and beings of the outside world. But these images are not likenesses of these objects and beings as in present-day man when he is awake.

The dream images are echoes of the experiences of the day, or symbolical expressions for events in the dreamer's environment, or for what is taking place in the interior of the dreaming person. Examples of these three types of dream experiences are easy to give. First, everyone knows those dreams which are nothing but confused images of more or less remote daily experiences.

An example of the second type would be if the dreamer thinks he perceives a passing train and then, upon awakening, realizes that it was the ticking of the watch lying beside him which was perceptible in this dream image. An example of the third kind is that it seems to someone that he is in a room where ugly animals are sitting on the ceiling, and upon awaking from this dream he realizes that it was his own headache which expressed itself in this way.

If one now wants to attain a conception of the Moon consciousness on the basis of such confused dream images, one must realize that while the image-like character is also present there, complete regularity instead of confusion and arbitrariness prevails. It is true that the images of the Moon consciousness have even less similarity than the dream images to the objects to which they are related, but on the other hand there is a complete correspondence of image and object.

At present in the earth development, the conception is a likeness of its object; thus for instance the conception "table" is a likeness of the table itself. This is not the case with the Moon consciousness. Assume, for instance, that the Moon man approaches an object which to him is pleasing or advantageous. Then a colored image of a light tone arises in his soul; when something harmful or displeasing comes near him, he beholds an ugly, dark image. The conception is not a likeness, but a symbol of the object which corresponds to it in a quite definite and regular way. Hence the being which has such symbolical conceptions can direct its life in accordance with them.

The inner life of man's ancestor on the Moon thus took its course in images which have the character of the volatile, the floating and the symbolical in common with dreams of today, but are distinguished from these dreams by their completely regular character.

The basis for the development of this image consciousness in man's ancestors on the Moon was the formation of a third member in addition to the physical body and the ether body. This third member is called the astral body.

This formation, however, only occurred in the third smaller Moon cycle — the so-called third Moon round. The first two revolutions of the Moon must be seen merely as a repetition of what took place on Saturn and on the Sun. But this repetition must not be imagined as a re-enactment of all the events which took place on Saturn and on the Sun. That which repeats itself, namely the development of a physical body and of an ether body, at the same time is subject to such a transformation that in the third Moon cycle these two members of the nature of man can be united with the astral body, a union which could not have taken place on the Sun.

In the third Moon period-actually the process already starts around the middle of the second-the Spirits of Motion pour the astral element out of their own nature into the human body. During the fourth cycle — from the middle of the third onward — the Spirits of Form shape this astral body in such a way that its form, its whole organization can develop inner processes. These processes have the character of what at present in animals and man is called instinct, desire — or the appetitive nature.

From the middle of the fourth Moon cycle onward, the Spirits of Personality begin with their principal task in the fifth Moon era: they inoculate the astral body with selfhood, as they have done in the preceding cosmic eras with respect to the physical and the ether body. But in order for the physical and the ether body to be so far advanced that they can harbor an independent astral body, at the time indicated, that is, in the middle of the fourth Moon cycle, they must first be brought to this point by the shaping spirits in the successive stages of development.

This takes place in the following manner. The physical body is brought to the necessary maturity in the first course of the Moon (round) by the Spirits of Motion, in the second by those of Form, in the third by those of Personality, in the fourth by the Spirits of Fire, and in the fifth by those of Twilight. To be exact, this labor of the Spirits of Twilight takes place from the middle of the fourth Moon cycle onward, so that at the same time that the Spirits of Personality are engaged on the astral body the same is the case with the Spirits of Twilight with respect to the physical body.

In regard to the ether body the following is the case. Its necessary qualities are implanted in it in the first course of the Moon by the Spirits of Wisdom, in the second by those of Motion, in the third by those of Form, in the fourth by those of Personality, and in the fifth by those of Fire. To be exact, this activity of the Fire Spirits takes place concurrently with the labor of the Spirits of Personality on the astral body, that is, from the middle of the fourth course of the Moon, onward into the fifth.

If one considers the entire ancestor of man as he developed on the Moon at that time, there is this to be said: Starting from the middle of the fourth Moon cycle, man consists of a physical body in which the Sons of Twilight perform their labor, of an ether body in which the Spirits of Fire perform theirs,

and finally of an astral body in which the Spirits of Personality perform theirs.

That the Spirits of Twilight work on the physical body of man in this period of development, means that they now rise to the level of humanity, as did the Spirits of Personality in the same cycle on Saturn and the Fire Spirits on the Sun. One must imagine that the "sensory germs" of the physical body, which by that time have become further developed, can be used by the Spirits of Twilight from the middle of the fourth course of the Moon onward in order to perceive external objects and events on the Moon.

Only on the earth will man be so far advanced that, from the middle of the fourth cycle onward, he can make use of these senses. On the other hand, around the middle of the fifth course of the Moon, he reaches the point where he can be engaged unconsciously on the physical body. Through this activity in the dullness of his consciousness he creates for himself the first germinal predisposition to what is called "spirit self" (Manas). This "spirit self" attains its full unfolding in the course of the subsequent development of mankind.

In its union with Atma, the "spirit-man," and with Buddhi, the "life-spirit," it is what later forms the higher, spiritual part of man. As on Saturn the Thrones or Spirits of Will permeated the "spirit-man" (Atma), and as on the Sun the Cherubim permeated the life-spirit (Buddhi) with wisdom, so now the Seraphim accomplish this for the "spirit-self" (Manas). They permeate it, and thereby implant in it a capacity which at later stages of development — on the earth — becomes that conceptualizing faculty of man by means of which, as a thinking being, he can enter into a relation with the world which surrounds him.

From the middle of the sixth course of the Moon onward, the "life-spirit" (Buddhi), from the middle of the seventh onward, the "spirit-man" (Atma) appear again, and these unite with the "spirit-self," so that at the end of the whole Moon era the "higher man" has been prepared. Then, together with all else that has developed on the Moon, the latter sleeps through a period of rest (Pralaya), in order to continue the course of his development on the earth planet.

While from the middle of the fifth Moon cycle onward into the sixth, man is working on his physical body in dullness, the Spirits of Twilight are engaged on his ether body. As has been shown, through their work on the physical body in the preceding epoch (round), they have now prepared themselves for relieving the Fire Spirits in the ether body, who in turn take over from the Spirits of Personality the work on the astral body. At this time, these Spirits of Personality have ascended to higher spheres.

The work of the Spirits of Twilight on the ether body means that they connect their own states of consciousness with the images of the consciousness of the ether body. They thereby implant in these images the joy and the pain which are caused by things. On the Sun the scene of their corresponding activity had still been the merely physical body. Hence joy and pain were there connected only with the functions of this body and with its conditions. Now this becomes different. Joy and pain now become attached to the symbols which arise in the ether body. In the dim human consciousness the Spirits of Twilight thus experience a world of emotions. This is the same world of emotions which man will experience for himself in his earth consciousness.

At the same time, the Fire Spirits are active in the astral body. They enable it to carry on an active perception and feeling of the environment. Joy and pain, such as have been produced in the ether body by the Spirits of Twilight in the manner just described, have an inactive (passive) character; they present themselves as inactive mirrorings of the outside world. But what the Fire Spirits produce in the astral body are vivid emotions, love and hate, rage, fear, horror, stormy passions, instincts, impulses and so forth. Because the Spirits of Personality (the Asuras) have previously inoculated this astral body with their nature, these emotions now appear with the character of selfhood, of separateness.

One must now represent to oneself how at that time the ancestor of man is constituted on the Moon. He has a physical body through which in dullness he develops a "spirit self" (Manas). He has an ether body, through which the Twilight Spirits feel joy and pain; and finally he possesses an astral body which, through the Fire Spirits, is moved by impulses, emotions, and passions. But these three members of the Moon man still completely lack the object consciousness. In the astral body images flow and ebb, and in these there glow the emotions named above. When the thinking object consciousness will make its appearance on the earth, this astral body will be the subordinate carrier or the instrument of conceptual thinking.

Now however, it unfolds in its own entire independence on the Moon. In itself it is more active here, more agitated than later on the earth. If one wishes to characterize it, one can say that it is an animal man. As such, it is on a higher level than the present-day animals of earth. It possesses the qualities of animality in a more complete way. In a certain respect these are more savage and unbridled than present-day animal qualities. Therefore, at this stage of his existence, one can call man a being which in its development stands midway between present-day animals and man. If man had continued to advance in a straight line along this path of development, he would have become a wild, unrestrained being. The development of earth represents a toning down, a taming of the animal character in man. This is caused by the thinking consciousness.

If, as he had developed on the Sun, man was called plant man, the man of the Moon can be called animal man. That the latter can develop presupposes that the environment also changes. It has been shown that the plant-man of the Sun could only develop because an independent mineral realm was established alongside the realm of this plant man. During the first two Moon eras (rounds) these two earlier realms, plant realm and mineral realm, again emerge from the darkness. They are changed only in that they both have become somewhat coarser and denser.

During the third Moon era a part of the plant realm splits off. It does not take part in the transition to coarseness. It thereby provides the substance out of which the animal nature of man can be formed. It is this animal nature which, in its union with the more highly formed ether body and with the newly developed astral body, produces the threefold nature of man which we have described above. The entire plant world which had been formed on the Sun could not develop into animality. For animals require the plant for their existence. A plant world is the basis of an animal world. As the Sun man could only elevate himself into a plant by thrusting a portion of his companions down into a coarser mineral realm, so this is now the case with the animal man of the Moon.

A portion of the beings which on the Sun still had the same plant nature as himself, he leaves behind

him on the level of coarser plantlike-ness. As the animal man of the Moon is not like the animals of today, but rather stands midway between present animal and present man, so too the mineral of the Moon lies between the mineral of today and the plant of today. The mineral of the Moon is something plantlike. The Moon rocks are not stones in the sense of today; they have an animated, sprouting, growing character. Similarly, the Moon plant has a certain character of animality.

The animal man of the Moon does not yet have firm bones. His skeleton is still cartilaginous. His whole nature is soft, compared to that of today. Hence his mobility too is different. His locomotion is not a walking, but rather a leaping, even a floating. This could be the case because the Moon of that time did not have a thin, airy atmosphere like that of present-day earth, but its envelope was considerably thicker, even denser than the water of today.

He moved forward and backward, up and down in this viscous element. In this element also lived the minerals and animals from which he absorbed his nourishment. In this element was even contained the power which later on the earth was wholly transferred to the beings themselves — the power of fertilization. At that time man was not yet developed in the form of two sexes, but only in one. He was made out of his water air. But as everything in the world exists in transitional stages, in the last Moon periods, two-sexedness was already developing in a few animal man beings as a preparation for the later condition of the earth.

The sixth and seventh Moon cycles represent a kind of ebbing of all the processes we have described, but also the development of a kind of over-ripe condition, until the whole enters the period of rest (Pralaya) in order to pass in sleep into the existence of earth.

The development of the human astral body is connected with a certain cosmic process which must also be described here. When, after the period of rest which succeeds the cosmic era of the Sun, the latter again awakes and emerges from the darkness, then everything which lives on the thus developing planet still inhabits it as a whole. But this re-awakening Sun is nevertheless different from what it was before. Its substance is no longer luminous through and through, as it was previously; rather it now has darker portions.

These separate out of the homogeneous mass, as it were. From the second cycle (round) onward, these portions appear more and more as an independent member; the Sun body thereby becomes biscuit-like. It consists of two parts, a considerably larger and a smaller one, which however are still attached to one another by a connecting link. In the third cycle these two bodies become completely separated. Sun and Moon are now two bodies, and the latter moves around the former in a circular orbit. Together with the Moon, all of the beings whose development has been described here, leave the Sun.

The development of the astral body alone takes place on the split-off Moon. The cosmic process which we have characterized is the precondition of the further development described above. As long as the beings belonging to man absorbed their forces from their own solar habitat, their development could not attain the stage we have described. In the fourth cycle (round) the Moon is an independent planet, and what has been described concerning that period takes place on this Moon planet.

Here again, we shall present the development of the Moon planet and of its beings in a clearly summarized form.

The Moon is that planet on which man develops the image consciousness with its symbolical character.

During the first two cycles (rounds) the Moon development of man is prepared through a kind of repetition of the Saturn and Sun processes.

In the third cycle the human astral body comes into being through an outpouring of the Spirits of Motion.

Concurrently with this process the Moon splits off from the re-awakened unified Sun body and revolves around the rest of the Sun. The development of the beings connected with man now takes place on the Moon.

In the fourth cycle the Spirits of Twilight inhabit the human physical body and thereby elevate themselves to the level of humanity.

The developing astral body is inoculated with independence by the Spirits of Personality (Asuras).

In the fifth cycle man begins to work in dullness on his physical body. Thereby the "spirit self" (Manas) joins the already existing monad.

In the ether body of man a kind of joy and pain develop during the Moon existence, which have a passive character. In the astral body on the other hand develop the emotions of rage, hate, the instincts, passions, and so forth.

The two former realms, the plant and the mineral realm, which are thrust down to a lower level, are now joined by the animal realm, in which man himself exists at this time.

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Toward the end of the whole universal era the Moon approaches more and more closely to the Sun, and when the time of rest (Pralaya) begins, again the two have become united in a whole, which then passes through the stage of sleep in order to awaken in a new universal era, that of the earth.

## 17 - The Life of Earth

In the preceding chapters has been shown how the components were successively formed which make up the so-called "lower nature of man" — the physical body, the ether body and the astral body. It has also been described how, with the appearance of a new body, the old ones must always be transformed so that they can become carriers and instruments of the one formed later. An advance of human consciousness is also associated with this progress.

As long as the lower man has only a physical body, he possess merely an utterly dull consciousness, which is not equivalent even to that of dreamless sleep of the present, although for man of today this latter state of consciousness is in fact an "unconscious" one. In the time when the ether body appears, man reaches the consciousness which is his today in dreamless sleep. With the formation of the astral body a dim image consciousness makes its appearance, similar to, but not identical with the one man at present ascribes to himself while he is dreaming. The fourth, the current condition of consciousness of earth man, will now be described.

This present condition of consciousness develops in the fourth great universal era, that of earth which follows the preceding Saturn, Sun, and Moon eras.

On Saturn the physical body of man was developed in several stages. At that time it could not have been the carrier of an ether body. And the latter was added only during the course of the Sun. Simultaneously, the physical body was so transformed in the successive Sun cycles that it could become the carrier of this ether body, or in other words, that the ether body could work in the physical body.

During the Moon development the astral body was added, and again the physical body and the ether body were transformed in such a way that they could provide suitable carriers and instruments for the then appearing astral body. Thus, on the Moon, man is a being composed of physical body, ether body, and astral body. Through the ether body he is enabled to feel joy and pain; through the astral body he is a being with emotions, rage, hate, love and so forth.

As has been shown, higher spirits actively work on the different members of his being. On the Moon the ether body received the capacity for joy and pain through the Spirits of Twilight; the emotions were implanted in the astral body by the Fire Spirits.

At the same time, something else was taking place during the three great cycles on Saturn, Sun, and Moon. During the last Saturn cycle the spirit man (Atma) was formed with the help of the Spirits of Will (Thrones). During the penultimate Sun cycle, the life-spirit (Buddhi) was joined to it with the assistance of the Cherubim.

During the third from the last Moon cycle, the spirit-self (Manas) united with the two others through the help of the Seraphim. Thus actually two origins of man were formed during these three great cycles: a lower man, consisting of physical body, ether body, and astral body, and a higher man, consisting of spirit man (Atma), life-spirit (Buddhi), and spirit-self (Manas). The lower and the higher nature of man followed separate paths at first.

The earth development serves to bring the two separate origins of man together.

But first, after the seventh small cycle, all of Moon existence enters a kind of sleeping state (Pralaya). Thereby everything becomes mixed together, so to speak, in a homogeneous mass. The Sun and the Moon too, which were separate in the last great cycle, again become fused during the last Moon cycles.

When everything again emerges from the sleeping state there must first be repeated in their essentials the Saturn condition during a first small cycle, the Sun condition during a second, and the Moon cycle during a third. During this third cycle the beings on the Moon, which has again been split off from the Sun, resume approximately the same forms of existence which they already had on the Moon. There the lower man is a being intermediate between man of today and an animal; the plants stand midway between the animal and plant natures of today, and the minerals only half bear their lifeless character of today, while for the rest they are still half plants.

During the second half of this third cycle something else is already in preparation. The minerals harden, the plants gradually lose the animal character of their sensibility, and out of the uniform species of animal man there develop two classes. One of these remains on the level of animality, while the other is subjected to a division of the astral body into two parts. The astral body splits into a lower part, which continues to be the carrier of the emotions, and a higher part, which attains to a certain independence, so that it can exercise a kind of mastery over the lower members, over the physical body, the ether body, and the lower astral body.

Now the Spirits of Personality seize upon this higher astral body and implant in it just that independence we have mentioned, and therewith also selfishness. Only in the lower human astral body do the Fire Spirits now accomplish their work, while in the ether body the Spirits of Twilight are active, and in the physical body that power entity begins its work which one can describe as the real ancestor of man. It is the same power entity which formed the spirit man (Atma) with the help of the Thrones on Saturn, the life-spirit (Buddhi) with the assistance of the Cherubim on the Sun, and the spirit-self (Manas) together with the Seraphim on the Moon.

But now this changes. Thrones, Cherubim, and Seraphim ascend to higher spheres, and the higher man now receives the assistance of the Spirits of Wisdom, of Motion, and of Form. These are now united with spirit-self, life-spirit, and spirit-man (with Manas-Buddhi-Atma). With the assistance of these entities the human power being characterized above develops its physical body during the second half of the third earth cycle. It is the Spirits of Form which act here in the most significant way. They already form the human physical body so that it becomes a kind of precursor of the later human body of the fourth cycle (the present one, or the fourth round)

In the astral body of the animal beings which have been left behind, it is exclusively the Fire Spirits which remain active, while in the ether body of the plants it is the Spirits of Twilight. On the other hand, the Spirits of Form participate in the transformation of the mineral realm. They make the latter hard, that is, implant rigid and fixed forms in it.



One must not imagine, however, that the sphere of activity of the spirits we have mentioned was confined only to what has been characterized. Always it is only the Main directions of their activities which are meant, in a subordinate way all the spirit beings participate everywhere. Thus at the time indicated, the Spirits of Form also have certain functions to perform in the physical plant and animal bodies, and so forth.

After all this has taken place, around the end of the third earth cycle all the entities — including Sun and Moon — again become fused and then pass through a shorter stage of sleep (a small Pralaya). At that time everything is again a uniform mass (a chaos), and at the end of this stage the fourth earth cycle begins in which we are at present.

At first, everything which already previously had had a being in the mineral, plant, animal, and human realms, begins to separate out of the uniform mass in germinal form. First there can re-emerge as independent germs only those human ancestors on whose higher astral bodies the Spirits of Personality have worked in the preceding small cycle. All other beings of the mineral, plant, and animal realm do not yet lead an independent existence here. At this stage everything is still in that high spiritual condition which is called the "formless" or Arupa condition.

At the present stage of development, only the highest human thoughts — for example, mathematical and moral ideals — are woven of that substance which was proper to all beings at the stage we are describing. That which is lower than these human ancestors can only appear as an activity in a higher being. The animals exist only as states of consciousness of the Spirits of Fire, the plants as states of consciousness of the Spirits of Twilight. The minerals have a double existence in thought. First they exist as thought germs in the human ancestors mentioned above, then as thoughts in the consciousness of the Spirits of Form. The "higher man" (spirit-man, life-spirit, spirit-self also exists in the consciousness of the Spirits of Form.

By degrees a densification of everything now occurs. But at the next stage, the density as yet does not exceed the density of thoughts. At this stage, however, the animal beings which originated in the preceding cycle, can emerge. They separate out of the consciousness of the Fire Spirits and become independent thought beings. This stage is called that of the "formed" or Rupa condition. Man advances in it insofar as his previously formless, independent thought body is clothed by the Spirits of Form in a body of coarser, formed thought substance. The animals as independent beings, here consist exclusively of this substance.

Now a further densification takes place. The condition which is now attained can be compared with that out of which the conceptions of the dreamlike image consciousness are woven. One calls this the "astral" stage.

The human ancestor again advances. In addition to the other two components, his being receives a body which consists of the substance just characterized. He now has the inner formless core of being, a thought body, and an astral body. The animals receive a similar astral body, and the plants emerge from the consciousness of the Spirits of Twilight as independent astral entities.

In the further course of the development, the densification now advances to that condition which is

called physical. At first we deal with the most refined physical condition, with that of the most refined ether. From the Spirits of Form the human ancestor receives the most refined ether body as an addition to his earlier components. He consists of a formless thought core, a formed thought body, an astral body, and an ether body.

The animals have a formed thought body, an astral body, and an ether body; the plants have an astral and an ether body; the minerals first emerge here as independent ether forms. At this stage of development we are concerned with four realms: a mineral, a plant, an animal, and a human realm. Along with these however, in the course of the development up to this point three other realms have come into existence.

In the time when the animals separated from the Fire Spirits at the thought stage (Rupa stage), the Spirits of Personality also separated certain entities out of themselves. These consist of indefinite thought substance which gathers together, dissolves in a cloudlike manner, and thus flows along. One cannot speak of them as of independent entities, but only of an irregular, general mass. This is the first elementary realm. At the astral stage something similar separates from the Fire Spirits. It consists of shadowy images or phantoms similar to the conceptions of the dreamlike image consciousness. They form the second elementary realm. In the beginning of the physical stage, indefinite image-like entities finally separate out of the Spirits of Twilight.

They too have no independence, but they can manifest forces which are similar to the passions and emotions of men and animals. These non-independent, buzzing emotions form the third elementary realm. For beings which are endowed with a dreamlike image consciousness, or with conscious image consciousness, these creations of the third elementary realm are perceptible as a flooding light, as flakes of color, as smell, taste, as various tones and sounds, but all such perceptions must be imagined to be phantom-like.

One must therefore imagine the earth, when it condenses as a refined etheric body out of its astral precursor, to be a conglomerate of an etheric mineral basic mass and of etheric plant, animal, and human beings. Filling the interstices as it were, and also permeating the other beings, are the creatures of the elementary realms.

This earth is inhabited by the higher spiritual entities, which, in the most diverse ways, are active in the realms we have mentioned. They form a spirit community, so to speak, a spirit state, and their dwelling-place and workshop is the earth, which they carry with them as a snail does its shell. In all this it must be borne in mind that what today is separated from the earth as Sun and Moon, is still entirely united with the earth. Only later do both heavenly bodies separate from the earth.

The "higher man" (spirit-man, life-spirit, spirit-self, Atma-Buddhi-Manas) has as yet no independence at this stage. He still constitutes a member of the spirit state, and for the time being is bound to the Spirits of Form, as a human hand is bound to a human organism as a dependent member.

With this we have followed the formation of the earth to the beginning of its physical condition. In what follows, we shall show how everything in this condition develops further. The previous development will then pass over into what has already been said in preceding chapters of the Akasha

Chronicle about the progress of earth.

States of development such as those which have been mentioned here as a formless, a formed, an astral, and a physical condition, which thus constitute differences in a smaller cycle (a round), are called "globes" in theosophical texts. In this respect one therefore speaks of an Arupa, a Rupa, an astral and a physical globe.

Some have considered such a designation incorrect. But here we shall not speak further of matters of nomenclature. Indeed, it is not names which are important, but rather the things themselves. It is better to endeavor to describe the latter as well as possible than to worry very much about names. These must after all always be incorrect in a certain sense. For to facts of the spiritual world one must give names which have come from the world of the senses, and therefore one can speak only by way of similes.

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The description of the development of the world of man has been brought to the point where the earth reaches the beginning of its physical densification. One should now represent to oneself the condition of development of this world of man at this stage. What later appears as sun, moon, and earth is still united in a single body.

This body possesses only refined etheric matter. It is only within this matter that the beings which later will appear as men, animals, plants, and minerals have their existence. For the further progress of the development, the one heavenly body must first separate into two, of which one becomes the later sun, while the other contains the later earth and the later moon in a still united form. Only later does a process of division also take place in this latter heavenly body; that which becomes the present-day moon is extruded, and the earth alone remains as the dwelling-place of man and of his fellow-creatures.

The student of ordinary theosophical literature should understand clearly that the separation of the one heavenly body into two took place in the period in which this literature places the development of the so-called second principal human race. The human ancestors of this race are described as forms with refined etheric bodies. But one must not imagine that they could have developed on our present earth after it had already separated itself from the sun and had expelled the moon. After this separation, such etheric bodies were no longer possible.

If one follows the development of mankind in that cycle to which our description has now come, and which leads us into the present, one becomes aware of a series of principal conditions, of which our current one is the fifth.

The preceding expositions from the Akasha Chronicle have already dealt with these conditions. Here we shall only repeat what is necessary for a further deepening of the discussion.

The first principal condition shows the human ancestors as highly refined etheric entities. The usual theosophical literature somewhat inexactly calls these entities the first principal race. This condition

essentially continues during the second epoch, in which this literature places the second principal race. Until this stage of development sun, moon, and earth are still one heavenly body. Now the sun splits off as an independent body.

It thereby takes those forces through which the human ancestors could be maintained in their etheric condition. With the splitting-off of the sun a densification of the human forms and also of the forms of man's fellow-creatures takes place. These creatures must now adapt themselves to their new dwelling-place, as it were.

But it is by no means only the material forces which are taken away from this dwelling-place. Spiritual entities, of whom it has been said that they formed a spirit community on the one heavenly body we have described, also leave at the same time. Their existence remains more intimately connected with the sun than with the heavenly body which the sun has thrust out from itself. If these entities had remained united with the forces which later develop on the earth and on the moon, they themselves could not have developed further to their appropriate levels.

They needed a new dwelling-place for this further development. This is provided for them by the sun after it — so to speak — has cleansed itself of the earth and moon forces. At the stage at which these beings now are, they can act on earth and moon forces only from the outside, from the sun.

One can see the reason for the separation we have described. Until this time, certain entities which are higher than man have gone through their development on the one heavenly body characterized above; they now lay claim to a part of it for themselves, and leave the rest to man and his fellow-creatures.

The consequence of the splitting-off of the sun was a radical revolution in the development of man and of his fellow-creatures. They fell as it were from a higher level of existence to a lower. They had to do this, for they lost the immediate connection with those higher beings. They would have entered entirely into a blind alley in their own development if other universal events had not taken place, through which progress was stimulated anew and the development directed into quite different channels.

With the forces which at present are united in the split-off moon, and which at that time were still within the earth, further progress would have been impossible. Present-day mankind could not have been produced with these forces, but, instead, only a kind of being in which the emotions of rage, hate and so forth, developed during the third great cycle, the Moon existence, would have increased to the point of the immoderate and animal.

During a certain period, this was in fact the case. The immediate consequence of the splitting-off of the sun was the arising of the third principal condition of the ancestors of man, which in theosophical literature is designated as the third principle race, the Lemurian. Again, the designation "race" for this condition of development is not an especially fortunate one. For in a real sense, the human ancestors of that time cannot be compared with what today one designates as "race." One must be completely clear about the fact that the evolutionary forms of the distant past as well as of the future are so entirely different from those of today that our present appellations can only serve as makeshifts, and really lose all meaning in relation to these remote epochs.

Actually, one can only begin to speak of "races" in connection with the development attained in about the second third of the third principal condition identified above (the Lemurian). Only then is formed what today one calls "races." This "racial character" is retained in the period of the Atlantean development, and further into our time of the fifth principal condition. But already at the end of our fifth era, the word "race" will again lose all sense. In future, mankind will be divided into parts which it will be impossible to designate as "races."

In this respect, ordinary theosophical literature has caused much confusion. This has especially been done by Sinnett's Esoteric Buddhism, the book which, on the other hand, has the great merit of having been the first to popularize the theosophical world-outlook in recent times. In this book the universal development is described as if, throughout the cosmic cycles, the "races" forever repeated themselves in the same way. But this is by no means the case. That which deserves to be called "race" also comes into being and perishes. One should only use the expression "race" for a certain span in the development of mankind. Before and after this, there are evolutionary forms which are something totally different from "races."

Only because the true deciphering of the Akasha Chronicle fully authorizes one to make such a remark have we presumed to make it here. In this the decipherer knows himself to be in complete accord with true occult spiritual investigation. Otherwise it could never occur to him to make such objections against the meritorious books of theosophical literature. He might also make the really quite superfluous remark that the inspirations of the great teachers mentioned in Esoteric Buddhism are not contradicted by what has been described here, but that the misunderstanding has only been produced by the fact that the author of that book has transposed the wisdom of these inspirations, which is difficult to express, into modern every-day human language, in his own way.

The third principal condition of the development of mankind presents itself as the one in which the "races" first came into being. This event was brought about by the separation of the moon from the earth. This separation was accompanied by the originating of the two sexes. This stage of the development of mankind has been repeatedly referred to in the descriptions from the "Akasha Chronicle." When the earth, still united with the moon, split off from the sun, a male and a female sex did not as yet exist within mankind. Each human being combined the two sexes within its still highly refined body.

It must be remembered however that these double-sexed human ancestors were on a low level of development as compared with present-day man. The lower impulses acted with immeasurable energy, and nothing of a spiritual development as yet existed. That the latter was stimulated and that thereby the lower impulses were confined within certain bounds, is connected with the fact that, at the same time at which earth and moon separated, the former came into the sphere of influence of other heavenly bodies. This extremely significant co-operation of the earth with other heavenly bodies, its meeting with foreign planets, in the time which theosophical literature calls the Lemurian, will be related in a further chapter of the "Akasha Chronicle."

The same course of development will be described once more, but from a different point of view. This is done for a quite definite reason. One can never look at the truths about the higher worlds from too many aspects. One should realize that from any one aspect it is possible to give only the poorest

sketch. And when one looks at the same thing from the most diverse aspects, the impressions one receives in this way only gradually complement each other to form an ever more animated picture. Only such pictures, not dry, schematic concepts, can help the man who wants to penetrate into the higher worlds. The more animated and colorful the pictures, the more can one hope to approach the higher reality.

It is obvious that it is just the pictures from the higher worlds which arouse mistrust in many today. A person is quite content to be given conceptual schemes and classifications — with as many names as possible — of Devachan, of the development of the planets, and so forth; but he becomes more difficult when somebody presumes to describe the supersensible worlds as a traveller describes the landscapes of South America. Yet one should realize that it is only through fresh, animated pictures that one is given something useful, not through dead schemes and names.

## 18 - The Fourfold Man of Earth

In this description, we shall take man as our point of departure. As he lives on the earth, man at present consists of the physical body, the ether or life body, the astral body and the "I." This fourfold human nature has in itself the dispositions for a higher development. The "I" by its own initiative transforms the "lower" bodies, and thereby incorporates into them higher parts of human nature. The ennobling and purifying of the astral body by the "I" causes the development of the "spirit self" (Manas), the transformation of the ether or life body creates the life spirit (Buddhi), and the transformation of the physical body creates the true "spirit man" (Atma).

The transformation of the astral body is in full progress in the present period of the development of the earth; the conscious transformation of the ether body and of the physical body belongs to later times; at present it has begun only among the initiates — those trained in the science of the spirit and their pupils.

This threefold transformation of man is a conscious one; it was preceded by one more or less unconscious during the previous development of the earth. It is in this unconscious transformation of astral body, ether body, and physical body that one must seek the origin of the sentient soul, of the intellectual soul, and of the consciousness soul.

One must now make clear to oneself which one of the three bodies of man (the physical, the ether, and the astral body) is in its way most perfect. One can easily be tempted to consider the physical body as the lowest and therefore as the least perfect. However, in this, one would be in error. It is true that the astral body and the ether body will attain a high degree of perfection in the future, but at present the physical body is more perfect in its way than are they in theirs.

Only because man has this physical body in common with the lowest natural realm on earth, the mineral realm, is it possible for the error we have mentioned to arise. For man has the ether body in common with the higher plant realm, and the astral body with the animal realm.

Now it is true that the physical body of man is composed of the same substances and forces which exist in the wider mineral realm, but the manner in which these substances and forces interact in the human body is the expression of wisdom and perfection in the structure. One will soon convince himself of the truth of this statement if he undertakes to study this structure not merely with the dry intellect but with his whole feeling soul. One can take any part of the human physical body as the subject for this contemplation, for instance the highest part of the upper thigh bone. This is not an amorphous massing of substance, but rather is joined together in the most artful manner, out of diminutive beams which run in different directions.

No modern engineering skill could fit a bridge or something similar together with such wisdom. Today such things are still beyond the reach of the most perfect human wisdom. The bone is constructed in this wise fashion so that, through the arrangement of the small beams, the necessary carrying capacity for the support of the human torso can be attained with the least amount of substance. The least amount of matter is used in order to achieve the greatest possible effect in terms of force. In face of such a "masterwork of natural architecture," one can only become lost in

admiration. No less can one admire the miraculous structure of the human brain or heart, or of the totality of the human physical body. One should compare with it the degree of perfection which for example the astral body has attained at the present stage of development of mankind.

The astral body is a carrier of pleasure and distaste, of the passions, impulses and desires and so forth. But what attacks this astral body perpetrates against the wise arrangement of the physical body! A large part of the stimulants which man consumes are poisons for the heart. From this it can be seen that the activity which produces the physical structure of the heart proceeds in a wiser manner than the activity of the astral body, which even runs counter to this wisdom. It is true that in future the astral body will advance to higher wisdom; at present, however, it is not as perfect in its way as is the physical body. Something similar could be shown to be true for the ether body, and also for the "I," that being which, from moment to moment, must struggle gropingly toward wisdom through error and illusion.

If one compares the levels of perfection of the parts of the human being, one will easily discover that at present the physical body is in its way the most perfect, that the ether body is less perfect, the astral body still less, and that in its way the least perfect part of man at present is the "I." This is due to the fact that in the course of the planetary development of the human dwelling-place the physical body of man has been worked on the longest. What man today carries as his physical body has lived through all the developmental stages of Saturn, Sun, Moon, and earth, up to the present stage of the latter. All the forces of these planetary bodies have successively worked on this body, so that gradually it has been able to attain its present degree of perfection. It is thus the oldest part of the present-day human entity.

The ether body, as it now appears in man, did not exist at all during the Saturn period. It was only added during the Sun development. Hence the forces of four planetary bodies have not worked on it as on the physical body, but only those of three, namely, of Sun, Moon, and earth. Therefore only in a future period of development can it become as perfect in its way as is the physical body at present. The astral body joined the physical body and the ether body only during the Moon period, and the "I" did so only during the earth period.

One must represent to oneself that the physical human body attained a certain stage of its development on Saturn, and that this development was carried forward on the Sun in such a way that from that time on the physical body could become the carrier of an ether body. On Saturn this physical body had attained a point where it was an extremely complex mechanism, which however had nothing in it of life. The complicatedness of its structure finally caused it to disintegrate. For this complicatedness had reached such a degree that this physical body could no longer maintain itself by means of the merely mineral forces which were acting in it. It was through this collapse of the human bodies that the decline of Saturn was brought about.

Of the present natural realms, namely the mineral realm, the plant realm, the animal realm, and the human realm, Saturn had only the last-named. What one knows today as animals, plants, and minerals did not yet exist on Saturn. Of the present four natural realms, there existed on this heavenly body only man in his physical body, and this physical body was in fact a kind of complicated mineral. The other realms came into existence because not all beings could attain full development on the



successive heavenly bodies. Thus only a part of the human bodies developed on Saturn attained the full Saturn goal. Those human bodies which did attain this goal were awakened, so to speak, to a new existence in their old form during the Sun period, and this form was permeated with the ether body.

They thereby developed to a higher level of perfection. They became a kind of plant men. That portion of the human bodies however which had not been able to attain the full goal of development on Saturn had to continue during the Sun period what they had previously not completed, but under considerably more unfavorable conditions than those which existed for this development on Saturn. They therefore fell behind the portion which had attained the full goal on Saturn. Thus on the Sun another natural realm came into being in addition to the human realm.

It would be erroneous to believe that all the organs in the present-day human body already began to be developed on Saturn. This is not the case. Rather it is particularly the sensory organs in the human body which have their origin in this ancient time. It is the first rudiments of eyes, ears and so forth which have such an early origin, rudiments which formed on Saturn in somewhat the same way that "lifeless crystals" now form on earth; the corresponding organs then attained their present form by again and again transforming themselves in the direction of greater perfection in each of the succeeding planetary periods. On Saturn they were physical instruments, and nothing else. On the Sun they were transformed, because an ether or life body permeated them.

They were thereby brought into the life process. They became animated physical instruments. To them were added those parts of the human physical body which cannot develop at all except under the influence of an ether body: the organs of growth, of nourishment, and of reproduction. Of course the first rudiments of these organs, as they developed on the Sun, again do not resemble in perfection the form which they have at present.

The highest organs which the human body at that time acquired through the interaction of physical body and ether body were those which at present have developed into the glands. The physical human body on the Sun is thus a system of glands, on which sensory organs of a corresponding level of development are impressed.

The development continued on the Moon. To the physical body and the ether body is added the astral body. Thereby the first rudiment of a nervous system is integrated into the glandular sensory body. One can see that the physical human body becomes more and more complicated in the successive planetary development periods. On the Moon it is composed of nerves, glands, and senses. The senses have behind them a two-fold process of transformation and perfection, while the nerves are at their first stage.

If one looks at the Moon man as a whole, he consists of three parts: a physical body, an ether body, and an astral body. The physical body is tripartite; its partition is the result of the work of the Saturn, Sun, and Moon forces. The ether body is only bipartite. It has in itself only the effect of the work of Sun and Moon, and the astral body is still unipartite. Only the Moon forces have worked on it.

Through the absorption of the astral body on the Moon, man has become capable of a life of sensation, of a certain inwardness. Within his astral body he can form images of what takes place in

his environment. These images in a certain respect are to be compared with the dream images of present-day human consciousness, but they are more vivid and colorful, and, most important, they relate to events in the outside world, while present-day dream images are mere echoes of daily life or are otherwise unclear mirrorings of inner or outer events. The images of the Moon consciousness corresponded completely to whatever they were related to externally.

Assume for instance that a Moon man as he has just been characterized, consisting of physical body, ether body, and astral body, had approached another Moon being. It is true that he could not have perceived the latter as a spatial object, for this has become possible only in the earth consciousness of man; but within his astral body would have arisen an image which in its color and shape would have quite exactly expressed whether the other being was well or ill disposed toward this Moon man, whether it would be useful or dangerous to him.

As a result, the Moon man could regulate his behavior entirely in accordance with the images which arose in his image consciousness. These images were a complete means of orientation for him. The physical instrument which the astral body needed in order to enter into relation with the lower natural realms was the nervous system, integrated into the physical body.

In order that the transformation of man described here could occur during the Moon period, the assistance of a great universal event was needed. The integration of the astral body and the related development of a nervous system in the physical body was only made possible by the fact that what had previously been one body, the Sun, split into two — into Sun and Moon. The former advanced to the state of a fixed star, the latter remained a planet — which the Sun also had been — and began to circle around the Sun, from which it had split off. Through this a significant transformation took place in everything which lived on Sun and Moon. Here for the moment we shall follow this process of transformation only insofar as it concerns the life of the Moon.

Man, consisting of physical body and astral body, had remained united with the Moon when it split off from the Sun. He thereby entered into entirely new conditions of existence. For the Moon took with it only a part of the forces contained in the Sun, and this part now acted on man from his own heavenly body; the Sun had retained the other part of the forces within itself. This latter part is now sent from the outside to the Moon and hence also to its inhabitant, man. If the previous relationship had remained in existence, if all the Sun forces had continued to reach man from his own scene of activity, that inner life which shows itself in the arising of the images of the astral body could not have developed. The Sun force continued its activity on the physical body and ether body from the outside; it had already acted on both of these previously. But it liberated a portion of these two bodies for influences which emanated from the Moon, the heavenly body newly created by a splitting-off.

Thus, on the Moon man was under a two-fold influence, that of the Sun and that of the Moon. It is to be ascribed to the influence of the Moon that out of the physical and the ether body there developed those parts which permitted the imprinting of the astral body. An astral body can only create images when the Sun forces reach it from outside rather than from its own planet. The Moon influences transformed the sensory rudiments and the glandular organs in such a way that a nervous system could be integrated into them; and the sun influences brought it about that the images for which this nervous system was the instrument corresponded to the external Moon events in the manner described above.

The development could only progress to a certain point in this manner. Had this point been overstepped, the Moon man would have become hardened in his inner life of images, and thereby he would have lost all connection with the Sun. When the time had come, the Sun again absorbed the Moon, so that again for some time both were one body. The union lasted until man was far enough advanced so that his hardening, which would have had to take place on the Moon, could be prevented by a new stage of development. When this had occurred a new separation took place, but this time the Moon took Sun forces along with itself which previously it had not received.

Through this it came about that another separation took place after some time. What had last split off from the Sun was a heavenly body which contained all the forces and beings at present living on earth and moon. Thus the earth still contained within itself the moon which now circles around it. If the latter had remained within it, it could never have become the scene of any human development, including the present one. The forces of the present moon first had to be cast off, and man had to remain on the thus purified earthly scene and continue his development there. In this way three heavenly bodies developed out of the old Sun. The forces of two of these heavenly bodies, the new sun and the new moon, are sent to the earth and hence to its inhabitant from the outside.

Through this progress in the development of the heavenly bodies it became possible that into the tripartite human nature, as it still had been on the Moon, the fourth part, the "I," integrated itself. This integration was connected with a perfecting of the physical body, the ether body, and the astral body. The perfecting of the physical body consisted in that the system of the heart was incorporated in it as the preparer of warm blood. Of course, now the sensory system, the glandular system, and the nervous system had to be transformed in such a way that in the human organism they would be compatible with the newly added system of the warm blood.

The sensory organs were so transformed that out of the mere image consciousness of the old Moon the object consciousness could develop, which makes possible the perception of external objects, and which man at present possesses from the time he awakes in the morning until he falls asleep in the evening. On the old Moon the senses were not yet open to the outside; the images of consciousness arose from within, and just this opening of the senses to the external is the achievement of the earth development.

It has been stated above that not all of the human bodies formed on Saturn attained the goal which was set for them there, and that on the Sun, alongside the human realm in its form of that time, a second natural realm developed. One must realize that at each of the subsequent stages of development, on Sun, Moon, and earth, there were always beings which fell short of their goals and that through this the lower natural realms came into existence.

The animal realm, which is closest to man, had already fallen behind on Saturn, but partially made up the development under unfavorable conditions on Sun and Moon, so that while on the earth it was not as far advanced as man, in part it still had the capacity to receive warm blood as he did. For warm blood existed in none of the natural realms before the period of earth. The present-day cold-blooded (or variably warm) animals and certain plants came into existence because certain beings of the lower Sun realm again fell short of the stage which the other beings of this realm attained. The present-day mineral realm came into existence last, in fact only during the earth period.

The fourfold man of earth receives from sun and moon the influences of those forces which have remained connected with these heavenly bodies. From the sun those forces reach him which further progress, growth, and becoming; from the moon come the hardening, forming forces. If man stood only under the influence of the sun he would dissolve in an immeasurably rapid process of growth. It is for this reason that formerly, after an appropriate time, he had to leave the Sun and to receive a retarding of his over-rapid progress on the split-off old Moon. But if then he had remained permanently connected with the latter, this retarding of his growth would have hardened him in a rigid form. Therefore he advanced to the development of earth, within which the two influences counterbalance each other in an appropriate way. At the same time the point is reached where something higher — the soul — is integrated as an inner entity within the quadripartite human being.

In its form, in its activities, movements and so forth, the physical body is the expression and the effect of what takes place in the other parts, in the ether body, the astral body, and the "I." In the descriptions from the "Akasha Chronicle" which we have given up to this point, it has become apparent how, in the course of development, these other parts of the human entity gradually intervened in the formation of the physical body. During the Saturn development none of these other parts was as yet associated with the physical human body. But the first beginning of its development was made in that time. However, one must not think that the forces which later acted on the physical body from the ether body, the astral body, and the "I" did not already act on it during the Saturn period.

They were already acting at that time, but in a certain sense from the outside, not from within. The other parts had not yet been formed, had not yet been united with the physical human body as individual entities; but the forces which were later united in them acted as it were from the environment — the atmosphere — of Saturn and formed the first beginning of this body. This beginning was then transformed on the Sun because a part of those forces now formed the separate human ether body, and now acted on the physical body no longer merely from the outside, but from the inside. The same thing occurred on the Moon with respect to the astral body. On the earth the physical body was transformed for the fourth time by becoming the dwelling place of the "I," which now works within it.

One can see that, to the eye of the scientist of the spirit, the physical body is not something fixed, something permanent in its form and manner of acting. It is undergoing a constant process of transformation. And such a transformation is also taking place in the current earth period of the body's development. One can only understand human life if one is in a position to form a conception of this transformation.

A consideration of the human organs from the point of view of the science of the spirit shows that these are at very different stages of development. There are organs in the human body which, in their present form, are in a descending, others which are in an ascending development. In future, the former will lose their importance for man more and more. The time of the flowering of their functions is behind them; they will become atrophied and finally disappear from the human body.

Other organs are in an ascending development; they contain much which now is only present in a germinal state, as it were: in future they will develop into more perfect forms with a higher function. Among the former organs belong, for instance, those which serve for reproduction, for the bringing

into existence of like beings. In future their function will pass to other organs and they themselves will sink into insignificance. There will come a time when they will be present on the human body in an atrophied condition, and one will then have to regard them only as evidences of the preceding development of man.

Other organs, as for instance the heart and neighboring formations, are at the beginning of their development in a certain respect. What now lies in them in a germinal state will reach its full flower only in the future. For in the conception of the science of the spirit, the heart and its relation to the so-called circulation of the blood are seen as something quite different from what contemporary physiology, which in this respect is completely dependent on mechanistic-materialistic concepts, sees in them.

In so doing, this science of the spirit succeeds in casting light on facts which are well-known to contemporary science, but for which with the means at its disposal, the latter cannot give anything like a satisfactory explanation. Anatomy shows that in their structure the muscles of the human body are of two kinds. There are those whose smallest parts are smooth bands, and those whose smallest parts show a regular transverse striation. Now the smooth muscles in general are those which in their movements are independent of human volition. For instance, the smooth muscles of the intestine push the food pulp along in regular movements, upon which the human volition has no influence.

Those muscles which are found in the iris of the eye are also smooth. These muscles bring about the movements through which the pupil of the eye is enlarged when the latter is exposed to a small amount of light, and contracted when much light flows into the eye. These movements too are independent of human volition. On the other hand, those muscles are striated which mediate movements under the influence of human volition, for example, the muscles by which the arms and legs are moved. The heart, which after all is also a muscle, constitutes an exception to this general condition. In the present period of human development, the heart is not subject to volition in its movements, yet it is a "transversely striated" muscle. The science of the spirit indicates the reason for this.

The heart will not always remain as it is now. In the future it will have a quite different form and a changed function. It is on the way to becoming a voluntary muscle. In the future it will execute movements which will be the effects of the inner soul impulses of man. It already shows what significance it will have in the future, when the movements of the heart will be as much an expression of the human will as the lifting of the hand or the advancing of the foot are today.

This conception of the heart is connected with a comprehensive insight of the science of the spirit into the relation of the heart to the so-called circulation of the blood. The mechanical-materialistic doctrine of life sees in the heart a kind of pumping mechanism which drives the blood through the body in a regular manner. Here the heart is the cause of the movement of the blood. The insight of the science of the spirit shows something quite different. For this insight, the pulsing of the blood, its whole inner mobility, are the expression and the effect of the processes of the soul.

The soul is the cause of the behavior of the blood. Turning pale through feelings of fear, blushing under the influence of sensations of shame, are coarse effects of processes of the soul in the blood.

But everything which takes place in the blood is only the expression of what takes place in the life of the soul. However, the connection between the pulsation of the blood and the impulses of the soul is a deeply mysterious one. The movements of the heart are not the cause, but the consequence of the pulsation of the blood.

In the future, through voluntary movements, the heart will carry what takes place in the human soul into the external world.

Other organs which are in a similarly ascending development are the organs of respiration in their function as instruments of speech. At present by their means man can transform his thoughts into air waves. He thereby impresses upon the external world what he experiences within himself.

He transforms his inner experiences into air waves. This wave motion of the air is a rendering of what takes place within him. In the future he will in this way give external form to more and more of his inner being. The final result in this direction will be that through his speech organs which have arrived at the height of their perfection, he will produce his own kind. Thus the speech organs at present contain within themselves the future organs of reproduction in a germinal state. The fact that mutation (change of voice) occurs in the male individual at the time of puberty is a consequence of the mysterious connection between the instruments of speech and reproduction.

The entire human physical body can be considered in this way from the point of view of the science of the Spirit. It was only intended to give a few examples here. In the science of the spirit, both an anatomy and a physiology exist. The anatomy and physiology of the present will have to let themselves be fertilized by the anatomy and physiology of the science of the spirit in a not very distant future, and will even transform themselves completely into the latter.

In this area it becomes especially apparent that results such as those given above must not be built on mere inferences, on speculations such as conclusions by analogy, but must only proceed from the true research of the science of the spirit. This must necessarily be emphasized, for it happens only too easily that once they have gained some insights, zealous adherents of the science of the spirit continue to spin their ideas in empty air. It is no miracle when only phantasms are produced in this way, and, in fact, they do abound in these areas of research.

One could, for instance, proceed to draw the following conclusion from the description given above: Because the human organs of reproduction in their present form will in the future be the first to lose their importance, they therefore were the first to receive it in the past, hence they are in a sense the oldest organs of the human body. Just the contrast of this is true. They were the last to receive their present form and will be the first to lose it again.

The following presents itself to spiritual scientific research. On the Sun, the physical human body had in a certain respect moved up to the level of plant existence. At that time it was permeated only by an ether body. On the Moon it took on the character of the animal body, because it was permeated by the astral body. But not all organs participated in this transformation into the animal character.

A number of parts remained on the plant level. On the earth, after the integration of the "I," when the

human body elevated itself to its present form, a number of parts still bore a decided plant character. But one must not imagine that these organs looked exactly like our present-day plants. The organs of reproduction belong among these organs. They still exhibited a plant character at the beginning of the earth development.

This was known to the wisdom of the old Mysteries. The older art which has retained so much of the traditions of the Mysteries, represents hermaphrodites with plant-leaf like organs of reproduction. These are precursors of man which still had the old kind of reproductive organs (which were double-sexed). For example, this can be seen clearly in a hermaphrodite figure in the Capitoline Collection in Rome. When one looks into these matters one will also understand for instance the true reason for the presence of the fig leaf on Eve.

One will accept true explanations for many old representations, while contemporary interpretations are, after all, only the result of a thinking which is not carried to its conclusion. We shall only remark in passing that the hermaphrodite figure mentioned above shows still other plant appendages. When it was made, the tradition still existed that in a very remote past certain human organs changed from a plant to an animal character.

All these changes of the human body are only the expression of the forces of transformation which lie in the ether body, the astral body, and the "I." The transformations of the physical human body accompany the acts of the higher parts of man. One can therefore understand the structure and the activity of this human body only if one absorbs oneself in the "Akasha Chronicle," which shows how the higher changes of the more spiritual and mental parts of man take place. Everything physical and material finds its explanation through the spiritual. Light is shed even on the future of the physical if one studies the spiritual.

## 19 - Answers to Questions

If we are to acquire new capacities through repeated incarnations in the successive races, if in addition nothing of what the soul has acquired through experience is again to be lost from its storehouse, how is it to be explained that in mankind of today absolutely nothing remains of the capacities of the will, of the imagination, of the mastery of natural forces which were so highly developed in those periods?

It is a fact that of the capacities which the soul has acquired in its transition through a stage of development, nothing is lost. But when a new capacity is acquired, the one previously gained assumes a different form. It then no longer manifests itself in its own character, but as a basis for the new capacity. Among the Atlanteans for instance, it was the faculty of memory which was acquired.

Contemporary man indeed can form only a very weak conception of what the memory of an Atlantean could accomplish. But all that appears as innate concepts in our fifth root race, in Atlantis was only acquired through the memory. The concepts of space, time, number, etc. would present difficulties of a quite different order if contemporary man were obliged to be the first to acquire them. For the faculty which this contemporary man is to acquire is the combinatory understanding. Logic did not exist among the Atlanteans. But each previously acquired power of the soul must withdraw, in its own form, become submerged beneath the threshold of consciousness if a new one is to be acquired. For example, if the beaver were suddenly to become a thinking being, it would have to change its capacity for intuitively erecting its artful constructions into something else.

The Atlanteans also had for example, the capacity to control the life force in a certain way. They constructed their wonderful machines through this force. But on the other hand, they had nothing of the gift for story-telling which the peoples of the fifth root race possess. There are as yet no myths and fairy tales among them. The life-mastering power of the Atlanteans first appeared among the members of our race under the mask of mythology. In this form it could become the basis for the intellectual activity of our race.

The great inventors among us are incarnations of "seers" of the Atlanteans. In their inspirations of genius is manifested what has as its basis something else, something that was like life-producing power in them during their Atlantean incarnation. Our logic, knowledge of nature, technology and so forth, grow from a foundation which was laid in Atlantis. If, for instance, an engineer could transform his combining faculty backward, something would result which was in the power of the Atlantean.

All of Roman jurisprudence was the transformed will power of a former time. In this the will as such remained in the background, and instead of itself assuming forms, it transformed itself into the forms of thought which are manifested in legal concepts. The esthetic sense of the Greeks is built up on the basis of directly acting forces which among the Atlanteans were manifested in a magnificent breeding of plant and animal forms. In the imagination of Phidias lived something which the Atlantean used directly for the transformation of actual living beings.

What is the relation of the science of the spirit, of theosophy, to the so-called secret sciences?

Secret sciences have always existed. They were cultivated in the so-called mystery schools. Only the



one who underwent certain tests could learn something of them. He was always told only as much as was appropriate for his intellectual, spiritual, and moral faculties.

This had to be so, for when properly used, the higher insights are the key to a power which must lead to misuse in the hands of the unprepared. Some of the elementary teachings of mystery science have been popularized by the science of the spirit. The reason for this lies in the conditions prevailing in our time. With respect to the development of the understanding, mankind today, in its more advanced members, has progressed to the point where sooner or later it would of itself attain certain conceptions which were previously a part of secret knowledge. But it would acquire these conceptions in an atrophied, caricatured, and harmful form.

Therefore some of those who are initiated into secret knowledge have decided to communicate a part of it to the public. It will thus become possible to measure human advances which take place in the course of cultural development, with the measuring rod of true wisdom. Our knowledge of nature, for example, does lead to ideas about the causes of things. But without a deepening through mystery science these ideas can only be distortions. Our technology is approaching stages of development which can only redound to the good of mankind if the souls of men have been deepened in the sense of the spiritual scientific conception of life.

As long as the peoples had nothing of modern knowledge of nature and modern technology, the form was salutary in which the highest teachings were communicated in religious images, in a manner which appealed merely to the emotional. Today mankind needs the same truths in a rational form. The world outlook of the science of the spirit is not an arbitrary development, but results from an insight into the historical fact just mentioned.

However, even today certain parts of secret knowledge can only be communicated to those who undergo the tests of initiation. Only those will be able to make use of the published part who do not limit themselves to an external noting of it, but who really assimilate these things internally and make them the content and the guiding principle of their lives. It is not a matter of mastering the teachings of the science of the spirit with the understanding, but of permeating feelings, emotions, the whole life with them.

Only through such a permeating does one learn something of their truth. Otherwise they remain something which "one can believe or not believe." When correctly understood, the truths of the science of the spirit will give man a true foundation for his life, will let him recognize his value, his dignity, and his essence, and will give him the highest zest for living. For these truths enlighten him about his connection with the world around him; they show him his highest goals, his true destiny.

They do this in a way which corresponds to the demands of the present, so that he need not remain caught in the contradiction between belief and knowledge. One can be a modern scientist and a scientist of the spirit at the same time. But, however, one must be one and the other in a true sense.

## 20 - Prejudices Arising from Alleged Science (1904)

It is certainly true that much in the intellectual life of the present makes it difficult for one who is seeking the truth to accept spiritual scientific (theosophical) insights. And what has been said in the essays on the *Lebensfragen der theosophischen Bewegung* (Vital Questions of the (Theosophical Movement)) can be taken as an indication of the reasons which exist especially for the conscientious seeker of truth in this respect.

Many statements of the scientist of the spirit must appear entirely fantastic to him who tests them against the certain conclusions which he feels obliged to draw from what he has encountered as the facts of the research of natural science. To this is added the fact that this research can point to the enormous blessings it has bestowed and continues to bestow on human progress.

What an overwhelming effect is produced when a personality who wants to see a view of the world built exclusively on the results of this research, can utter the proud words: "For there lies an abyss between these two extreme conceptions of life: one for this world alone, the other for heaven. But up to the present day, traces of a paradise, of a life of the deceased, of a personal God, have nowhere been found by human science, by that inexorable science which probes into and dissects everything, which does not shrink back before any mystery, which explores heaven beyond the stars of the nebula, analyzes the infinitely small atoms of living cells as well as of chemical bodies, decomposes the substance of the sun, liquefies the air, which will soon telegraph by wireless transmission from one end of the earth to the other, and already today sees through opaque bodies, which introduces navigation under the water and in the air, and opens new horizons to us through radium and other discoveries; this science which, after having shown the true relationship of all living beings among themselves and their gradual changes in form, today draws the organ of the human soul, the brain, into the sphere of its penetrating research." (Prof. August Forel, *Leben und Tod* (Life and Death) Munich, 1908, page 3).

The certainty with which one thinks it possible to build on such a basis betrays itself in the words which Forel joins to the remarks quoted above: "In proceeding from a monistic conception of life, which alone takes all scientific facts into account, we leave the supernatural aside and turn to the book of nature." Thus, the serious seeker after truth is confronted by two things which put considerable obstacles in the way of any inkling he may have of the truth of the communications of the science of the spirit.

If a feeling for such communications lives in him, even if he also senses their inner well-founded-ness by means of a more delicate logic, he can be driven toward the suppression of such impulses when he has to tell himself two things. First of all, the authorities who know the cogency of positive facts consider that everything "supersensible" springs only from day-dreams and unscientific superstition. In the second place, by devoting myself to these transcendental matters, I run the risk of becoming an impractical person of no use in life. For everything which is accomplished in practical life must be firmly rooted in the "ground of reality."

Not all of those who find themselves in such a dilemma will find it easy to work their way through to a realization of how matters really stand with respect to the two points we have cited. If they could do

it, with respect to the first point they would, for instance, see the following: The results of the science of the spirit are nowhere in conflict with the factual research of natural science. Everywhere that one looks at the relation of the two in an unprejudiced manner, there something quite different becomes apparent for our time. It turns out that this factual research is steering toward a goal which in a by no means distant future, will bring it into full harmony with what spiritual research ascertains in certain areas from its supersensible sources. From hundreds of cases which could be adduced as proof for this assertion, we shall cite a characteristic one here.

In my lectures on the development of the earth and of mankind, it has been pointed out that the ancestors of the present-day civilized peoples lived in a land-area which at one time was situated in that part of the surface of the earth which today is occupied by a large portion of the Atlantic Ocean. In the essays, *From the Akasha Chronicle*, it is rather the soul-spiritual qualities of these Atlantean ancestors which have been indicated. In oral presentations also has often been described how the earth surface looked in the old Atlantean land.

It was said that at that time the air was saturated with water mist vapors. Man lived in the water mist, which in certain regions never lifted to the point where the air was completely clear. Sun and moon could not be seen as they are today, but were surrounded by colored coronas. A distribution of rain and sunshine, such as occurs at present, did not exist at that time. One can clairvoyantly explore this old land; the phenomenon of the rainbow did not exist at that time. It only appeared in the post-Atlantean period.

Our ancestors lived in a country of mist. These facts have been ascertained by purely supersensible observation, and it must even be said that the spiritual researcher does best to renounce all deductions based on his knowledge of natural science, for through such deductions his unprejudiced inner sense of spiritual research is easily misled. With such observations one should now compare certain ideas toward which some natural scientists feel themselves impelled at present. Today there are scientists who find themselves forced by facts to assume that at a certain period of its development the earth was enveloped in a cloud mass.

They point out that at present also, clouded skies exceed the unclouded, so that life is still to a large extent under the influence of sunlight which is weakened by the formation of clouds, hence one cannot say that life could not have developed under the cloud cover of that Atlantean time. They further point out that those organisms which can be considered among the oldest of the plant world are of a kind which also develop without direct sunlight.

Thus, among the forms of this older plant world those desert-type plants which need direct sunlight and dry air, are not present. And also with respect to the animal world, a scientist, Hilgard, has pointed out that the giant eyes of extinct animals, for instance, of the Ichthyosaurus, indicate that a dim illumination must have prevailed on the earth in their time. I do not mean to regard such views as not needing correction. They interest the spiritual researcher less through what they state than through the direction into which factual research finds itself forced. Even the periodical *Kosmos*, which has a more or less Haeckelian point of view, some time ago published an essay worthy of consideration which, because of certain facts of the plant and animal world, indicated the possibility of a former Atlantean Continent.

If one brought together a greater number of such matters one could easily show how true natural science is moving in a direction which in the future will cause it to join the stream which at present already carries the waters of the springs of spiritual research. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that spiritual research is nowhere in contradiction with the facts of natural science.

Where its adversaries see such a contradiction, this does not relate to facts, but to the opinions which these adversaries have formed, and which they believe necessarily result from the facts. But in truth there is not the slightest connection between the opinion of Forel quoted above, for instance, and the facts of the stars of the nebulas, the nature of the cells, the liquefaction of the air, and so forth. This opinion represents nothing but a belief which many have formed out of a need for believing, which clings to the sensory-real, and which they place beside the facts. This belief is very dazzling for present-day man.

It entices him to an inner intolerance of a quite special kind. Its adherents are blinded to the point where they consider their own opinion to be the only "scientific" one, and ascribe the views of others merely to prejudice and superstition. Thus it is really strange when one can read the following sentences in a newly-published book on the phenomena of the soul life [Hermann Ebbinghaus, *Abriss der Psychologie* (Outline of Psychology)]: "As a help against the impenetrable darkness of the future and the insuperable might of inimical powers, the soul creates religion for itself. As in other experiences involving ignorance or incapacity, under the pressure of uncertainty and the terror of great dangers, ideas as to how help can be found here, are quite naturally forced upon man in the same way in which one thinks of water when in danger from fire, of the helpful comrade in the peril of combat."

"In the lower stages of civilization, where man still feels himself to be quite impotent and to be surrounded by sinister dangers at every step, the feeling of fear, and correspondingly, the belief in evil spirits and demons naturally entirely prevail. In higher stages on the other hand, where a more mature insight into the interconnection of things and a greater power over them produce a certain self-confidence and stronger hopes, a feeling of confidence in invisible powers comes to the fore and with it the belief in good and benevolent spirits.

But on the whole, both fear and love, side by side, remain permanently characteristic of the feeling of man toward his gods, except that their relation to one another changes according to the circumstances." — "These are the roots of religion . . . fear and need are its mothers, and although it is principally perpetuated by authority once it has come into existence, still it would have died out long since if it were not constantly being reborn out of these two."

Everything in these assertions has been shifted and thrown into disorder, and this disorder is illuminated from the wrong points of view. Furthermore, he who maintains this opinion is firm in his conviction that his opinion must be a generally binding truth. First of all, the content of religious conceptions is confused with the nature of religious feelings. The content of religious conceptions is taken from the region of the supersensible worlds.

The religious feeling, for example, fear and love of the supersensible entities, is made the creator of this content without further ado, and it is assumed without hesitation that nothing real corresponds to

the religious conceptions. It is not even considered remotely possible that there could be a true experience of supersensible worlds, and that the feelings of fear and love then cling to the reality which is given by this experience, just as no one thinks of water when in danger from fire, of the helpful comrade in the peril of combat, if he has not known water and comrade previously.

In this view, the science of the spirit is declared to be day-dreaming because one makes religious feeling the creator of entities which one simply regards as non-existent. This way of thinking totally lacks the consciousness that it is possible to experience the content of the supersensible world, just as it is possible for the external senses to experience the ordinary world of the senses.

The odd thing that often happens with such views is that they resort to the kind of deduction to support their belief which they represent as improper in their adversaries. For example, in the above-mentioned work of Forel the sentence appears, "Do we not live in a way a hundred times truer, warmer, and more interestingly when we base ourselves on the ego, and find ourselves again in the souls of our descendants, rather than in the cold and nebulous *fata morgana* of a hypothetical heaven among the equally hypothetical songs and trumpet soundings of supposed angels and archangels, which we cannot imagine, and which therefore mean nothing to us."

But what has that which "one" finds "warmer," "more interesting," to do with the truth? If it is true that one should not deduce a spiritual life from fear and hope, is it then right to deny this spiritual life because one finds it to be "cold" and "uninteresting"? With respect to those personalities who claim to stand on the "firm ground of scientific facts," the spiritual researcher is in the following position.

He says to them, Nothing of what you produce in the way of such facts from geology, paleontology, biology, physiology, and so forth is denied by me. It is true that many of your assertions are in need of correction through other facts. But such a correction will be brought about by natural science itself. Apart from that, I say "yes" to what you advance. It does not enter my mind to fight you when you advance facts. But your facts are only a part of reality. The other part are the spiritual facts, through which the occurrence of the sensory ones first becomes understandable. These facts are not hypotheses, not something which "one" cannot imagine, but something lived and experienced by spiritual research. What you advance beyond the facts you have observed is, without your realizing it, nothing other than the opinion that those spiritual facts cannot exist.

As a matter of fact, you advance nothing as the proof of your assertion except that such spiritual facts are unknown to you. From this you deduce that they do not exist and that those who claim to know something of them are dreamers and visionaries. The spiritual researcher does not take even the smallest part of your world from you; he only adds his own to it. But you are not satisfied that he should act in this way; you say — although not always clearly — "One must not speak of anything except of that of which we speak; we demand not only that that be granted to us of which we know something, but we require that all that of which we know nothing be declared idle phantasms."

The person who wants to have anything to do with such "logic" cannot be helped for the time being. With this logic he may understand the sentence: "Our I has formerly lived directly in our human ancestors, and it will continue to live in our direct or indirect descendants." (Forel, *Leben und Tod* (Life and Death), page 21.) Only he should not add, "Science proves it," as is done in this work. For in

this case science "proves" nothing, but a belief which is chained to the world of the senses sets up the dogma: That of which I can imagine nothing must be considered as delusion; and he who sins against my assertion offends against true science.

The one who knows the development of the human soul finds it quite understandable that men's minds are dazzled for the moment by the enormous progress of natural science and that today they cannot find their way among the forms in which great truths are traditionally transmitted. The science of the spirit gives such forms back to mankind. It shows for example how the Days of Creation of the Bible represent things which are unveiled to the clairvoyant eye. (\*)

A mind chained to the world of the senses finds only that the Days of Creation contradict the results of geology and so forth. In understanding the deep truths of these Days of Creation, the science of the spirit is equally far removed from making them evaporate as a mere "poetry of myths," and from employing any kind of allegorical or symbolical methods of explanation. How it proceeds is indeed quite unknown to those who still ramble on about the contradiction between these Days of Creation and science.

Further, it must not be thought that spiritual research finds its knowledge in the Bible. It has its own methods, finds truths independently of all documents and then recognizes them in the latter. This way is necessary for many present-day seekers after truth. For they demand a spiritual research which bears within itself the same character as natural science. And only where the nature of this science of the spirit is not recognized does one become perplexed when it is a matter of protecting the facts of the supersensible world from opinions which appear to be founded on natural science. Such a state of mind was even anticipated by a man of warm soul, who however could not find the supersensible content of the science of the spirit.

Almost eighty years ago this personality, Schleiermacher, wrote to the much younger Lücke: "When you consider the present state of natural science, how more and more it assumes the form of an encompassing account of the universe, what do you then feel the future will bring, I shall not even say for our theology, but for our evangelical Christianity? ... I feel that we shall have to learn to do without much of what many are still accustomed to consider as being inseparably connected with the nature of Christianity. I shall not even speak of the Six Days' Work, but the concept of creation, as it is usually interpreted ... How long will it be able to stand against the power of a world-outlook formed on the basis of scientific reasonings which nobody can ignore? ... What is to happen, my dear friend? I shall not see this time, and can quietly lie down to sleep; but you, my friend, and your contemporaries, what do you intend to do?" (*Theologische Studien und Kritiken* von Ullmann und Umbreit (*Theological Studies and Criticism* by Ullmann and Umbreit), 1829, page 489).

At the basis of this statement lies the opinion that the "scientific reasonings" are a necessary result of the facts. If this were so, then "nobody" could ignore them, and he whose feeling draws near the supersensible world can wish that he may be allowed "quietly to lie down to sleep" in the face of the assault of science against the supersensible world. The prediction of Schleiermacher has been realized, insofar as the "scientific reasonings" have established themselves in wide circles. But at the same time, today there exists a possibility of coming to know the supersensible world in just as "scientific" a manner as the interrelationships of sensory facts.

The one who familiarizes himself with the science of the spirit in the way this is possible at present, will be preserved from many superstitions by it, and will become able to take the supersensible facts into his conceptual store, thereby divesting himself of the superstition that fear and need have created this supersensible world.

The one who is able to struggle through to this view will no longer be held back by the idea that he might be estranged from reality and practical life by occupying himself with the science of the spirit. He will then realize how the true science of the spirit does not make life poorer, but richer.

It will certainly not mislead him into underestimating telephones, railroad technology, and aerial navigation; but in addition he will see many other practical things which remain neglected today, when one believes only in the world of the senses and therefore recognizes only a part of the truth rather than all of it.

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[\*] Compare: Rudolf Steiner, *Die Geheimnisse der biblischen Schöpfungsgeschichte* (The Secrets of the Biblical History of Creation), Freiburg i, Br., 1954.

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# Cosmology, Religion and Philosophy

By  
Rudolf Steiner

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COSMOLOGY, RELIGION  
AND PHILOSOPHY  
BY ≈ RUDOLF STEINER

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A series of lectures commencing with the opening of the French course at the Goetheanum Dornach, September 1922, published by Frau Dr. Steiner in one volume.

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## **Foreword**

The following books and pamphlets were intended by Dr. Steiner to form a series of meditation processes describing the basic experiences of Spiritual Science.

1. The Knowledge of Higher Worlds and its Attainment.
2. A Road to Self-knowledge.
3. The Threshold of the Spiritual World.
4. Cosmology, Religion and Philosophy.
5. The Life of the Soul.

## 1 - The Three Steps Of Anthroposophy

It is a great pleasure to me to be able to give this series of lectures in the Goetheanum, which was founded to promote Spiritual Science. What is here called 'Spiritual Science' must not be confused with those things which, more than ever at the moment, appear as Occultism, Mysticism, etc.

These schools of thought either refer to ancient spiritual traditions which are no longer properly understood, and which give in a dilettante manner all kinds of imagined knowledge of supersensible worlds, or they ape outwardly the scientific methods which we have to-day without realizing that methods of research which are ideal for the study of the natural world can never lead to supernatural worlds. And what makes its appearance as Mysticism is also either mere renewal of ancient psychic experiences, or muddled, very often fantastic, and deceptive introspection.

As opposed to this, the attitude of the Goetheanum is one which, in the fullest sense, falls in with the present-day view of natural scientific research, and recognizes what is justified in it. On the other hand, it seeks to gain objective and accurate results on the subject of the supersensible world by means of the strictly controlled training of pure psychic vision. It counts only such results as are obtained through this vision of the soul, by which the psychic-spiritual organization is just as accurately defined as a mathematical problem.

The point is that at first this organization is presented in scientifically indisputable vision. If we call it 'the spiritual eye', we then say: as the mathematician has his problems before him, so has the researcher into the spirit his 'spiritual eye'. The scientific method is employed for him on that preparation which is in his 'spiritual organs'. If his 'science' has its being in these organs, he can make use of them, and the supersensible world lies before him.

The student of the world of the senses directs his science to outward things, to results; but the student of the spirit pursues science as a preparation of vision. And when vision begins, science must already have fulfilled its mission. If you like to call your vision 'clairvoyance' it is at any rate, an 'exact clairvoyance'. The science of the spirit begins where that? of the senses ends. Above all, the research student of the spirit must have based his whole method of thought for the newer Science on the one he applied to the world of the senses.

Thus it comes about that the Sciences studied to-day merge into that realm which opens up Spiritual Science in the modern sense. It happens not only in the separate realms of Natural Science and History, but also e.g., in Medicine; and in all provinces of practical life, in Art, in Morals, and in Social life. It happens also in religious experiences.

In these lectures three of these provinces are to be dealt with, and it is to be shown how they merge into the modern spiritual view. The three are Philosophy, Cosmology and Religion.

At one time Philosophy was the intermediary for all human knowledge. In its logos man acquired knowledge of the distinct provinces of world-reality. The different Sciences are born of its substance. But what has remained of Philosophy itself? A number of more or less abstract ideas which have to justify their existence in face of the other sciences, whose justification is found in observation through

the senses and in experiment. To what do the ideas of Philosophy refer? That has to-day become an important question. We find in these ideas no longer a direct reality, and so we try to find a theoretical basis for this reality.

And more: Philosophy, and in its very name, love of wisdom shows that it is not merely an affair of the intellect, but of the entire human soul. What one can 'love' is such a thing, and there was a time when wisdom was considered something real, which is not the case with 'ideas' which engage only Reason and Intellect. Philosophy, from being a matter for all mankind which once was felt in the warmth of the soul, has become dry, cold knowledge: and we no longer feel ourselves in the midst of Reality when we occupy ourselves with philosophizing.

In mankind itself that has been lost which once made Philosophy a real experience. Natural Science (of the outer world) is conducted by means of the senses, and what Reason thinks concerning the observations made by the senses is a putting-together of the content derived through the senses. This thought has no content of its own; and while man lives in such knowledge he knows himself only as a physical body. But Philosophy was originally a soul-content which was not experienced by the physical body, but by a human organism which cannot be appreciated by the senses.

This is the etheric body, forming the basis of the physical body, and this contains the supersensible powers which give shape and life to the physical body. Man can use the organization of this etheric body just as he can that of the physical. This etheric body draws ideas from the supersensible world, just as the physical body does, through the senses, from the sense world. The ancient philosophers developed their ideas through this etheric body, and as the spiritual life of man has lost this etheric body and its knowledge, Philosophy has simultaneously lost its character of reality. We must first of all recover the knowledge of etheric man, and then Philosophy will be able to regain its character of reality. This must mark the first of the steps to be taken by Anthroposophy.

Cosmology once upon a time showed man how he is a member of the universe. To this end it was necessary that not only his body but also his soul and spirit could be regarded as members of the Cosmos; and this was the case because in the Cosmos things of the soul and things of the spirit were visible. In later times, however, Cosmology has become only a superstructure of Natural Science gained by Mathematics, Observation and Experiment.

The results of research in these lines are put together to make a picture of cosmic development, and from this picture one can no doubt understand the human physical body. But the etheric body remains unintelligible, and in a still higher sense that part of man which has to do with the Soul and the Spirit. The etheric body can only be recognized as a member of the Cosmos, if the etheric essence of the Cosmos is clearly perceived. But this etheric part of the Cosmos can, after all, give man no more than an etheric organization, whereas in the Soul is internal life; so we have to take into consideration also the internal life of the Cosmos. This is just what the old Cosmology did, and it was because of this view of it that the soul-essence of man which transcends the etheric was made a part of the Cosmos.

Modern spiritual life fails, however, to see the reality of the inner life of the Soul. In modern experience, this contains no guarantee that it has an existence beyond birth and death. All one knows to-day of the soul-life can have its origin in and with the physical body through the life of the embryo

and the subsequent unfolding in childhood and can end with death. There was something in the older human wisdom for the soul of man of which modern knowledge is only a reflection; and this was looked upon as the astral being in man. It was not what the soul experiences in its activities of thinking, feeling and volition, but rather something which is reflected in thinking, feeling and volition.

One cannot imagine thinking, feeling and volition as having a part in the Cosmos, for these live only in the physical nature of man. On the other hand the astral nature can be comprehended as a member of the Cosmos, for this enters the physical nature at birth and leaves it at death. That element which, during life between birth and death, is concealed behind thought, feeling and volition — namely the astral body — is the cosmic element of man.

Because modern knowledge has lost this astral element of man, it has also lost a Cosmology which could comprise the whole of man. There remains only a physical Cosmology, and even this contains no more than the origins of physical man. It is necessary once more to found a knowledge of astral man, and then we shall also again have a Cosmology which includes the whole human being.

So the second step of Anthroposophy is marked out.

Religion in its original meaning is based on that experience whereby man feels himself independent not only of his physical and etheric nature, the cause of his existence between birth and death, but also of the Cosmos, in so far as this has an influence on such an existence.

The content of this experience constitutes the real spirit-men, that being at which our word 'Ego' now only hints. This 'Ego' once connoted for man something which knew itself to be independent of all corporeality, and independent of the astral nature. Through such an experience man felt himself to be in a world of which the one which gives him body and soul is but an image; he felt a connection with a divine world. Now knowledge of this world remains hidden to observation according to the senses. Knowledge of etheric and astral man leads gradually to a vision of it.

In the use of his senses man must feel himself separated from the divine world, to which belongs his inmost being: but through supersensible cognition he puts himself once more in touch with this world. So supersensible cognition merges into Religion.

In order that this may be the case, we must be able to see the real nature of the 'Ego', and this power has been lost to modern knowledge. Even philosophers see in the 'Ego' only the synthesis of soul experiences. But the idea which they have thereby of the 'Ego', the spiritual man, is contradicted by every sleep; for in sleep the content of this 'Ego' is extinguished. A consciousness which knows only such an 'Ego' cannot merge into Religion on the strength of its knowledge, for it has nothing to resist the extinction of sleep. However, knowledge of the true 'Ego' has been lost to modern spiritual life, and with it the possibility to attain to Religion through knowledge.

The religion that was once available is now something taken from tradition, to which human knowledge has no longer any approach. Religion in this way becomes the content of a Faith which is to be gained outside the sphere of scientific experience. Knowledge and Faith become two separate kinds of experience of something which once was a unity.

We must first re-establish a clear cognition and knowledge of the true 'Ego', if Religion is to have its proper place in the life of mankind. In modern Science man is understood as a true reality only in respect of his physical nature. He must be recognized further as etheric, astral and spiritual or 'Ego' man and then Science will become the basis of religious life.

So is the third step of Anthroposophy worked out.

It will now be the task of the subsequent lectures to show the possibility of acquiring knowledge of the etheric part of man, that is to say, of clothing Philosophy with reality; it will be my further business to point out the way to the knowledge of the astral part of man, that is to say, to demonstrate that a Cosmology is possible which embraces humanity; and finally will come the task to lead you to the knowledge of the 'true Ego', in order to establish the possibility of a religious life, which rests on the basis of knowledge or cognition.

## 2 - Exercises Of Thought, Feeling And Volition

Philosophy did not arise in the same way in which it is continued in modern times. In these days it is a connection of ideas which are not experienced in one's inner being, in the soul, in such a manner that a man, conscious of self, feels himself in these ideas as in a reality. Therefore we seek after all possible theoretical means to prove that the philosophic content does refer to a reality. But this way leads only to different philosophic systems, and of these one can say they are right to a certain extent; for mostly the grounds on which they are refuted are of as much value as those on which it is sought to prove them.

Now with Anthroposophy it is a question not of attaining the reality of the philosophic content by theoretic thought, but by the cultivation of a method which on the one hand is similar to that by which in ancient times Philosophy was won, and on the other, is as consciously exact as the mathematical and natural scientific method of more recent times.

The ancient method was semi-conscious. Compared with the condition of full consciousness of the modern scientific thinker it had something almost dreamy. It existed not in such dreams as concealed indirectly by their very nature their real content, but in waking dreams, which pointed to reality precisely by means of this content. Nor had such a soul-content the abstract character of the modern presentation, but rather that of picture-making.

Such a soul-content must be regained, but in full consciousness, according to the modern stage of human evolution; exactly in the same sense of consciousness as we find in scientific thought. Anthroposophical research seeks to attain this in a first stage of supersensible knowledge in the condition of 'imaginative consciousness'.

It is reached through a process of meditation in the soul. This leads the entire force of the soul-life to presentations which are easily visualized and held fast in a state of rest. By this means we finally realize, if such a process is constantly repeated over a sufficient period of time, how the soul in its experience becomes free from the body. We see clearly that the thought of ordinary consciousness is a reflection of a spiritual activity which remains unconscious as such, after having become so by the incorporation of the human physical organism in its course.

All ordinary thinking is dependent on the supersensible spiritual activity which is reproduced in the physical organism. But at the same time we are conscious only of what the physical organism allows us to be conscious of. The spiritual activity can be separated from the physical organism by meditation, and the soul then experiences the supersensible in a super-sensible way; no longer the physical but the etheric organism is the background of the soul's experience. We have a presentation before our soul's consciousness with the character of a picture.

We have before us in this kind of presentation pictures of the powers which, coming from the supersensible are the basis of the organism as its powers of growth, and also as the very powers which function in the regulation of the processes of nourishment. We gain in these pictures a real vision of the life-forces. This is the stage of 'imaginative cognition'. This is life in the etheric human organism, and with our own etheric organism we live in the etheric Cosmos. There is between the etheric



organism and the etheric Cosmos no such sharp distinction relating to subjective and objective as there is in physical thought about the things of the world.

This 'imaginative knowledge' is the means whereby we can recall the very substantial reality of ancient Philosophy, but we can also conceive a new Philosophy, and a real conception of Philosophy can only come into being by means of this imaginative knowledge. And when this Philosophy is once there it can be grasped and understood by the ordinary consciousness; for it speaks out of 'imaginative' experience in a form which springs from spiritual (etheric) reality, and whose reality-content can, through the ordinary consciousness, be recalled in experience.

A higher activity of knowledge which is forthcoming when meditation is extended, is required for Cosmology. Not only is intensive quietness cultivated on a soul-content or subject matter but also a fully conscious stationary condition of the quiet, content-less soul. This is after the meditative soul-content or subject matter has been banished from the consciousness. The stage 'is reached where the spiritual content of the Cosmos flows into the empty soul — the stage of 'inspired cognition'. We have in part of us a spiritual Cosmos, just as we have a physical Cosmos before the senses.

We succeed in seeing, in the powers of the spiritual Cosmos, what takes place spiritually between man and the Cosmos in the process of breathing. In this and the other rhythmic processes of man we find the physical reproduction of what exists in the spiritual sphere in human astral organization. We attain to the vision of how this astral organism has its place in the spiritual Cosmos outside the life on earth, and how it takes on the cloak of the physical organism through embryonic life and birth, to lay it down again in death. By means of this knowledge we can distinguish between heredity, which is an earthly phenomenon, and that which man brings with him from the spiritual world.

In this way, through 'inspired knowledge', we attain to a Cosmology which can embrace man in respect of his psychic and spiritual existence. Inspired knowledge is cultivated in the astral organism because we experience an existence outside our bodies in the Cosmos of the Spirit. But the same thing happens in the etheric organism; and we can translate this knowledge into human speech in the images which present themselves in this sphere, and we can harmonize it with the content of Philosophy. So we get a Cosmic Philosophy.

For Religious Cognition a third thing is necessary. We must dive down into those existences which reveal themselves in picture form as the content of 'inspired knowledge'; and this is attained when we add 'Soul-exercises of the Will' to the kind of meditation which we have till now been describing. For instance, we attempt to present to ourselves events which in the physical world have a definite course, but in reverse order, from the end to the beginning.

Doing this we separate the soul-life, through a process of will which is not used in ordinary consciousness from the cosmic externals, and let the soul sink into those Beings which manifest themselves by inspiration. We attain true intuition, a union with beings of a spiritual world. These experiences of intuition are reflected in etheric and also in physical man, and produce in this reflection the subject matter of religious consciousness.

Through this 'intuitive cognition' we gain a vision of the true nature of the Ego, which in reality is

sunk into the spiritual world. The Ego which we know in ordinary consciousness is only a quite faint reflection of its true proportions. Intuition provides the possibility of feeling the connection of this faint reflection with the divine primal universe, to which in its true shape it belongs.

Moreover, we are enabled to see how spiritual man,, the true Ego, has his place in the spiritual world, when he is sunk in sleep. In this condition the physical and etheric organisms require the rhythmic processes for their own regeneration. In a waking condition the Ego lives in this rhythm and in the metabolic processes that are a part of it; in the condition of sleep, the rhythm and the metabolic processes of man have a life of their own as physical and etheric organisms; and the astral organisms and the Ego then take their place in the spirit world.

The translation of man into this world by inspired and intuitive knowledge is conscious; he lives in a spiritual Cosmos, just as by his senses he lives in a physical Cosmos. He can speak of the content of the religious consciousness from knowledge, and he can do this because what he experiences in the spiritual sphere is reflected in the physical and etheric man. Moreover, the reflected pictures can be expressed in speech, and in this form have a meaning which throws religious light on the human disposition of ordinary consciousness.

Thus we reach the heart of Philosophy by imaginative cognition, of Cosmology by inspiration, and of the religious life through intuition. Besides that already described, the following soul-exercise helps towards attaining intuition. One tries so to grasp the life, which otherwise unconsciously unfolds itself from one human age to another, that one consciously contracts habits which one did not have before, or consciously changes such as one had.

The greater the effort that such a change necessitates, the better it is for gaining intuitive knowledge; for these changes bring about a loosening of the will-power from the physical and etheric organism. We bind the will to the astral organism and to the true form of the Ego and consciously immerse both of them into the spirit world.

What we may call 'abstract thought' has been perfected only in the modern spiritual development of mankind. In earlier periods of evolution this kind of thought was unknown to man, though it is necessary to the development of human spiritual activity, because it frees the power of thought from the picture-form. We achieve the possibility of thinking through the physical organism, though such thinking is not rooted in a real world; only in an apparent world where the processes of Nature can be copied without man himself contributing anything to these pictures.

We attain a copy of Nature, which, qua copy, can be genuine, because the life in the thought-copy is not in itself reality, but only apparent reality. But the moral impulses can also be taken up into this pseudo-thought, so that they exercise no compulsion on man. The moral impulses are themselves real because they come from the spirit world; the manner in which man experiences them in his apparent world enables him to adapt himself in accordance with them, or not. They themselves exercise no compulsion on him either through his body or his soul.

So man strides on; thought which was in ancient times completely bound to the unconsciously imagined, inspired and intuitive knowledge, thought in which the subject matter was laid as open as

Imagination and Inspiration and Intuition themselves, becomes abstract thought conducted through the physical organism. In this thought, which has a pseudo-life, because it is spirit substance translated into the physical world, man has the possibility of developing an objective nature-knowledge and his own moral freedom.

More details on this subject you will find in my Philosophy of Spirit Activity, my Knowledge of Higher Worlds and how to attain it, Theosophy, Occult Science, etc. What is necessary in order to return to a Philosophy, a Cosmology and a Religion that embrace all man, is to enter upon the province of an exact clairvoyance in Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition; and this consciously — that is in contradistinction to the old dreamlike clairvoyance. Man attains to his full consciousness in the province of a life of abstract presentations. It remains to him, in the further advance of humanity, to bring this full consciousness of the spiritual world to bear on his daily life.

In this must true human progress in future consist.

### 3 - Methods Of Imaginative, Inspired And Intuitive Knowledge Or Cognition

The inner life of man assumes another form from that of ordinary consciousness when it enters upon imaginative knowledge. His relationship to the world is also changed. This change is brought about by the concentration of all the powers of the soul on a presentation-complex which can easily be seen in its entirety.

This last condition is necessary to avoid any kind of unconscious process playing a part in the meditation; for in this everything must come to pass only within the psychic and spiritual spheres. The man who thinks out a mathematical problem can be fairly certain that he is employing only psychic-spiritual forces. Unconscious memories, influenced by feeling or will, will not enter into it. It must be the same with Meditation.

If we take for it a thought which is brought up out of memory, we cannot know how much at the same time we introduce into the consciousness from the physical, or instinctive, or unconsciously psychical, and cause it to react in the soul on the presentation during meditation. It is, therefore, best to choose for a subject of meditation something which one knows for certain to be quite new to the soul. If we seek advice on this point from an experienced spiritual investigator, he will lay particular stress on this.

He will recommend a subject which is perfectly simple and which quite certainly cannot have occurred to us before. It is of no importance that the subject should even correspond with some known fact taken from the world of the senses. We can take as an idea something pictorial, but not necessarily representing a picture of the outer world, e.g., 'In Light lives streaming Wisdom'. It depends on the power of reposeful meditation with such an image-presentation.

The spiritual and psychic powers are strengthened by such a calm meditation just as the muscles are strengthened by performing a piece of work. The meditation can be short at a time, but it must be repeated over a long period to be successful. With one person success can be attained after a few weeks, with another only after years, according to natural predisposition.

The man who wishes to be a true Spiritual Investigator must do such exercises systematically and intensively. The first result of meditation in the way here indicated is that the man who practises it has through his inner life a greater control over the statements of a Spiritual Investigator than the man of ordinary healthy intellect, though the latter, if sufficiently unfettered and unprejudiced, is also quite capable of such control.

Meditation must call to its aid the exercise in character strengthening, inner truthfulness, calmness of soul, self-possession and deliberation. For only then, when it is thoroughly imbued with these qualities, will the soul gradually imprint on the whole human organization what in meditation appears as a process.

When success is reached by means of such exercises, we find ourselves in the etheric organism. The thought-experience receives a new form. We experience the thoughts not only in the abstract form as before, but in such a way that one feels the power in them. Thoughts of former experience can only be

thoughts, they have no power to stimulate action. Whereas the thoughts we now have as much power as the powers of growth which accompany man from childhood to maturity, and just for this reason it is necessary to carry out meditation in the right way. For if unconscious forces intervene in it, if it is not an act of complete and deliberate thoughtfulness, and done in self-possession taking a purely psychic and spiritual course, impulses are developed which step in as do the natural powers of growth in our own human organism.

This must in no wise occur. Our own physical and etheric organism must remain completely untouched by meditation. The right kind of, meditation enables us to live with the newly-developed power of thought-content quite outside our own physical and etheric organism. We have the etheric experience; and our organism itself attains to a personal experience of a relationship with a relative objectivity.

We look at it (our organism) and in the form of thought it radiates back what we experience in the ether. This experience is healthy if we arrive at the condition in which we can with complete freedom of choice alternate between an existence in the ether and one in our physical body. The condition is not right if there is something which forces us into the etheric existence. We must be able to be in ourselves and outside ourselves in accordance with perfectly free orientation.

The first experience which we can win through such an inner labour is a review of the course of our own past life on earth. We see it as it has progressed by means of the powers of growth from childhood upwards. We see it in thought-pictures which are condensed into powers of growth. They are not simply remembered scenes of our own life which we have before us. They are pictures of an etheric course of events, which have happened in our own existence, without having been taken into the ordinary consciousness. That which the consciousness and memory hold is only the abstract accompanying appearance of the real course. It is, as it were, a surface wave which is in its shape the result of something deeper.

In the process of viewing this progress the working of the etheric Cosmos on man is brought out. We can experience this work as the subject-matter of Philosophy. It is wisdom, not in the abstract form of the conception, but rather in the form of the working of the etheric in the Cosmos.

In ordinary consciousness it is only the young child who has not yet learnt to speak who is in the same relationship to the Cosmos as the man who uses his imagination correctly. The child has not yet separated the powers of thought from the general (etheric) powers of growth. This happens only when he learns to speak. Then the powers of abstract thought are separated from the universal powers of growth which alone were previously present. In the course of his later life man has these powers of abstract thought, but they are part of his physical organism, and are not taken up into his etheric being. He cannot, therefore, bring his relationship to the etheric world into his consciousness. He can learn to do this through Imagination.

A quite small child is an unconscious philosopher; the 'imaginative philosopher' is again a small child, but wakened to full consciousness.

Through the exercise of 'Inspiration' a new capacity is added to those already developed, namely, the

capacity to obliterate from the consciousness pictures which have been dwelt upon in meditation. It must be clearly emphasized that here the capacity must be developed again to obliterate when one likes pictures which have previously been taken up in meditation by one's freewill. It is not enough to obliterate presentations which have not been implanted in the consciousness by free choice. It requires a greater psychic effort to abolish pictures which have been created in meditation than to extinguish those which have entered into the consciousness in another way. And we need this greater effort to advance in supersensible knowledge.

On such lines we achieve a wakeful, but quite empty soul-life; we remain in conscious wakefulness. If this condition is experienced in full thoughtfulness the soul becomes filled with spiritual facts, as through the senses it is filled with physical. And this is the condition of 'Inspiration'. We live an inner life in the Cosmos just as we live an inner life in the physical organism. But we are aware that we are experiencing the cosmic life, that the spiritual things and processes of the Cosmos are being revealed to us as our own inner soul-life.

Now the possibility must have remained of always momentarily exchanging this inner experience of the Cosmos with the condition of ordinary consciousness. For then we can always relate what we experience in Inspiration to something we experience in ordinary consciousness. We see in the Cosmos that is perceived by the senses a reproduction of what we have spiritually experienced. The process may be compared with that by which one compares a new experience in life with a memory-picture which rises in the consciousness. The spiritual outlook which we have won is like the new experience, and the physical view of the Cosmos like the memory-picture.

This spiritual outlook, thus attained, differs from the imaginative. In the latter we have general pictures of an etheric occurrence; in the former, pictures appear of spiritual beings who live and move in this etheric occurrence. What we know in the physical world as Sun and Moon, Planets and Fixed Stars, these we find again as Cosmic beings; and our own psychic-spiritual experience appears enclosed in the orbit of these cosmic essences. The physical organism of man now becomes intelligible for the first time, for not only all that his senses take in contributes to its shape and life, but also the beings who work creatively in the affairs of the sense-world.

Everything which is thus experienced through inspiration remains completely shut out from the ordinary consciousness. Man would only be conscious of it if he experienced the process of breathing in the same way as he experienced the process of observation. The cosmic disposition between man and world remains hidden for ordinary consciousness. The Yoga-philosophy seeks the road to a Cosmology whereby the process of breathing is transformed into a process of observation. Modern western man should not imitate that. In the course of human evolution he has entered upon an organization which for him excludes such Yoga-exercises.

He would never through them get quite away from his organism, and so would not satisfy the requirement to leave untouched his physical and etheric organism. Such practices corresponded with a period of evolution which has gone by. But what was attained by them had to be gained in the same way as has just been described for inspired knowledge; the method, that is, of experiencing in a state of full consciousness what in past times man had to experience in waking dreams.

If the Philosopher is a child with fully-developed consciousness, the Cosmologist must become in a fully conscious way a man of past ages, in which the Spirit of the Cosmos could still be seen by means of natural faculties.

In 'Intuition' man is completely translated — through the exercises of the Will described last time — together with his consciousness into the objective world of the cosmic, spiritual beings. He attains a condition of experience which alone on earth the first men had. They were in as close a connection with the inwardness of their cosmic surroundings as they were with the processes of their own bodies. And these processes were not completely unconscious as with modern man. They were reflected in the soul.

Man felt in the soul his growth, and the chemical changes of his body, as in waking dream-pictures. And this experience enabled him to feel also the processes of his cosmic circumstances with their spiritual inwardness as in a dream. He had dreamlike intuition of which we find to-day only an echo in some people specially inclined to it. The world around him was, in the consciousness of primitive man, both material and spiritual; and what he experienced then in a semi-dream state was for him religious revelation, a direct continuation of the other aspects of his life.

These experiences in the spirit world, of which primitive man was only half conscious, remain completely unknown to modern man. The man with supersensible, intuitive knowledge brings them into his full consciousness, and so in a new way he is transported back to the condition of primitive man, who still derived the religious content from his world-consciousness.

As the Philosopher resembles the fully-conscious child, and the Cosmologist the fully-conscious man of a past middle human period, so the man with religious cognition in a modern sense resembles primitive man, except that he experiences the spiritual world in his soul, not as in a dream, but with full consciousness.

## 4 - Exercises Of Cognition And Will

We said that for the development of 'inspired cognition' one of the basic exercises is to banish from the consciousness pictures which have arisen in it in meditation or in the sequel to the process of meditation. But this exercise is really only a preliminary one to another. By the banishing we get to the point of visualizing the course of our life in the way our last survey demonstrated. We attain also to a view of the spiritual Cosmos in so far as this can express itself in etheric life.

We receive a picture of the living etheric Cosmos projected on to the human being. We see how everything which we can call heredity passes on in a continuous process from the physical organisms of the ancestors to the physical organisms of posterity. But we see also how a repeatedly new effect of the etheric cosmos occurs for the facts of the etheric organism. This fresh effect from the etheric cosmos works in opposition to heredity. It is of a kind which affects only the individual man. It is specially important for the teacher to have an insight into these things.

To progress in supernatural knowledge it is necessary to perfect the exercise of banishing the imaginative pictures more and more. Through it the energy of the soul for this banishing is continually strengthened. For at first we attain only to a review of the course of our life since birth. What we have there before us is indeed something psychic and spiritual, but at the same time it is not something which can be said to have an existence beyond the physical life of man.

In continuing these exercises of inspiration it becomes clear that the power of obliterating the imaginative pictures grows ever greater, and later becomes so great that the whole picture of one's life's course can be banished from the consciousness. We then have a consciousness that is freed also from the content of our own physical and etheric human nature.

Into this in a higher sense empty consciousness there then enters through a higher inspiration a picture of the psychic-spiritual nature as it was before man left the psychic-spiritual world for the physical, and there formed union with the body which exists through conception and the development of the embryo. We get a vision of how the astral and Ego-organization covers itself with an etheric organization which comes from the etheric Cosmos, and with a physical one which arises from the sequence of heredity.

Only in this way do we acquire knowledge of the eternal inner being of man, which during his life on earth exists in the reflection of the soul's imagination, feeling and. Will. But we acquire also through it the idea of the true nature of this imaginative presentation; for in point of fact this is not present in its true shape within the limits of the earth-life.

Look at a human corpse. It has the shape and the limbs of a man, but life has gone out of it. If we understand the nature of the corpse, we do not regard it as an end in itself, but as the remains of a living physical man. The external forces of Nature, to which the corpse is surrendered, can destroy it well enough; but they cannot construct it. In the same Way, from a higher stage of vision, one recognizes earthly human thought to be the dead remains of that living thought which belonged to man before he was transplanted from his existence in the spiritual, psychic world into his life on earth. The nature of earthly thought is as little comprehensible from itself as the form of the human



organism is from the forces which work in the corpse. We must recognize earthly thought as dead thought, if we want to recognize it rightly.

If we are on the way to such a recognition, we can then also completely see the nature of earthly will. This is recognized in a certain sense as a more recent part of the soul. That which is hidden behind the will stands to thought in the same relationship as, in the physical organism, the baby does to the old man on his deathbed. Only with the soul, babyhood and old age do not develop in sequence after one another, but exist side by side.

We see, however, from what has been explained, certain results for a Philosophy which intends to form its ideas only on the experience of life on earth. It receives as contents only dead, or at least, expiring ideas. Its duty therefore can be only to recognize the dead character of the thought-world and to draw conclusions from what is dead on the basis of something which was once living. Just so far as one keeps to the method of intelligible proof, one can have no other aim. This purely 'intellectual' Philosophy therefore, can lead to the true nature of the soul only indirectly. It can examine the nature of human thought and recognize its transitoriness, and so it can indirectly show that something dead points to something living, as the corpse points to a living man.

Only 'inspired cognition' can arrive at a real vision of what is the true soul. The corpse of thought is again animated in a certain sense through exercises for this inspiration. We are not, it is true, transferred back completely into the condition that existed before life on earth began; but we bring to life in us a true picture of this condition, from the nature of which we can realize that it is projected out of a pre-terrestrial existence into a terrestrial one.

By means of developing intuition by exercises of the Will it comes about that the pre-terrestrial existence which had in thought died out during the earth-life is brought to life again in the subconscious mind. Through these exercises man is brought into a condition by means of which he enters upon the world of the spiritual, apart from his physical and etheric organism. He experiences what existence is after the dissolution from the body; he is given a pre-vision of what really happens after death. He can speak of the continuity of the spiritual part of the soul after going through the gates of death.

Again the purely intellectual conceptual Philosophy can attain to the recognition of the immortality of the soul only by an indirect way. As it recognizes in thought something that can be compared with a dead body, so in the will it can establish something comparable with a seed. Something that has life in itself, which points beyond the dissolution of the body, because its nature shows itself, even during life on earth, independent of it.

So, since we do not stand still at thought, but use all soul-life as experience of self, we can reach an indirect realization of the everlasting nucleus of the human being. Further we must not limit our contemplation to thought, but subject the interchange of thought with the other forces of the soul to philosophical methods of proof. But still with all this we come only to experience the everlasting human nucleus as it is in the earth-life, and not to a vision of the condition of the human spirit and the human soul before and after it.

This is the case, for instance, with Bergson's Philosophy, which rests on a comprehensive self-experience of what is evident in the earth-life, but which refuses to step into the region of real supersensible knowledge.

Every Philosophy which remains within the sphere of the ordinary consciousness can reach only an indirect knowledge of the true nature of the human soul.

Cosmology if it is to be of a kind that the total human being is influenced through it, can be acquired only through the imaginative, inspired and intuitive knowledge. Within ordinary consciousness it has only the testimony for the human soul-life that dies out and re-awakens like seed. From this fact it can formulate ideas based on unprejudiced observations which point to something Cosmic, and lay it open. Still, these ideas are only that which pours into the inner being of man from the spiritual Cosmos, and moreover reveals itself in a changed form within him. Philosophy indeed had in former times a branch called Cosmology. But the real subject matter of this Cosmology were ideas which had become very abstract, which had by tradition subsisted from old forms of Cosmology.

Humanity had developed these ideas at a time when an old dream-like Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition still existed. They were taken out of their tradition and woven into the material of pure intellectual, logical or dialectic demonstration. Men were often quite unconscious of the fact that these ideas were borrowed; they were considered new and original. Gradually it was found that in the inner life of the spirit no real inner connection with these ideas existed. Therefore this 'rational Cosmology' fell almost completely into discredit. It had to give place to the physical Cosmology, built up on the nature-knowledge of the physical senses, which, however, to the unprejudiced eye, no longer embraced man in its scope.

A true Cosmology can arise again only when imaginative, inspired and intuitive knowledge are allowed their place, and their results applied to the knowledge of the universe.

What has had to be said concerning Cosmology applies still more to knowledge of a religious kind. Here we have to build up knowledge which has its origins in the experience of the spiritual world. To draw conclusions concerning such experience from the subject-matter of ordinary consciousness is impossible. In intellectual concepts the religious content cannot be opened out but only clarified. When one began to seek for proofs of God's existence, the very search was a proof that one had already lost the living connection with the divine world. For this reason also no intellectualistic proof of God's existence can be given in any satisfactory way.

Any theory formed from the ordinary consciousness alone is obliged to work into an individual system ideas borrowed from tradition. Formerly, philosophers tried to get also a 'rational Theology' from this ordinary consciousness. But this compared with the Theology based on traditional ideas suffered the same fate as 'rational Cosmology', only still more so. Whatever came to light as a direct 'God-experience' remains in the world of feeling or will, and in fact prevents the transition to any method of conceptual proof.

Philosophy itself has fallen into the error of seeing in a purely historical religion religious forms which have existed and still exist. It does this from an incapacity to attain through the ordinary

consciousness to ideas on a subject which can be experienced only outside the physical and etheric organism.

A new basis for the knowledge of the religious life can be won only by a recognition of the imaginative, inspired and intuitive methods, and by the application of their results to this life.

## 5 - Experiences Of The Soul In Sleep

We speak to-day of the 'Unconscious' or 'Subconscious', when we wish to signify that the soul-experiences of ordinary consciousness — observation, representation, realization, volition — are dependent on a state which is not included in this consciousness. That knowledge which would base itself only on these experiences can no doubt, by logical sequence of argument, point to such a 'subconscious'; but that is all it can do. It can bring no contribution to a definition of the unconscious.

The imaginative, inspired and intuitive knowledge which has been described in the foregoing considerations, can give such a definition. Now we shall try to do the same for the soul-experiences of man during sleep.

The sleep-experiences of the soul do not enter upon ordinary consciousness, for this rests on the basis of the physical organization; and during sleep the experience of the soul is outside the body. When in waking the soul begins, with the help of the body, to imagine, to feel, and to will, it joins up in its memory with those experiences which took place before sleep on the basis of the physical organization. The experiences of sleep reveal themselves only to Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. They do not appear in the guise of memory, but as if in a psychic review of it.

I shall now have to describe what is revealed in this review. Because it is hid from ordinary consciousness, such a description of this review must, when the consciousness is faced with it unprepared, naturally appear grotesque. But the foregoing explanations have shown that such a description is possible, and how it is to be taken. Although it may even be laughed at from some quarter or another, I shall give it as it emerges from the states of consciousness already described.

At first, in falling asleep, a man finds himself in an inwardly vague, undifferentiated state of being. He sees there no difference between his own being and that of the universe; nor any between separate objects or people. His state of existence is universal and vague. Taken up into the imaginative consciousness, this experience becomes an 'Ego-feeling', in which the 'universe-feeling' is included. He has left the sphere of the senses, and has not yet clearly entered upon another world.

We shall now have to use expressions such as 'Feeling', 'longing', etc., which also in ordinary life refer to something known; and yet we shall have to use them to denote processes which remain unknown to the ordinary soul-life. But the soul experiences them as facts during sleep. Think, for instance, how in daily life joy is experienced consciously. Physically an enlargement of the small blood vessels takes place, and other things, and this enlargement is a fact; when it takes place, joy is consciously felt. Similarly, the soul goes through real experiences in sleep; and this will be described in terms which refer to corresponding experience of the imaginative, inspired and intuitive consciousness. If, for example, we speak of 'longing' we shall mean an actual soul-process which is imaginatively revealed as longing. Thus the unconscious states and experiences of the soul will be described as if they were conscious.

Simultaneously with the feeling of vagueness and the absence of differentiation, there arises in the soul a longing for rest in what is spiritual and divine. The human soul evolves this longing as a counterbalance to the feeling of being lost in infinity. Having lost the sphere of the senses, it craves

for a state out of the spiritual world that will support it.

Dreams interweave themselves into the state of soul just described. They traverse the unconscious with half-conscious experiences. The real form of sleep experiences is not made clearer through ordinary dreams, but still less clear. This lack of clearness applies also to the imaginative consciousness if this latter is clouded by dreams arising spontaneously. One perceives the truth on the further side of life both awake and in dream by means of that conception of the soul which is attained by free will through the exercises previously explained.

The next state through which the soul lives then is like a division or partition of itself into inner happenings which are differentiated from each other. During this period of sleep, the soul feels itself to be not a unity but an inner plurality, and this state is one suffused with anxiety. Were it felt consciously, it would be soul-fear. But the human soul experiences the real counterpart of this anxiety every night, though remaining unconscious of it.

In the case of modern man there appears at this moment of sleep the soul-saving effect which corresponds in the waking condition to his self surrender to Christ. It was different, of course, before the events of Golgotha. Then men, when awake, received from their religious beliefs the antidote which carried over into the condition of sleep and was the medicine for this fear. For the man who lives after the events of Golgotha are substituted the religious experiences which he has in the contemplation of the life and death and being of Christ.

He overcomes his fears through the working of this into his sleep. This fear prevents, as long as it is present, the inner vision of that which should be experienced by the soul in sleep, as the body prevents it in the waking state. The leadership of Christ overcomes the inner division and transforms the plurality into a unity. And the soul comes now to the point of having an inner life different from that of the waking condition. The physical and etheric organisms belong now to its outer world. On the other hand in its present inner self it experiences a reflection of the planetary movements.

The soul experiences something cosmic in place of the individual, conditioned by the physical and etheric organisms. The soul lives outside the body; and its inner life is an inner reflection of the planetary motions. This being so, the inspired consciousness is aware of the corresponding inner processes in the manner which has been described in our previous studies.

This consciousness perceives also how that which the soul receives through its contact with the planets continues to have an after-effect in the consciousness after waking. This planetary influence continues in awakesness as a stimulant in the rhythm of breathing and blood-circulation. During sleep the physical and etheric organisms are subjected to the effect of the planet-stimulation, which by day influence them, as described, as the after-effect of the previous night.

There are other experiences side by side with these. In this phase of its sleep-existence, the soul experiences its relation to all human souls with which it had come into contact in earthly life. Considered intuitively this leads to certainty on the subject of repeated earth life; for these earth-lives reveal themselves in their relation to the soul. And the connection with other spirit-beings, which live in the world without ever assuming a human body, is also one of the soul's experiences. But in this

condition of sleep the soul experiences also what point to good and evil tendencies, and good and evil events in the predestined course of earthly life. In fact, what older philosophers have termed 'Karma' is now presented to the soul.

In daily life all these happenings of the soul have so much effect that they help to cause the feelings, the general mood of the soul, of happiness or unhappiness.

In the further course of sleep another state of the soul is added to the one just described. It goes through a copy or imitation of state of the Twin Stars. As the bodily organs are sensed in waking, so a reconstructing of the fixed constellations is now attempted. The cosmic experience of the soul is widening. It is now a spirit amongst spirits. 'Intuition' sees the sun and the other fixed stars as physical projections of spirits, in the manner just described. These adventures of the soul reverberate during daily life as its religious leanings, its religious feeling and willing. It can be said indeed that the religious longing, stirring in the depth of the soul, is in awake life the aftermath of the stellar experience during the state of sleep.

But it is significant above all that in this state the soul is faced with the facts of life and death. It sees itself as a spirit-being, entering into a physical body through conception and the life of the cell, and unconsciously it sees the event of death as a passing over into a purely spiritual world. That the soul in its waking state cannot believe in the reality of what outwardly represents itself to the senses as the events of birth and death is therefore not only the imaginative picturing of a longing but a vaguely-felt reliving through things presented to the soul in sleep.

If man could recall to his consciousness everything he lives through unconsciously from falling asleep to waking up, he would have a consciousness-content giving the experiences of truth to his philosophical ideas in the first occurrence in which sense-phenomena merge into a universal inner cosmic life, and in which a kind of pantheistic knowledge of God occurs. If he was conscious of this planet and fixed-star life of sleep he would indeed have a cosmology full of content. And the conclusion could be formed from the experience of star-life, that a human being has a life as spirit among spirits.

From falling asleep, through further states of sleep, man actually becomes an unconscious philosopher, cosmologist, and God-filled being. From the depths of experiences otherwise only possible in sleep, 'Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition' lift up that which shows what kind of being man himself really is; how he is part of the Cosmos and how he becomes one with God.

This last happens to man in the deepest stage of sleep. From there the soul begins to return to the world of the senses. In the impulse leading to this return the intuitive consciousness recognizes the activity of those spirit beings which have their physical counterpart in the moon. The spiritual moon-activities are the ones recalling men in their sleep back to their presence on earth. Naturally these same lunar activities are also present in the New Moon. But the transformation of whatever changes visibly in the moon has its significance concerning the part lunar activities play in man's holding on to his earthly life from birth or conception to death.

After the deepest state of sleep man returns to his waking state through the same intermediate states.

Before awakening he goes once more through experiencing the universal world state, and the longing for God, in which dreams can play their part.

## **6 - Transference From The Psycho-Spiritual To The Physical Sense-Life In Man's Development**

In the previous studies it was shown how a view of the eternal psycho-spiritual inner being of man can be attained through inspired and intuitive approach. Attention was drawn to the fact that the inner life of man was filled by reflections of cosmic happenings. In the last survey it was shown how man lives through such cosmic reconstructions during sleep. Man's inner world becomes the external world and vice versa: the spiritual part of the external world becomes an inner world.

During the state of sleep the physical and etheric organisms of man form an outer world for his psycho-spiritual nature. They remain there in the same way in which, in waking, they can become again the instrument of the psycho-spiritual man. Man carries the longing for these two organisms over into the sleeping state. As shown in the last review, this longing is connected with those spiritual activities of the Cosmos which are reflected physically in the appearances of the moon. Man is only subjected to these lunar activities through his being part of this earth. The contemplation of that state in which man finds himself in the purely spiritual world for a certain time before his turning towards earthly life makes it clear that then he is not subjected to the influences of these lunar activities.

In this state he does not recognize a physical and etheric human organism as belonging to him, as he does in sleep. But he recognizes them in other ways. He sees them as having their foundations in cosmic worlds, as growing out of the spiritual Cosmos. He contemplates a spiritual Cosmos which is the spiritual part of the cell of the physical organism, which at some future time he will put on. When we talk of a cell in this connection we designate something which in one sense is opposed to what we usually term cell. By 'Cell' we usually mean the small physical beginning of a growing organism. The spiritual organism on the other hand which man sees in connection with himself in his pre-earthly spiritual state, is large and contracts continually, as it were, to merge finally with the physical part of the cell.

In order to represent these relationships clearly we have to make use of expressions 'Large' and 'Small'. But we must remember all the time that the happenings of the spiritual world are spiritual and that for them space, in which physical happenings move, is non-existent. The expressions used therefore are only similes for something spiritual, entirely non-spatial, purely qualitative.

During his pre-earthly existence man lives in the cosmic creation which is the spiritual germ of his future physical organism, and this spiritual stage is regarded as in unity with the whole of the spiritual cosmos and reveals itself at the same time as the cosmic body of the individual human being. Man feels the spiritual cosmos as his own innate powers. His whole existence consists in his experiencing himself in this cosmos. But he does not experience only himself in it. For this cosmic existence does not separate him from the other life of the cosmos, as does later his physical organism. Over against this existence he is in a kind of Intuition. The existence of other spiritual beings is at the same time his own existence.

Man has his pre-earthly existence in the active recognition of the spirit-cell of his future physical organism. He himself prepares for this organism by working in the spirit world on the spirit-cell together with other spirits in the world of spirits.



As during his existence on earth he perceives through his senses a physical world round him in which he is active, so in his pre-earthly existence he perceives his physical organism being built in spirit; and his activity consists in helping its construction, just as his activity in the physical world consists in helping to shape the physical things of the outer world.

In the spirit-cell of the physical human body which the psycho-spiritual man experiences in his pre-earthly existence, a whole universe is present, no less manifold than the physical outer world of the senses. Indeed intuitive knowledge may well say that man, incorporated in his physical body, though unknown to himself, carries a universe of such magnificence that the physical world cannot be remotely compared with it.

This universe it is which man experiences in a spiritual manner in his pre-earthly state, and in which he is active. He experiences it in its growth, its mobility, but filled with spiritual beings.

He has a consciousness within this world; with the Powers active in the growth of this Universe his own are bound up. His consciousness is filled with the collaboration of these spiritual cosmic powers with his own power. The state of sleep is in a sense a reconstruction of his activity.

But in its course of sleep the physical organism exists as an exclusive form, or system apart from and independent of the psycho-spiritual man. Here contemplation lacks the active powers representing the content of consciousness in the pre-earthly state. Therefore the state remains unconscious.

In the further course of pre-earthly existence the conscious recognition of the growth of the future earth-organism becomes fainter. It never disappears completely from view, but it fades by degrees. It is as if man felt his own cosmic world get further and further away, as if he was growing out of it. What is at first a complete fusion with the spiritual beings of the cosmos now becomes only a revelation of these beings.

One might say that while at one time man had a true 'intuition' of the spiritual world, it is now changed into a real 'inspiration', in which his nature acts upon man, revealing itself from the outside. But with this a new phase begins within the psycho-spiritual man which might be identified with the 'missing' and the beginning of the 'longing for the lost'. Expressions like these are used only to describe conditions of the supernatural world in terms of the natural world.

In such a state of 'missing' and 'longing' the soul of man passes a later period of its pre-earthly existence. It no longer has consciousness of the full reality of experience of a spiritual world, but only of a revealed reflection thereof, with, as it were, less intensity of being.

The human soul is now getting ready to experience the spiritual lunar activities, which up to now were beyond its sphere. It thus obtains a being through which it makes itself independent of the other spirit-beings with whom it lived before. One might say that at first its experience was permeated by spirit, and by God, and that later it feels itself as an independent spiritual being; the cosmos is now felt as an outer world, even though the experiencing of this revelation of the Cosmos is still a very intense one during the first phases, and only develops into a fainter one by degrees.

In this experience man therefore leaves the existence permeated by spirit, and felt as reality, in order to enter one in which he is faced by a revealed spirit-cosmos. The first phase of this experience is the reality of that which later on appears as religious learning to one's perception. The second is the reality of what, if described, will result in a true Cosmology. For here the physical human organism is viewed also in its cosmic cell-form without which it cannot be comprehended.

In the later phases man loses the capacity of viewing the spirit cosmos, which becomes less clear to the 'spiritual eye'. On the other hand the experience of the inner soul which is connected with the spiritual lunar activities grows ever more intense. The human soul gets ready to receive from outside that which before she experienced within herself. The spiritual activity that has furthered the growth of the physical organism which man at first experienced consciously, is dropped by the organs of his soul, but it is transferred into the physical activity which reaches its climax in the reproductive development within the existence on earth.

The previous experience of the human soul is transferred into this development as its directing force. Now for some time the human soul has its place in the spiritual world, for she no longer takes part in the shaping of the physical human organism.

In this phase she becomes ripe to satisfy with the etheric cosmos that which in her is 'missing' something or 'longing' for it. She attracts the cosmic ether. And according to the faculties remaining to her, from her collaboration in the human Universe she forms her etheric organism. Thus man gets used to his etheric organism before his physical organism receives him on earth.

The events belonging to earthly existence and following an accomplished conception, and separated from the course of the last phases of the pre-earthly life of the soul, have brought the growth of the physical organism to physical cell-formation. With this the human soul which meanwhile has taken over her etheric organism, can unite. She can unite with it through the power of continued 'longing' and man thus begins his earthly career.

The experience of the human soul in taking unto itself the etheric organism, the increase in growth, as it were, of this organism out of the world-ether, is an experience foreign to earth, for it is passed through without the physical organism. It has it, however, as its 'longed-for' object. That which happens in the experience of the little child is an unconscious memory of this experience. But it is an active memory, an unconscious working of the physical organism which was once the inner world of the soul and now is the outer case of it.

The formative creative work which man unconsciously applies to his own organism during its growth is the visible sign of this active memory. What philosophy is searching for, and what she can only achieve as an inner reality by fully conscious imaginative treatment of the child's earliest experience, lies in this active unconscious memory. This explains in some measure the nature of philosophy which sometimes seems nearer and sometimes further away from the world.

## 7 - The Relationship Of Christ With Humanity

I attempted to show in my last observations how, in the realm of human evolution, the psycho-spiritual existence is transferred to that of the physical senses. Now it depends on the understanding which man can bring to bear on this transference whether he can gain a relationship, in accordance with modern consciousness, to the event of Golgotha and its reference to man's development on earth.

If one does not realize in one's own physical nature how something psycho-spiritual has so changed itself from a spiritual form of experience as to become manifest in the physical world of the senses, one will also never know how the Christ spirit coming from spirit worlds was made manifest in the man Jesus on earth.

But it must be once more emphasized that it is not a case of individual knowledge derived from observation, but rather of understanding with one's whole nature and being what observation has brought to light. Only a few men achieve the former, but the latter is possible to all. The man who realizes the worlds through which the human soul has passed in its pre-earthly existence, learns also to look up to Him who before the event of the mystery of Golgotha had lived as Christ only in those worlds, and who through this mystery and since its occurrence had united His life with mortal humanity.

Our earthly souls have attained the condition in which they now live only through a gradual development. Ordinary consciousness takes the condition of the soul as it is to-day and constructs a 'history', in which things are represented as if man in the grey dawn of time had thought and willed and felt practically as he does now. But that is not so. There have been times in which the soul condition was quite different — times when there was no such sharp distinction between sleeping and waking.

Dreams now are the only bridge between the two; and their content has something deceptive and questionable about them. Primitive man knew a stage between full wakefulness and unconscious sleep, which was pictorial and remote from the senses, but revealing something really spiritual, just as the sense-observation reveals something of the actually physical.

In this life of pictures, and not of thoughts, early man had a dream-like experience of his pre-earthly existence. He felt his pre-earthly soul-nature as an echo of what he had gone through. On the other hand he had not that sense of self which present-day man has. He did not find himself in the same degree as to-day as an 'Ego'. This feeling has arisen only in the course of human spiritual evolution, and the decisive epoch of this development is that in which occurred also the event of Golgotha.

At this time in the ordinary consciousness the psychic experience of an echo from pre-earthly existence grew ever fainter. Man's knowledge of himself became more and more limited to what his physical sense-life on earth told him,

Moreover from this moment the perception of death took on a new meaning. Previously man knew, as I have described, of the central point of his being. He knew it through the contemplation of this echo in such case that he was convinced this echo could not be affected by death. At the moment of

historical time when the view became limited to the physical nature of man, death became a disturbing problem for the soul.

The further development of purely inner faculties of knowledge did not suffice to solve this problem. It was solved by the events of Golgotha occurring in the evolution of the earth.

The Christ came down to earthly existence from those worlds in which man had passed his pre-earthly life. By combining the experience of the ordinary awake consciousness with the contemplation of the acts of Christ, man can find, since Golgotha, what he formerly found through a natural function of his consciousness.

The 'Initiates' of the ancient Mysteries spoke to their followers in such a way that they saw in their considerations of pre-earthly life a gift of grace from that spiritual Sun-Being which has its counterpart in the physical sun.

The Initiates who at the time of the mystery of Golgotha still continued the ancient initiation-methods, told those who had ears to hear how the Being who had before given to man the echo from spiritual worlds of pre-earthly existence that he could carry into the earthly life, had descended as the Christ upon the physical earth and taken flesh in the person of the man Jesus.

Those who knew the truth about the mystery of Golgotha always, as in the early days of Christianity, spoke of the Christ-Being as one who had descended from spiritual worlds to an earthly one. The teachers of mankind of that time stressed particularly this aspect of the Christ coming from a higher world down to the earth.

This view was conditioned by the fact that one still knew enough, from the ancient initiation, about the supernatural worlds, to see in Christ a Being of the spiritual world before his descent to earth.

The remnants of this knowledge lasted into the Fourth Century, and then faded in man's consciousness. The event of Golgotha thus became an event which was known only through the construction of political history.

The principles of initiation of the old world were lost to the outer world, and took root only in almost unknown places. Only now in the last third of the nineteenth Century has a stage in human evolution been reached again in which the new Initiation, as has been described leads to an aspect of Christ's nature within the spiritual world.

It was necessary for the complete unfolding of the ego-consciousness, which was to come into being in the development of humanity, that initiate knowledge should disappear for a few centuries, and that man should turn his attention to the outer world of the senses in which the ego-consciousness could be freely cultivated.

Thus it was only possible for the Christian community to direct the attention of believers to the historical tradition concerning the mystery of Golgotha and to clothe what was once known by spiritual knowledge in 'Dogmas of Belief' for the Earth. The content of these Dogmas does not

concern us here, but only the manner in which they affect the soul, whether through faith, belief or through knowledge.

It is again possible to-day to have a direct knowledge of the Christ. The figure of Jesus stood for centuries in front of the ordinary consciousness, and the Christ who lived in him, had become an object of faith. But more and more the inclination to dogmatic faith grew less, precisely among the spiritual leaders of mankind; Jesus was seen more and more only as history made him appear to the ordinary consciousness. The sense of Christ was gradually lost; and so there grew up a modern branch of Theology which concerns itself really only with the man Jesus, and which lacks a living sense of the Christ. But a mere Jesus-Faith is really -no longer Christianity.

In the consciousness which early man had of his pre-earthly existence, he had also an anchorage for a proper relationship to his existence, after death on earth.

In later times his union with the Christ was to give him in another way what had thus been given him in primæval time by nature, through the sense of his own life-experience concerning the problem of death. The Christ was so to permeate him, in the words of St. Paul, 'Not I, but the Christ in me', that He might be his guide through the gate of death. Man now had indeed something in the ordinary consciousness which could develop the complete Ego-sense, but nothing which could give the soul the strength to approach the gates of Death with certain knowledge of its living passage through them» For ordinary consciousness is a result of the physical body, and therefore can give the soul only such strength as must be regarded as extinguished in death.

To those who could learn all this from their old initiation, the human physical organism appeared out of order, for they had to assume that it could not develop the power to give the soul such a comprehensive consciousness as to enable it to live its full life. Christ appeared as the soul-doctor of the world, as the Healer, the Saviour, and as such in His fundamental relationship to humanity He must be recognized.

The event of death and its relationship to the Christ is to be the subject of my next study.

Through the taking-up of the Christ-experience a Philosophy has grown out of what the ancient consciousness, deepened by the saying of the Initiates, had given to man as an experience of eternity, and a philosophy which can include the divine Father principle. The Father in Spirit can be regarded again as the all-pervading Being. Cosmology gains its Christian character through the knowledge of the Christ who, as a Being from outside the earth, assumed mortal shape in the person of Jesus.

In the events of human evolution the Christ is recognized as the Being to whose lot has fallen a decisive part in this evolution. And through the re-awakening of the half-forgotten knowledge of the 'Eternal Man', the human mind is led out of the purely sense-world in which the ego-consciousness develops, to the spirit, which can be experienced with full understanding by the soul in conjunction with God the Father and the Christ in a renewed perceptive knowledge of Religion.

## 8 - The Event Of Death And Its Relationship With The Christ

In the state of sleep, sense-experience ceases for the ordinary consciousness as does also the psychic activity of thinking, feeling and willing. Thus man loses what he terms as 'himself'.

Through the psychic exercises of the soul which have been described in the previous studies, thinking is the first to be seized by the higher consciousness. Without being lost first however, thinking cannot be thus seized. In successful meditation one experiences this loss of thinking. One does actually feel oneself as an independent inner being; there is actually some kind of an inner experience. But one cannot at once experience one's own entity so strongly as to comprehend it through active thought. This only becomes possible by degrees.

The inner activity grows and the power of thinking is kindled from a quarter other than ordinary consciousness. In this ordinary consciousness can one only experience oneself in a momentary glimpse. But by the rekindling of thought through the psychic exercises, after passing through not-thinking and arriving at imagining, one experiences the content of the whole cycle of life from birth to the present moment as one's own proper Ego.

The memories of ordinary consciousness are also experiences of the moment, images realized in the present which point to the past only through their content.

Such memories are at first lost when image-making begins. The past is then seen as if it was something present. As in sense-perception the senses are led to the things which are side by side in space, so the kindled activity of the soul is led to the different events of one's own life in image-making. The course of events in time is presented as happening at the same time. A process of growth becomes something present at the moment.

But in higher consciousness there is something else than just the memories of the ordinary consciousness. There you have the activity of the etheric organism previously unknown to this consciousness. The memories of the ordinary consciousness are only images of man's experience through his physical organism of the outer world, whereas the 'imaginative' consciousness knows the activity which the etheric organism has effected in the physical organism.

The rising-up of this experience happens in such a way that one has the feeling of something rising from the depths of the soul which before had indeed lain hidden in one's own nature, but had not surged up into the consciousness. All this must be experienced in full consciousness; and that is the case if the ordinary consciousness continues to be kept side by side with the 'imaginative'.

The experiences gained in the active exchange between etheric and physical organism must always be capable of being brought into relationship with the corresponding memory-life of the ordinary consciousness. Whoever is not able to do this is not dealing with imagination but with an experience of a visionary kind.

In visionary experience consciousness is not adding a new content to the old, as in imagination, but it is changed; the old content cannot be recalled at the same time as the new. The man who has

'imagination' has his ordinary self next to him, as it were; the visionary has been turned into quite a different being.

Anybody criticizing Anthroposophy from the outside should take note of this. Imaginative knowledge has often been considered as leading to something visionary. This view has to be strictly rejected by the true researcher into the spirit. He does by no means replace the ordinary consciousness by a visionary one, but he incorporates an imaginative one into it. Ordinary thinking fully controls imaginative experience at every moment.

The visionary picturing is a stronger entering of the ego into the physical organism than is the case in the ordinary consciousness. Imagining on the other hand is an actual 'stepping-out' from the physical organism, and the ordinary constitution of the soul remains by its side consciously held in the physical organism.

We grow conscious in a part of the soul which before was unconscious, but that part which before was conscious in the physical organism remains in the same psychic condition. The interchange between the experience of imagination and that of ordinary consciousness is just as real a happening to the soul as is the guiding to and fro of soul-activity from one thought to another in the course of ordinary consciousness. If this is kept in mind one cannot mistake imaginative knowledge for something of a visionary nature.

It tends, on the contrary, to drive out all inclination to what is visionary. But he who uses 'imaginative cognition' is also in a position to realize that visions are not independent of the body but dependent on it in a far higher degree than sense-experiences. For he can compare the character of visions with that of imagination which is really independent of the body. The Visionary is more deeply immersed in his physical functions than the man who perceives the outer world by means of his senses in the ordinary way.

When Imagination takes place ordinary thinking is recognized as something having no substantial content. Only what is introduced into consciousness by imagination is found to be the substantial content of this ordinary thinking. Ordinary thinking may indeed be compared to a mirrored picture. But while the mirrored picture rises in the ordinary consciousness the imagined picture is alive unconsciously.

We imagine also in our ordinary psychic life, but unconsciously. If we did not imagine we should not think. The conscious thoughts of ordinary psychic life are the reflections of unconscious imagining mirrored by the physical organism. And the substantial part of this imagining is the etheric organism which is manifest in the development of man's earthly life.

A new element enters the consciousness with inspiration. In order to attain inspiration the individual human life must be abstracted, as has been described in the previous studies. But the power of activity which the soul has won for itself by imagining still remains. Possessing this power the soul can attain pictures of that which in the universe underlies the etheric organism just as this underlies the physical.

And thus the soul is faced with its own eternal nature. In the ordinary consciousness it happens (that the

soul can only give its activity a conceptual form by grasping the physical organism. It dives into it and there finds the pictured reflections of that which it experiences with its etheric organism. This latter, however, the soul does not experience in its activity. This etheric organism is itself experienced in imaginative consciousness. But this happens through the soul having gone further back with its experience to the astral organism.

As long as the soul merely 'imagines' it lives unconsciously in the astral organism, and both the physical and etheric organisms are contemplated; as soon as the soul attains 'inspired' knowledge the astral organism is also brought into contemplation; for the soul now lives in the eternal centre of its being, and can contemplate this by means of the continuation of 'intuitive' cognition. Through this it lives in the spiritual world, as in ordinary existence it lives in its physical organism.

The soul learns in this way how the physical, etheric and astral organisms grow out of the spiritual world. But it can also observe the continued activity of the spiritual in the organization of the earthly being — man. It sees how the spiritual centre of man's nature sinks into the physical, etheric and astral organism. This sinking is not really a merging of something spiritual into something physical, so that the former dwells in the latter. But it is a transformation of part of the human soul into the physical and etheric organization. This part of the soul disappears during earthly life by being transformed into the physical and etheric organism. It is this part of the soul which is experienced through thought by the ordinary consciousness in its reflection. But the soul emerges again elsewhere.

This is the case with that part of it which in earthly existence is experienced as volition, which has a different character from thought. Volition even during wakefulness contains a section which is asleep. The soul receives a thought clearly. Actually man when he thinks is fully awake, which is not the case with volition. The will is stimulated by thought. Consciousness extends as far as thought. But then the act of volition sinks into the human organism. If I deliberately raise my hand I have the causal thought in my ordinary consciousness to start with, and the sight of my raised hand with all the accompanying sensations is the result of my act of will. What is between remains unconscious. What happens in the depths of the organism when a man puts his will into action escapes the ordinary consciousness just as do the events of sleep. Man has always a part of himself asleep even when he is awake.

This is the part in which continues to live during earthly existence as much of the Spirit-Soul as had not been transformed into the physical organism. One perceives this when true intuition has been achieved by the exercises of the will previously described. Then we recognize behind the will the eternal part of the human soul, which is transformed into the head-organization; and disappears in its form-life during earthly existence, rises again on the other side to pass through death and to become ready once more to help in a future physical body and earthly life.

This brings this study to the event of death which is to be further touched upon in the next. For by the views I have put before you to-day we are led only to the continuity of the Will and to a knowledge of that part of the soul from the past, which is transformed into human head-organization. We have not reached the destiny of the ego-consciousness, which can only be treated in conjunction with the Christ-problem. Therefore that study will again lead us back to a consideration of the mysteries of Christianity.

The customary Philosophy of Ideas consists of thoughts; but they have no life, no substance. The



substance comes by leaving behind the physical organism in 'Imagination'. As I have shown, formerly the ideas of Philosophy were only mirrored pictures. If these are built up into a Philosophy, and if one studies them without prejudice, one must feel their unreality. One feels vaguely the moment here described as the one in which all remembered thought entirely disappears.

Augustine and Descartes have felt this, but have inefficiently explained it to themselves as 'doubt'. But Philosophy acquires life when the unity of life is substantiated in the soul.

Bergson perceived this, and has expressed it in his idea of 'Duration'. But he did not proceed beyond this point.

Starting with this as a basis, we shall proceed to consider its bearing upon Cosmology and Religious cognition.

## 9 - The Destination Of The Ego-Consciousness In Conjunction With The Christ-Problem

The life of the soul in its earthly existence is passed in the facts of thinking, feeling and willing. In thinking we have a mirrored picture of the experience of the astral organism and the ego-being within the physical sense-world. These higher parts of the human nature were also experienced during the state of sleep. But this experience remains unconscious during the stay on earth. The soul is then too weak in its inner being to present its own content to its consciousness. As soon as the consciousness perceives this content, it takes it for a purely psycho-spiritual one.

In awaking the, astral organism and the ego enter into the etheric and physical organisms. Through thinking the sense-perceptions are experienced by the etheric organisms. But in this experience it is not the world surrounding man, which is active, but a copy of this world. In this copy the sum-total of the formative powers underlying the earthly course of man manifests itself. And a copy of the outer world is present in man at every instant. Man does not directly experience this thinking, but its reflection is presented to ordinary consciousness by the physical organism.

Ordinary consciousness cannot perceive what is happening behind the reflective activity of thinking in the physical organism, it can only perceive the result, namely the reflected images, presented as thoughts. These unperceived happenings in the physical organism are activities of the etheric and astral organism and of the ego. In his thoughts man perceives what he himself is enacting in his physical organism as a psycho-spiritual being. There is in the etheric organism a copy of the outer world as inner activity, filling the physical organism. In the astral organism there exists a copy of the pre-earthly existence; in the ego exists the eternal central being of man.

In the etheric organism the outer world is active in man. In the astral organism continues to be active whatever man has experienced in the pre-earthly existence. This activity has not changed in kind during its earthly existence from what it was in its pre-earthly existence. It was of a kind which occurred in a spiritually changed physical organism. In the waking state it is similar. The inner head-organization of man strives continually to be changed from a physical state into a spiritual one. But this change can only remain a tendency during earthly existence.

The physical organization resists it. Precisely at the moment at which the astral organism in its changing activity arrives at a point at which the inner physical head-organization would have to cease as a physical one, the state of sleep intervenes. It replenishes the inner head-organization with strength from the rest of the physical organization by means of which it can continue in the physical world.

This strength lies in the etheric organism, which grows less and less differentiated inside the head-organization during the waking state. During sleep however it is differentiated internally into definite formations. In those formations are manifest the forces which during existence on earth act in rebuilding the physical organism.

In the head-organization a two-fold activity is thus enacted during the waking state; one building up through the etheric organism and one tearing down, that is, one which destroys the physical organism. This destruction takes place through the astral organism.

Through this astral activity man carries death in him continually during his existence on earth. Only this death is vanquished day by day by forces opposing it. But we owe to these constantly acting death tendencies the ordinary consciousness. For in the dying life of the head-organization is found that which is capable of reflecting the soul activity as thought-experience. An organically-growing activity urging towards life cannot produce a tissue of thought. For that a tendency towards death is required. The organically-growing activity reduces the machinery of thought to stupor or unconsciousness.

What finally happens to the whole human organism in physical death accompanies human life during existence on earth as a tendency, as an always recurring beginning of death. And to this continued dying within him man owes his ordinary consciousness. Before this consciousness stand the etheric and the physical organism as non-transparent things; man does not see them but the thought-reflections mirrored by them and experienced by him in his soul. The physical and etheric organizations hide for him the astral organization and the Ego; and just because the consciousness of soul is filled by the reflections of the physical organism during existence on earth man is prevented from seeing his etheric and astral organization and his Ego.

In death the physical organism separates from the etheric and astral one and from the Ego. Now man carries his etheric and astral organism and his ego in himself. Through the casting, off of the physical organism the obstacle to man's perceiving the etheric organism has been removed. The picture of his life on earth just passed through stands before man's soul. For this picture is only the expression of the formative powers, which in their sum represent the etheric body.

What is present in the etheric body has been woven into man from the etheric part of the Cosmos. He can never be entirely free of the Cosmos. The Cosmic-etheric act continues inside the human organization and this continuation inside man is the etheric organism. Thus it is when after death man becomes conscious of his etheric organism this consciousness begins already to change into a cosmic one. Man feels the world ether as well as his etheric organism as part of himself. This actually means that the etheric body dissolves after a very short while in the world ether. Man keeps that part which was bound to the physical and etheric organism during existence on earth, namely, his astral organism and his ego.

The astral being is never wholly incorporated into the physical organism. The head-organization represents a total transformation of this astral organism and the Ego. But in everything that can be called the rhythmical organization of man, in the processes of breathing, blood-circulation, etc. the astral organization and the Ego continue to live with a certain independence, for their activities are not reflected by these processes as they are by the head-organization. The astral organization and the Ego can blend with the rhythmical processes.

This union brings about a Being, of spirit and of body known to the ordinary consciousness as the 'Feeling' life. In man's Feeling life the astral organism and the Ego are united with man's experiences. We must look at this union in its details. Let us assume that man has created something within the world of the senses. For his psychic life things do not remain there. He judges his own act. But this judgment is not only happening in the life of thought, the impulse towards it is derived from the astral organism, which in conjunction with the rhythmical processes also manifests itself in physical life.

To thought-life which is passed in reflex pictures is added a reflection of moral judgment, which appears within the reflected thought-world as itself only bearing the character of the reflected thought-thing. But in the astral-rhythmical organism it lives in reality. This reality does not enter into the ordinary consciousness during existence on earth. Its entry is prevented because the physical rhythmical processes are felt more strongly than the spiritual processes accompanying them.

When the physical organism is discarded in death and the physical rhythmical processes are no longer there, then the importance of the death of man to the spiritual-cosmic world is realized by the cosmic consciousness. This cosmic consciousness is formed after the separation from the etheric organism. In this state a man looks upon himself as a moral being as in earthly life he looked upon himself as a physical being. He now has an inner life formed by the moral quality of his activity on earth. He looks upon his astral organism. But the spiritual-cosmic world breaks in upon this astral organism. Whatever judgment this world pronounces on man's earthly activities is presented as facts to his soul.

In death a man enters a form of experiences of another rhythm than during existence on earth. This rhythm appears as a cosmic imitation of his activity on earth. And into this imitative experience the spirit-cosmos enters continually as does the air into the lungs in breathing during existence on earth. In conscious cosmic experience we have a rhythm of which the physical one is a copy.

Through the cosmic rhythm the activities of man on earth as a world of moral qualities are united to an amoral world. And man experiences after his death this moral kernel of a future cosmos, ripening within the cosmos, which will not only exist in a purely natural order like the present, but in a moral-natural one. The chief feeling passing through the soul during this experience in a cosmic world in the making is expressed by the question: Shall I be worthy to form part of a moral-natural order of things in a future existence?

In my book Theosophy I have called the world of experience through which man passes after his death, the 'Soul-world'. It is the consciousness of this world through 'Inspiration' which gives us material for a real Cosmology. Just as an 'Imaginative cognition' of the actual course of human life gives us material for a true philosophy.

Man's soul cannot gain sufficient impulses out of that cosmic consciousness into which the cosmic after-effect of man's activities on earth have been reaching, to prepare spiritually for the future physical organism. This organism would be spoilt if the soul remained in a soul-world. It must enter into a world of experience in which the non-human, spiritual impulses of the cosmos are active. I have called this world the 'Spirit-Land' in the same book.

The ancient Initiates were able to say to their followers out of the knowledge gained by initiation: That Spiritual Being, who, in the physical world, shows his reflected glory in the Sun, will meet you after death in the spiritual world. He will lead you out of the soul world into the Spirit Land; under His guidance you will be purified, so that you will be able to prepare a physical organism for the next world during your stay in the Spirit land.

At the time of the Mystery of Golgotha and during the first Christian centuries the Initiates had to tell their followers: The degree of Ego consciousness to which you will attain during existence on earth

will by its own nature on earth be so light that its antithesis which will begin after death will be so dark that you will not be able to see the spiritual sun-guide.

Therefore the sun-being has descended on earth as Christ and has consummated the Mystery of Golgotha. If therefore during your existence on earth you already let yourself be permeated by a lively feeling of your connection with the Mystery of Golgotha, then its significance will become part of life on earth and will continue to be active in man after death. You can then recognize the Christ-guide through this result. After the Fourth Century this old initiated knowledge was lost in the course of human development.

A renewed Christian Religious knowledge should introduce once more from inspiration into cosmological science Christ's deed for humanity even into experiences after death. To expound how the events of human existence on earth, hidden by Will, have their effects even after death, will be the task of the next study.

## 10 - On Experiencing The Will-Part Of The Soul

When the ordinary consciousness sets Will inaction there is apart of the astral organism at work which is more loosely connected with the physical organism than the part which corresponds with feeling. And already this part of the astral organism corresponding with feeling is more loosely connected with the physical organism than is the part corresponding with thinking. At the same time we have in the astral organism of the will the true nature of the Ego.

While something psychic-spiritual which is continually active in the rhythmical part of the physical organism corresponds with feeling, the will-part of the soul continually permeates the metabolic organism and the organization of the limbs. But it is only actively connected with these parts of the human body while in the act of volition.

The connection between the thinking part of the soul and the head-organization is a surrender of the psychic-spiritual to the physical. The connection between the feeling soul with the rhythmical organization is an alternate surrender and drawing-back. But the connection of the will-part to the physical is at first felt to be something unconsciously psychic. It is an unconscious longing for the physical and etheric event.

This will-part is by its own nature prevented from being resolved into physical activity. It stands back from it and remains psycho-spiritually alive. Only when the thinking part of the soul extends its activity into the metabolic and limb-organization, the will-part is stimulated to surrender itself to the physical and etheric organization and to be active in it. The thinking part of the soul is founded on a destructive activity of the physical organism. During the making of thoughts this destruction extends only to the head-organization.

When the will ordains something the destructive activity of metabolism and of the limb-organization takes charge. The thought-activity flows into the organization of trunk and limbs, where a corresponding destructive activity of the physical organism takes place. This stimulates the will-part of the soul to oppose this destruction with a re-building and the dissolving organic activity with a constructive one.

Thus life and death are warring together in the human being. In thought is manifest an ever dying activity while will stands for something life-awakening, life-giving.

Those exercises of the soul which are undertaken as exercises of the will, aiming at supernatural vision, are successful only when they become an experience of pain. The man who succeeds in raising his will to a higher level of energy will feel sorrow. In former epochs of the development of mankind this pain was directly occasioned by ascetic practices. They reduced the body to a state which made it difficult for the soul to absorb herself in it.

This caused the will-part of the soul to break away from the body and to be stimulated to independent experiences of the spiritual world. This kind of practice is no longer suitable to the human organization which has reached the present moment of earthly development. The human organism is now so constituted that the presentation of the ego-development in it would be disturbed if we went

back to the old ascetic practices.

At present we must do the opposite. The soul exercises now wanted to set free the will-part of the soul from the body have been characterized in the previous studies. They do not achieve the strengthening of this soul part from the direction of the body, but from the direction of the soul. They strengthen the soul and spiritual part of man and leave the physical part untouched.

Our ordinary consciousness makes us realize already how the experience of sorrow is connected with the development of psychic experience. Whoever has gained any kind of supernatural knowledge will say: The happy, joy-giving events of my life I owe to fate; but my really true knowledge of life I owe to my bitter and sorrowful experiences.

If the will-part of the soul has to be strengthened as is necessary for the attainment of 'Intuitive cognition' we must first strengthen the desire which in ordinary human life is satisfied through the physical organism. This is done by the exercises described. If this desire becomes so strong that the physical organism in its earthly form cannot be a foundation for it, then the experience of the will-part of the soul enters into the spiritual world and intuitive vision is attained. And then in this vision the spiritual-eternal part of the soul grows conscious of itself. Just as the consciousness living inside the body realizes the body in itself, so spiritual consciousness realizes the content of a spiritual world.

In the alternating processes of destruction and construction of the human organization, as they are manifested in the thinking, feeling and willing organization of mankind, we must recognize the more or less normal course of human life on earth. It differs in childhood from that of the grown-up man. The task of the true pedagogue is a perception of the effect of the destructive and constructive activities in childhood and of the influence of education and tuition upon them.

A true educational science can only arise from the supernaturally-derived knowledge of the human nature complete in its physical, psychic and spiritual being. A knowledge keeping solely within the limits of what is attainable to natural science cannot be called a foundation of a true educational science.

In illness the more or less normal course of the inter-relation between the constructive and destructive elements is disturbed throughout the whole organization — or in separate organs. We get there an overbalancing either of construction in a prolific life or of destruction in shifting forms of single organs or processes.

What exactly happens in this case can only be seen in the whole by someone who has complete knowledge of the human organization, according to its physical, etheric and astral organism, as well as to the nature of the ego; and the cure can be found only by means of such knowledge. For in the realms of the outer world are to be found mineral and herbal things in which constructive knowledge recognizes forces which counteract certain kinds of too strongly stimulating, or too actively lowering forces in the organism. In the same way such a counteraction can be found in certain functions of the organism itself, which in a state of health are not applied or stimulated.

A genuine medical knowledge, a real Pathology and Therapy can be built up only on a knowledge of

the human being which embraces spirit, soul and body, a knowledge, moreover, which knows how to value the products of Imagination, Inspiration and Intuition. The demand for such a medical science is to-day called childish, because we view everything from the ground of a physical science. From this point of view this is quite intelligible, because according to it one has not the least idea how much more is a complete knowledge of the human being than mere knowledge of the human body. We can genuinely say that Anthroposophy is aware of the objections of its opponents and knows how to appreciate them. But just for this reason we also know how difficult it is to convince these opponents.

The will part of the soul experiences also what passes in the feeling parts, unconsciously as far as the ordinary life of the soul is concerned; but in the depths of man's organization it occurs as a combination of facts. The evaluation of human earth-activity completed through feeling and will is there transformed into an effort to contrast in further experiences a more worthy deed with a less worthy one.

The whole moral quality of the man is unconsciously experienced; and from this experience is formed a kind of spiritual-psychic being which during life on earth grows up in the unconscious region of the human being. This spiritual-psychic being represents whatever earthly life produces as a desirable objective, unattainable however by man in earthly life, because his physical and etheric organism with their forms predestined from former earth life, make it impossible. Therefore man strives through this spiritual-psychic being or nature to form another physical and etheric organism, through which the moral results of the earth-life can be transformed in the subsequent existence.

This new form can be achieved only if man carries with him this spiritual-psychic nature through the gates of death into the supernatural world.

Immediately after death the psychic-spiritual man retains for a short time the etheric organism. In his consciousness at this point he has no more than an indication of the moral value which has unconsciously arisen during earth-life in the spiritual and psychic part of him. For man is there completely pre-occupied with the vision of the etheric cosmos. In the following longer state of experience (which I have called the Soul-world in my Theosophy) a clear consciousness of this moral valuation is actually present, but not yet the strength to begin working at the construction of the spirit-cell which is to be a future physical earth-organism.

Man then still has a tendency to look back at his earthly life because of his moral qualities acquired there. After a certain time man can find the transition to a state of experience in which the tendency is no longer there. (In my Theosophy I have called the region here traversed by man the real domain of the spirit.) From the point of view of the supernatural thought-content to which man attains — after death — in the cosmic consciousness — we might say: For a short while after death man lives turned towards the earth and is permeated with those spiritual activities which have their outward reflection in the physical phenomena of the moon. Outwardly he has been separated from the earth, but he is indirectly connected with it through a spiritual-psychic content.

Everything of world-spiritual value that man during his presence on earth has developed into a real value in his astral organism (or as expressed above: in the unconscious region of his soul-life according to feeling and willing), all this is permeated by the spiritual moon-activities already



described. This moral being with its spiritual quality is related by content with the spiritual moon-activities, and it is they which hold man bound to earth. But for the development of the spirit-cell for the future physical organism he must also sever himself psycho-spiritually from the earth.

This he can only do by cutting himself loose at the same time from the region of the moon-activities. There he must leave behind that moral quality-being with which he is related. For the working for the future physical organism in conjunction with the spiritual beings of the supernatural world must take place unhampered by that quality-being.

Man cannot obtain this severance from the region of the spiritual moon-activities through his own psycho-spiritual powers. But it has to be done nevertheless.

Before the mystery of Golgotha the science of initiation could speak to man as follows: At a certain period of existence after death, human experience has to be withdrawn from the lunar sphere which keeps man within the region of planetary life. Man cannot himself bring about this withdrawal. Here it is that the being, whose physical reflection is the sun, comes to man's aid, and guides him into the sphere of pure spirit in which he, himself and not the spiritual moon beings are active. Man then experiences a stellar existence in such a way as to view the spiritual patterns of the fixed star constellations from the farther side, as it were; from the periphery of the cosmos.

This vision is non-spatial even though the stars are made visible to him. With the powers now permeating man his ability to form the spirit-cell of physical organism out of the cosmos grows. The divine in him brings forth the divine. Once the spirit-cell has ripened, its descent to earth begins. Man enters once more into the lunar sphere and finds there the being of moral-spiritual quality which he left behind at his entry into the pure stellar existence; he adds it to his psychic-spiritual being to make it the foundation of his destined future life on earth.

The Initiation-science of Christianity finds something else. In the absorption of the strength accruing to the soul through the contemplative and active sympathy with the earthly life of Christ and the Mystery of Golgotha, man gains, already while still on earth and not aided only by the solar-being after death, the faculty of withdrawing from the lunar activities at a certain point after his earthly existence, and of entering into the pure stellar sphere.

This faculty is the spiritual counterpart, experienced after death, of the freedom brought about in earthly life by the ego-consciousness. Man then takes over in the period between death and re-birth his moral-spiritual quality-being, left behind in the lunar sphere, as the designer of his fate which he can thus experience in freedom in his new existence on earth. He also carries within him in freedom the earthly after-effect of his god-filled existence between death and rebirth as religious consciousness.

A modern science of Initiation can recognize this and can see the activity of the Christ in human existence. It adds to a living Philosophy and to a Cosmology which recognizes also the spirit cosmos, a religious knowledge which recognizes the Christ as the mediator of a renewed religious consciousness and as the leader of the world in freedom.

In these studies I have not been able to do more than sketch a possible beginning of a Philosophy, a Cosmology and a Religious Cognition. Much more would have to be said if the sketch were to be converted into a coloured picture with all its colours.

# **Guidance in Esoteric Training**

**By  
Rudolf Steiner**

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## Prefatory Note

The contents of this book are selected from the matter of Rudolf Steiner's Esoteric School. The School remained in existence for ten years from 1904 to 1914, when the outbreak of the First World War prevented its continuance. During that period Rudolf Steiner was still within the Theosophical Society, and he used the words 'theosophy' and 'theosophical', though always (as he tells us in his Autobiography) in the direction in which his anthroposophical spiritual science had from the first been pointing.

After the lapse of a further ten years, when he went on to found the General Anthroposophical Society and himself became its President, his esoteric guidance of those members who sought it was continued on a somewhat different footing, in closer association with the organization and direction of the Society.

The institution of the Esoteric School in 1904 had been quickly followed by publishing descriptions of the path which pupils should follow, in the book *Theosophy*, in the series of *Essays, Knowledge of the Higher Worlds. How is it achieved?* (first published in book form in 1909), and also in *Occult Science: an Outline*, which appeared early in 1910.

A description of the basic conditions for inner development, particularly of the 'subsidiary exercises', is also to be found in these books, and after their publication Rudolf Steiner sometimes alluded to such exercises by reference to them. In Chapter V of *Occult Science: an Outline* ('Knowledge of Higher Worlds. Concerning Initiation') he lays down as follows the necessary precondition for all the exercises.

We can however understand from this how necessary it is that man should not demand entry into the spiritual world until he has learned and understood certain essential truths of that world by the simple exercise of his everyday intelligence, developed in the physical world. If spiritual development follows the right and normal path, then before he aspires to enter the supersensible world the pupil will already have mastered with his ordinary intelligence the whole of the earlier contents of this book.

In 1947, thirty-three years after the First World War had interrupted the Esoteric School and two years after the end of the Second, Marie Steiner, in response to requests from members of the Anthroposophical Society, set about publishing the most important of the Contents of the Esoteric School. Numerous works on oriental training methods (Yoga etc.) were making their appearance, and it was her object to set against these something from the European discipline of Rudolf Steiner. 'By making available', she wrote in a letter, 'examples of Rudolf Steiner's careful, personally-delivered advice, I wished to ensure that something could come forth from that Rosicrucian stream which is more in tune with the present age than decadent Indian and Tibetan methods.'

Three separate series of selections in English translation, entitled *From the Contents of the Esoteric School*, have previously appeared in 1948, 1949 and 1954. The following includes a revised translation of all that they contain together with some additional material not previously published in English.

O.B.

## 1 - The Task Of Spiritual Science

Notes of a lecture given in Berlin in 1903 or 1904:

There is a beautiful saying by Hegel: The most profound thought is bound up with the historical, external Figure of Christ. And the greatness of the Christian religion is that it is there for every stage of development. It is within the grasp of the most naive consciousness and at the same time it is a challenge to the deepest wisdom.

That the Christian religion is comprehensible to every stage of consciousness is shown by the very history of its development. Properly understood, it must be the task of Theosophy, or of Spiritual Science in general, to show that the Christian religion calls for penetration into the deepest Wisdom-teachings.

Theosophy is not a religion, but an instrument for understanding the religions. Its relation to the religious documents is rather like the relation of mathematics itself to the writings in which it was originally taught. A man can understand mathematics through his own spiritual faculties and comprehend the laws of space without having to refer to any such early text. But if he has really absorbed the truths of geometry, he will value all the more highly the original texts through which these laws were first presented.

So it is with Theosophy. Its sources are not in ancient documents, nor do they rest upon tradition; they lie in the reality of the spiritual worlds. It is there that they must be found and grasped by the development of a man's own spiritual powers, just as he grasps mathematics by endeavouring to develop the faculties of his intellect.

Our intellect, by means of which we are enabled to comprehend the laws of the world of sense, is supported by an organ, the brain. Similarly, in order to grasp the laws of spiritual worlds, we need appropriate organs.

How have our physical organs developed? Because forces from outside have worked upon them: the forces of the Sun, the forces of sound. Thus did eyes and ears come into being - out of neutral, sluggish organs into which, at first, the sense-world could not penetrate, and which opened only by degrees. If our spiritual organs are worked upon by the right forces, they too will open.

What then are the forces which surge in upon our still inert spiritual organs? During the daytime, the astral body of modern man is assailed by forces that work against his development, and even destroy such organs as he formerly possessed before the dawn of his clear day-consciousness. In earlier times, man received direct astral impressions.

The surrounding world spoke to him through pictures, through the form in which the astral world comes to expression. Living, inwardly organic pictures and colours hovered freely in surrounding space as expressions of pleasure and repugnance, sympathy and antipathy. Then these colours wrapped themselves, as it were, round the surface of things, and objects acquired fixed outlines. This was when the physical body of man was steadily gaining in solidity and becoming more highly

organized.

When his eyes opened fully to the physical light, when the veil of Maya spread itself over the spiritual world, his astral body received impressions of the surrounding world by way of the physical and etheric bodies. The astral body itself transmitted these impressions to the 'I' and from the 'I' they passed into his consciousness. Thus he was personally involved and continuously active. But the forces working upon him were no longer plastic, weaving forces akin to the nature of his own being; they were forces that fed upon him, destroyed him, in order to awaken the I-consciousness.

Only in the night, when he sank down into the rhythmic-spiritual world homogeneous with him, did he acquire new strength and become able once more to feed forces into his physical and etheric bodies. Out of this conflict of impressions, out of the deadening of the astral organs formerly working unconsciously in man, the life of the individual 'I', the I-consciousness, arose. Out of life-death; out of death-life. The ring of the serpent was complete. And now from this wakened I-consciousness there had to arise forces that would kindle life again in the defunct vestiges of earlier astral organs, shaping and moulding them.

Mankind is moving towards this goal, guided by its Teachers and Leaders, the great Initiates, of whom the serpent is also the symbol. It is an education towards freedom, hence a slow and difficult education. The great Initiates could have made the task easier, for themselves and for man, if they had worked upon his astral body during the night, when it is free, in such a way as to impress the astral organs into it from outside. But such an act would have operated in man's dream-consciousness; it would have trespassed on his sphere of freedom. The highest principle in man, the Will, would never have unfolded.

Man is led onward stage by stage. There has been an Initiation in Wisdom, an Initiation in Feeling, an Initiation in Will. True Christianity is the summation of all stages of Initiation. The Initiation of antiquity was the prophetic announcement, the preparation. Slowly and gradually the man of later times emancipated himself from his Initiator, his Guru. Initiation, to begin with, proceeded in deep trance-consciousness, but was equipped to imprint in the physical body a remembrance of what had transpired outside the body. Hence the necessity of releasing the ether-body, the bearer of memory, as well as the astral body.

Astral body and ether-body sank together into the Ocean of Wisdom, into Mahadeva, into the Light of Osiris. This Initiation proceeded in deepest secrecy, in absolute seclusion. No breath from the outer world might intrude. The man was as if he had died to outer life, and the tender seeds were nurtured away from the blinding light of day.

Then Initiation came forth from the darkness enshrouding the Mysteries into the clearest light of day. In a great and mighty Personality, the Bearer of the highest unifying Principle, of the Word - of Him who is the expression and manifestation of the hidden Father, and who taking on human form became the Son of Man and thereby the Representative of all mankind, the Bond uniting all I's - in Christos, the Life-Spirit, the Eternal Unifier, the Initiation of mankind as a whole was accomplished, as historical fact and at the same time as symbol, on the plane of feeling.



So potent was this Event that in every individual who modelled his life on it, its power could continue to work - right into the physical, expressing itself even in the appearance of the stigmata and in the most piercing pains. Feelings were shaken to their innermost depths. An intensity of emotion, the like of which has never surged through the world before or since, arose in mighty waves.

In the Initiation on the Cross of Divine Love the sacrifice of the 'I' for All had taken place. The blood, the physical expression of the 'I' had flowed in love for mankind, and the effect was such that thousands pressed forward to this Initiation, to this Death, letting their blood flow in love and devotion for mankind. That blood untold was poured out in this way has never been sufficiently emphasized; the thought no longer enters the consciousness of men, not even in theosophical circles.

Yet the waves of ardour which in this streaming blood flowed down, and then ascended, have fulfilled their task. They have become the wellsprings of powerful impulses. They have made mankind ripe for the Initiation of the Will.

And this is the legacy of Christ.

## 2 - General Demands ...

### General Demands Which Every Aspirant For Occult Development Must Put To Himself

#### (Subsidiary Exercises)

In what follows, the conditions which must be the basis of any occult development are set forth. Let no one imagine that he can make progress by any measures applied to the outer or the inner life unless he fulfils these conditions. All exercises in meditation, concentration, or exercises of other kinds, are valueless, indeed in a certain respect actually harmful, if life is not regulated in accordance with these conditions.

No forces can actually be imparted to a human being; all that can be done is to bring to development the forces already within him. They do not develop of their own accord because outer and inner hindrances obstruct them. The outer hindrances are lessened by means of the following rules of life; the inner hindrances by the special instructions concerning meditation, concentration, and the like.

The first condition is the cultivation of absolutely clear thinking. For this purpose a man must rid himself of the will-o'-the-wisps of thought, even if only for a very short time during the day - about five minutes (the longer, the better). He must become the ruler in his world of thought. He is not the ruler if external circumstances, occupation, some tradition or other, social relationships, even membership of a particular race, the daily round of life, certain activities and so forth, determine a thought and how he works it out.

Therefore during this brief time, acting entirely out of his own free will, he must empty the soul of the ordinary, everyday course of thoughts and by his own initiative place one single thought at the centre of his soul. The thought need not be a particularly striking or interesting one. Indeed it will be all the better for what has to be attained in an occult respect if a thoroughly uninteresting and insignificant thought is chosen. Thinking is then impelled to act out of its own energy the essential thing here, whereas an interesting thought carries the thinking along with it. It is better if this exercise in thought-control is undertaken with a pin rather than with Napoleon.

The pupil says to himself: Now I start from this thought, and through my own inner initiative I associate with it everything that is pertinent to it. At the end of the period the thought should be just as colourful and living as it was at the beginning. This exercise is repeated day by day for at least a month; a new thought may be taken every day, or the same thought may be adhered to for several days. At the end of the exercise an endeavour is made to become fully conscious of that inner feeling of firmness and security which will soon be noticed by paying subtler attention to one's own soul; the exercise is then brought to a conclusion by focusing the thinking upon the head and the middle of the spine (brain and spinal cord), as if the feeling of security were being poured into this part of the body.

When this exercise has been practised for, say, one month, a second requirement should be added. We try to think of some action which in the ordinary course of life we should certainly not have performed. Then we make it a duty to perform this action every day. It will therefore be good to choose an action which can be performed every day and will occupy as long a period of time as

possible. Again it is better to begin with some insignificant action which we have to force ourselves to perform; for example, to water at a fixed time every day a flower we have bought.

After a certain time a second, similar act should be added to the first; later, a third, and so on ... as many as are compatible with the carrying out of all other duties. This exercise, also, should last for one month. But as far as possible during this second month, too, the first exercise should continue, although it is a less paramount duty than in the first month. Nevertheless it must not be left unheeded, for otherwise it will quickly be noticed that the fruits of the first month are lost and the slovenliness of uncontrolled thinking begins again.

Care must be taken that once these fruits have been won, they are never again lost. If, through the second exercise, this initiative of action has been achieved, then, with subtle attentiveness, we become conscious of the feeling of an inner impulse of activity in the soul; we pour this feeling into the body, letting it stream down from the head to a point just above the heart.

In the third month, life should be centered on a new exercise - the development of a certain equanimity towards the fluctuations of joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain; 'heights of jubilation' and 'depths of despair' should quite consciously be replaced by an equable mood. Care is taken that no pleasure shall carry us away, no sorrow plunge us into the depths, no experience lead to immoderate anger or vexation no expectation give rise to anxiety or fear, no situation disconcert us, and so on.

There need be no fear that such an exercise will make life arid and unproductive; far rather will it quickly be noticed that the experiences to which this exercise is applied are replaced by purer qualities of soul. Above all, if subtle attentiveness is maintained, an inner tranquillity in the body will one day become noticeable; as in the two cases above, we pour this feeling into the body, letting it stream from the heart, towards the hands, the feet and, finally, the head.

This naturally cannot be done after each exercise, for here it is not a matter of one single exercise but of sustained attentiveness to the inner life of the soul. Once every day, at least, this inner tranquillity should be called up before the soul and then the exercise of pouring it out from the heart should proceed. A connection with the exercises of the first and second months is maintained, as in the second month with the exercise of the first month.

In the fourth month, as a new exercise, what is sometimes called a 'positive attitude' to life should be cultivated. It consists in seeking always for the good, the praiseworthy the beautiful and the like, in all beings, all experiences, all things. This quality of soul is best characterized by a Persian legend concerning Christ Jesus. One day, as He was walking with His disciples, they saw a dead dog lying by the roadside in a state of advanced decomposition.

All the disciples turned away from the disgusting sight; Christ Jesus alone did not move but looked thoughtfully at the corpse and said: 'What beautiful teeth the animal has!' Where the others had seen only the repulsive, the unpleasant, He looked for the beautiful. So must the esoteric pupil strive to seek for the positive in every phenomenon and in every being. He will soon notice that under the veil of something repugnant there is a hidden beauty, that even under the outer guise of a criminal there is a hidden good, that under the mask of a lunatic the divine soul is somehow concealed.

In a certain respect this exercise is connected with what is called 'abstention from criticism'. This is not to be understood in the sense of calling black white and white black. There is, however, a difference between a judgment which, proceeding merely from one's own personality, is coloured with the element of personal sympathy or antipathy, and an attitude which enters lovingly into the alien phenomenon or being, always asking: How has it come to be like this or to act like this? Such an attitude will by its very nature be more set upon helping what is imperfect than upon simply finding fault and criticizing.

The objection that the very circumstances of their lives oblige many people to find fault and condemn is not valid here. For in such cases the circumstances are such that the person in question cannot go through a genuine occult training. There are indeed many circumstances in life which make occult schooling impossible, beyond a certain point. In such a case the person should not impatiently desire, in spite of everything, to make progress which is possible only under some conditions.

He who consciously turns his mind, for one month, to the positive aspect of all his experiences will gradually notice a feeling creeping into him as if his skin were becoming porous on all sides, and as if his soul were opening wide to all kinds of secret and delicate processes in his environment which hitherto entirely escaped his notice. The important point is to combat a very prevalent lack of attentiveness to these subtle things.

If it has once been noticed that the feeling described expresses itself in the soul as a kind of bliss, endeavours should be made in thought to guide this feeling to the heart and from there to let it stream into the eyes, and thence out into the space in front of and around oneself. It will be noticed that an intimate relationship to this surrounding space is thereby acquired. A man grows out of and beyond himself, as it were.

He learns to regard a part of his environment as something that belongs to him. A great deal of concentration is necessary for this exercise, and, above all, recognition of the fact that all tumultuous feelings, all passions, all over-exuberant emotions have an absolutely destructive effect upon the mood indicated. The exercises of the first months are repeated, as with the earlier months.

In the fifth month, efforts should be made to develop the feeling of confronting every new experience with complete open-mindedness. The esoteric pupil must break entirely with the attitude which, in the face of something just heard or seen, exclaims: 'I never heard that, or I never saw that, before; I don't believe it - it's an illusion.' At every moment he must be ready to encounter and accept absolutely new experiences.

What he has hitherto recognized as being in accordance with natural law, or what he has regarded as possible, should present no obstacle to the acceptance of a new truth. Although radically expressed, it is absolutely correct that if anyone were to come to the esoteric pupil and say, 'Since last night the steeple of such and such a church has been tilted right over', the esotericist should leave a loophole open for the contingency of his becoming convinced that his previous knowledge of natural law could somehow be augmented by such an apparently unprecedented fact.

If he turns his attention, in the fifth month, to developing this attitude of mind, he will notice creeping

into his soul a feeling as if something were becoming alive, astir, in the space referred to in connection with the exercise for the fourth month. This feeling is exceedingly delicate and subtle. Efforts must be made to be attentive to this delicate vibration in the environment and to let it stream, as it were, through all the five senses, especially through the eyes, the ears and through the skin, in so far as the latter contains the sense of warmth.

At this stage of esoteric development, less attention is paid to the impressions made by these stimuli on the other senses of taste, smell and touch. At this stage it is still not possible to distinguish the numerous bad influences which intermingle with the good influences in this sphere; the pupil therefore leaves this for a later stage.

In the sixth month, endeavours should be made to repeat all the five exercises again, systematically and in regular alternation. In this way a beautiful equilibrium of soul will gradually develop. It will be noticed, especially, that previous dissatisfactions with certain phenomena and beings in the world completely disappear. A mood reconciling all experiences takes possession of the soul, a mood that is by no means one of indifference but, on the contrary, enables one for the first time to work in the world for its genuine progress and improvement.

One comes to a tranquil understanding of things which were formerly quite closed to the soul. The very movements and gestures of a person change under the influence of such exercises, and if, one day, he can actually observe that the character of his handwriting has altered, then he may say to himself that he is just about to reach a first rung on the upward path. Once again, two things must be stressed:

First, the six exercises described paralyse the harmful influence other occult exercises can have, so that only what is beneficial remains. Secondly, these exercises alone ensure that efforts in meditation and concentration will have a positive result. The esotericist must not rest content with fulfilling, however conscientiously, the demands of conventional morality, for that kind of morality can be extremely egotistical, if a man says: I will be good in order that I may be thought good.

The esotericist does not do what is good because he wants to be thought good, but because little by little he recognizes that the good alone brings evolution forward, and that evil, stupidity and ugliness place hindrances along its path.

### 3 - For The Days Of The Week

The pupil must pay careful attention to certain activities in the life of soul which in the ordinary way are carried on carelessly and inattentively. There are eight such activities.

It is naturally best to undertake only one exercise at a time, throughout a week or a fortnight, for example, then the second, and so on, then beginning over again. Meanwhile it is best for the eighth exercise to be carried out every day. True self-knowledge is then gradually achieved and any progress made is perceived.

Then later on - beginning with Saturday - one exercise lasting for about five minutes may perhaps be added daily to the eighth so that the relevant exercise will occasionally fall on the same day. Thus: Saturday - Thoughts; Sunday - Resolves; Monday - Talking; Tuesday - Actions; Wednesday - Behaviour, and so on.

#### **Saturday**

To pay attention to one's ideas.

To think only significant thoughts. To learn little by little to separate in one's thoughts the essential from the nonessential, the eternal from the transitory, truth from mere opinion.

In listening to the talk of one's fellow-men, to try and become quite still inwardly, foregoing all assent, and still more all unfavourable judgments (criticism, rejection), even in one's thoughts and feelings.

*This may be called: 'Right Opinion'.*

#### **Sunday**

To determine on even the most insignificant matter only after fully reasoned deliberation. All unthinking behaviour, all meaningless actions, should be kept far away from the soul. One should always have well-weighed reasons for everything. And one should definitely abstain from doing anything for which there is no significant reason.

Once one is convinced of the rightness of a decision, one must hold fast to it, with inner steadfastness.

*This may be called: 'Right Judgment'.*

having been formed independently of sympathies and antipathies.

#### **Monday**

Talking. Only what has sense and meaning should come from the lips of one striving for higher development. All talking for the sake of talking -to kill time - is in this sense harmful.

The usual kind of conversation, a disjointed medley of remarks, should be avoided. This does not mean shutting oneself off from intercourse with one's fellows; it is precisely then that talk should gradually be led to significance. One adopts a thoughtful attitude to every speech and answer taking all aspects into account. Never talk without cause - be gladly silent. One tries not to talk too much or too little. First listen quietly; then reflect on what has been said.

*This exercise may be called: 'Right Word'.*

## **Tuesday**

External actions. These should not be disturbing for our fellow-men. Where an occasion calls for action out of one's inner being, deliberate carefully how one can best meet the occasion - for the good of the whole, the lasting happiness of man, the eternal.

Where one does things of one's own accord, out of one's own initiative: consider most thoroughly beforehand the effect of one's actions.

*This is called: 'Right Deed'.*

## **Wednesday**

The ordering of life. To live in accordance with Nature and Spirit. Not to be swamped by the external trivialities of life. To avoid all that brings unrest and haste into life. To hurry over nothing, but also not to be indolent. To look on life as a means for working towards higher development and to behave accordingly.

*One speaks in this connection of: 'Right Standpoint'.*

## **Thursday**

Human Endeavour. One should take care to do nothing that lies beyond one's powers - but also to leave nothing undone which lies within them.

To look beyond the everyday, the momentary, and to set oneself aims and ideals connected with the highest duties of a human being. For instance, in the sense of the prescribed exercises, to try to develop oneself so that afterwards one may be able all the more to help and advise one's fellow-men - though perhaps not in the immediate future.

*This can be summed up as: 'To Let All The Foregoing Exercises Become A Habit'.*

## **Friday**

The endeavour to learn as much as possible from life.

Nothing goes by us without giving us a chance to gain experiences that are useful for life. If one has done something wrongly or imperfectly, that becomes a motive for doing it rightly or more perfectly, later on.

If one sees others doing something, one observes them with the like end in view (yet not coldly or heartlessly). And one does nothing without looking back to past experiences which can be of assistance in one's decisions and achievements.

One can learn from everyone - even from children if one is attentive.

*This exercise is called: 'Right Memory'. (Remembering what has been learnt from experiences).*

## **Summary**

To turn one's gaze inwards from time to time, even if only for five minutes daily at the same time. In so doing one should sink down into oneself, carefully take counsel with oneself, test and form one's principles of life, run through in thought one's knowledge - or lack of it - weigh up one's duties, think over the contents and true purpose of life, feel genuinely pained by one's own errors and imperfections. In a word: labour to discover the essential, the enduring, and earnestly aim at goals in accord with it: for instance, virtues to be acquired. (Not to fall into the mistake of thinking that one has done something well, but to strive ever further towards the highest standards.)

*This exercise is called: 'Right Examination'.*



#### 4 - Main Exercise

In the early morning, immediately after waking, before any other impressions have passed through the soul, the pupil gives himself up to his meditation. He strives for complete inner stillness, which means that all attention is withdrawn from impressions coming from outside and from all memories of everyday life. He also endeavours to free the soul from all cares and anxieties, which are apt to oppress it particularly at this time.

Then the meditation begins. In order to facilitate this inner stillness, the consciousness is first of all directed to a single idea, perhaps that of 'Rest', and then this idea is allowed to disappear from consciousness so that no image whatsoever remains in the soul; the content of the following seven lines is then allowed to live in the soul, to the exclusion of everything else. These seven lines must be held in the consciousness for five minutes. If other images intrude, the pupil keeps returning again to these seven lines, in profound contemplation:

In purest outpoured Light Shimmers the Godhead of the world. In purest Love toward all that lives  
Outpours the god-hood of my soul. I rest within the Godhead of the world; There shall I find myself,  
Within the Godhead of the world.

In den reinen Strahlen des Lichtes Erglanzt die Gottheit der Welt. In der reinen Liebe zu allen Wesen  
Erstrahlt die Gottlichkeit meiner Seele. Ich ruhe in der Gottheit der Welt; Ich werde mich selbst  
finden In der Gottheit der Welt.

After this has been practised for five minutes, the pupil goes on to the following:

He takes a calm, strong breath; after the in-breathing he breathes out, just as calmly and strongly, so that there is no pause between the in-breathing and the out-breathing. Then he abstains from breathing for a brief period, endeavouring however to let the breath remain wholly outside the body. The following are the approximate periods to be observed.

The time taken by the in-breathing is optional, to be adjusted in accordance with one's capacities. The out-breathing should take twice as long as the in-breathing, and the abstention from breathing three times as long as the in-breathing. If, for example, two seconds are needed for in-breathing, then four seconds are taken for the out-breathing, and six seconds for the abstention from breathing.

This in-breathing, out-breathing, abstention from breathing is repeated four times. During the in-breathing and the out-breathing the mind is emptied of thought and the whole consciousness directed to the breathing; but during the first abstention from breathing the pupil concentrates on the point lying between and a little behind the eyebrows, at the root of the nose, inside the forepart of the brain, while he fills his consciousness exclusively with the words:

*I am.*

During the second abstention from breathing he concentrates on a point inside the larynx, while he fills his consciousness exclusively with the image:

*It thinks.*

During the third abstention from breathing he concentrates on the two arms and hands. The hands are either held folded, or the right is laid over the left. At the same time he fills his consciousness exclusively with the image:

*She feels.*

During the fourth abstention from breathing he concentrates on the whole surface of the body; that is, he pictures his bodily self with the utmost possible clarity and fills his consciousness with the image:

*He wills.*

If these exercises in concentration are continued strenuously for several weeks, something will be felt at those points upon which the consciousness has been focused: at the root of the nose, in the larynx, a stream in the hands and arms and on the whole outer surface of the body.

During concentration upon the arms and hands the pupil will feel as if a force were driving the hands apart; he lets them go apart, following the line of the force, but he does not suggest this to himself. The feeling must come quite of itself.

In 'It thinks', the 'It' signifies the universal Cosmic Thinking which should live as impersonal power in our words. In 'She feels', the 'She' signifies the Cosmic Soul - it means that we should feel, not personally but impersonally, in the sense that the Cosmic Soul is impersonal. In 'He wills', the 'He' signifies God, within whose Will we instate our whole being.

When the pupil has carried through these four breathing exercises, he fills his consciousness for a while with one single image in which he is entirely absorbed, so that during this time nothing else whatever is present in the soul. This image is: 'My Power' or 'I in me' or 'I will'.

Then we pass on to complete absorption, for five minutes, in our own Divine Ideal. This exercise must be enacted with the utmost devotion and reverence.

The whole meditation need not last longer than fifteen minutes. In all the periods specified above, we do not go by the clock but by our feeling. Care is taken to adopt such a position of the body that the body itself cannot (because of fatigue, for instance) be a cause of distraction.

The previous Mantram in a rather more individualized form:

In purest outpoured Light Shimmers the Godhead of the world. In purest Ether fire Outpours the lofty Power that is 'I'. I rest within the Spirit of the world, There shall I find myself for ever, In the Eternal Spirit of the world.

In den reinen Strahlen des Lichtes Erglanzt die Gottheit der Welt. In dem reinen Feuer des Aethers  
Erstrahlt der Ichheit hohe Kraft. Ich ruhe im Geiste der Welt, Ich werde mich immer finden Im  
ewigen Geiste der Welt.

## 5 - Explanation Of The Foregoing Main Exercise

Whoever strives for esoteric development must above all be clear that certain extremely simple formulae conceal a force which takes effect if these formulae or sentences are made alive in the soul. He does not rightly grasp what this implies if he tries to understand such sentences merely with the intellect.

That way they say very little to him, to begin with. He must for a certain time fill his whole inner being with such a sentence, pouring himself into it with all the powers of his soul. Such a sentence is: 'I am'.

The whole secret of present-day human existence really lies in this sentence. Only a being possessed of an external form similar to that of earthly man today is able to think, feel and imbue these words with will. The form of such a being must have developed in such a way that the goal of all the forces working in the body was the frontward shape of the vaulted brow. This vaulted brow and the 'I am' belong together.

Earlier in the evolution of the human form there was a stage when it had not yet pressed forward into such a brow. At that time the 'I am' could be neither inwardly thought, nor willed, nor felt. Now it would be quite wrong to believe that the form of the body, as described above, could itself bring forth the 'I am'.

This 'I am' was already in existence, only it could not yet express itself in an appropriate form. Just as it now expresses itself in the bodily form of man, so, in an earlier time, it expressed itself in a world of soul. And it is this very power of the 'I am' which, having united in the far-distant past with a human body lacking the present brow-formation, impelled the forehead to assume its present shape.

Hence it is that a man, by sinking deeply into the 'I am', can feel within himself the force which has moulded him in his present form. And this force is higher than the forces which, in his ordinary life, are active within him today. For it is the creative force of soul which forms the bodily nature out of the soul.

Anyone, therefore, who is aiming at esotericism must, for a short period, live entirely in the 'I am'. He must think this 'I am', while at the same time he experiences within himself something like: 'I rejoice that I, as an independent being, can participate in the work of shaping the world'. And he must also experience something like: 'I will my own existence; I resolve to place myself in the whole context of the world'.

If a man concentrates all this into a single, inner act of consciousness, and at the same time shifts the whole force of his consciousness upwards into the region of the brow and the inner members of the brain beneath it, then he actually transfers himself into a higher world out of which his brow-formation has been brought into being.

Let him not think, however, that he can attain these higher worlds tomorrow morning. He must have the patience to undertake this meditation day by day, over and over again, for a long time. If he has

this patience, then, after some time, he will notice a thought arising within him - no longer a mere concept but a thought teeming with life and force. He will be able to say to himself: 'The force contained in the seed of a plant, impelling it to form the organs of the plant, must be inwardly alive, just like this thought of mine'. And soon this thought will reveal itself to him as if it were radiating light.

In this inner radiation of light he feels happy, full of the joy of existence. A feeling permeates him which can only be described as joyful love in creative existence'. And a force imparts itself to the will as if the thought were radiating warmth through the will, energizing the will. All this can be drawn from sinking himself in the right way into the 'I am'. He will gradually realize that the highest intellectual, psychical and moral power comes to birth in him in this way, and that he thereby brings himself into a more and more conscious relationship to a higher world.

A second such sentence is: 'It thinks'. This 'It thinks' represents - in a way that corresponds to the account given of the 'I am' - the force through which the form of the human speech-organs has been developed from the higher worlds. When thinking was still functioning in a higher world of soul, and not yet within a human body, it worked from that higher world in such a way that organs of speech not yet existing in the human form were incorporated into it.

If, therefore, the esoteric pupil sends his thinking, feeling and willing into the depths of the 'It thinks', at the same time concentrating his consciousness on the region of the larynx, there will arise in him an experience of the creative force of soul which, from the higher worlds, manifested in the creation of the organs of speech.

If again he has the patience described above, he will experience how from the 'It thinks' rays go forth which are like the opening harmonies of spiritual music; they fill him with a feeling of reverent devotion, and at the same time with a force which tells him: 'What I will, as man, will gradually increase in wisdom.' An inkling will come to him of that force which as divine-spiritual force pours itself through the Cosmos, ordering all things according to measure, number and weight.

A third sentence is 'She feels'. In still earlier times, the force of this sentence, too, was not yet present within man but dwelt in a higher world of soul. Working down from that higher world, it re-cast the form of the human body. Until then there had been no difference between hands and feet; they were identically shaped organs of movement.

Hence man had not yet attained his upright posture. It was a great step forward in human evolution when his anterior organs of movement were transformed into organs for manual work. He was then able to assume his upright posture and so to overcome his lower nature, inasmuch as his gaze was now directed out and upwards towards the heavenly worlds of Spirit. Thereby, too, he first became capable of fashioning karma. For it is only when a being possesses this particular form that his deeds come within his own, individual responsibility.

Thus it was that Spiritual Beings transformed man as the force of the 'She feels', which had previously reposed in them alone, streamed into the human body. If therefore the esoteric pupil sinks himself into the 'She feels', again in the way described above, he raises himself to the corresponding Creative

Powers of the higher worlds. But together with the 'She feels' he must concentrate the whole of his consciousness on his arms and hands.

Out of the thought 'She feels' an experience of indescribably blissful life will then stream to him. This feeling can be described as that of 'love in active existence'. Thereby he attains consciousness of how the Creative Love flows through cosmic space, and by its deed pours into all things the breath of life.

A fourth sentence is 'He wills'. It was by the force of this sentence that in a primeval past the human body, as a whole, was for the first time separated out as an independent being from its environment.

Before this force worked upon it from higher worlds, the human body was not shut off on all sides by an outer skin. Streams of substance flowed into the body from all sides and out of it again. It had no independent life but was entirely immersed in the life of its environment.

In that epoch, of course, the environment was quite different from that of our own time. If the esoteric pupil now again sinks all his thinking, feeling and willing into the 'He wills', concentrating his consciousness on the whole surface of the outer skin, he transfers himself gradually into the sublime creative forces of the 'He wills'.

These are the forces of the supersensible world whereby the things of the world of sense are given their form and shape. If he has sufficient endurance, the human being will feel, in the deeply inward experience of this thought, as if he were raised above all sensible-corporeal existence and were looking down upon the field of sense-creation in order to work upon it in conformity with the Divine Thoughts attained in the spiritual world.

The force proceeding from this thought is that of being joyously transported into pure spirituality, and the attainment of a consciousness that out of higher regions one can bring to the world of sense that of which it stands in need.

As he engrosses himself deeply in these thoughts that are forces, the esotericist will simultaneously have to focus attention on his breathing-process and, for a short time, transform it from an unconscious process into a consciously regulated act.

For while the forces working from higher worlds upon the human form were achieving the transformation indicated, these same forces produced, within this form, the present breathing-system - the system necessary for a being whose body has an independent existence, the work of whose hands is his own responsibility, whose organs of speech can translate experiences in the life of soul into externally audible sounds. The ascent into the higher regions of world-creation is furthered by directing the attention in this way to the breathing process.

If the esoteric pupil learns by degrees thus to experience consciously the higher cosmic forces, which indeed are always slumbering within him but of which he has hitherto been unaware, then what he should already have assimilated through study becomes alive in him, begins to glimmer into perceptible reality. He should already have acquired the knowledge that man, together with the evolution of the Earth as a whole, passed through different stages of transformation before the present

Earth came into being.

These stages of transformation are called: the Saturn condition, the Sun condition, the Moon condition. The esotericist has also to acquire the knowledge that in later epochs there is a certain recapitulation of earlier conditions. Thus the Saturn, Sun and Moon conditions were recapitulated during the Earth-evolution, and in such a way that the Saturn repetition corresponds to the creative work of the 'He wills' on the outer sheath of the human being. The Sun recapitulation corresponds to the creative work of the 'She feels' on the arms and hands, and the Moon recapitulation to the creative work of the 'It thinks' on the organs of speech.

The idea of the human body as a mere product of the sense-world is abandoned, and the esotericist finds his way to vision of those higher worlds whence come the forces that work creatively upon man. So, too, the bare concepts which have been acquired of such matters as Saturn, Sun and Moon become actual perceptions and experiences. And so indeed it must be if the way is to be found more and more from the exoteric to the esoteric.

The exercises given here must of course be regarded only as a beginning. The pupil must, however, work strenuously through them, and then he will reach the point where he can receive the further exercises through which still higher forces that slumber within him are awakened. The aim is to gain an inkling of the spiritual facts which underline the words, 'I am', 'I think', 'She feels', 'I will', and to feel their connection with the members of the human body, whose form has arisen from out of the spiritual world.

It should be added, for information, that in the above Words of Power, the three forms

IT-SHE-HE

are well founded in the nature of the higher worlds.

'It' is the Word of Power for the Cosmic Thinking: that is, for those Beings in the higher world to whom creative thinking belongs in just the same measure as sense-perception belongs to the human beings below them.

'She' is the Word of Power for the Cosmic Soul which originates the Feeling that streams out from it, whereas human feeling streams in, being stimulated from outside. This Feeling of the World Soul is the Creative Cosmic Love which brings all things into existence.

'He' is the Word of Power for the Cosmic Will, the Cosmic Spirit whose Will acts from out of Himself, whereas the human will is brought into action through the outer world. This 'He' is the Creative, Archetypal Power of the World.

# Knowledge of the Higher Worlds

Rudolf Steiner

(Written 1904 – 1905; GA 10)

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**Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment** constitutes a fundamental guide to the anthroposophical path of cognition or knowledge. In human consciousness, faculties are sleeping that, if awakened, lead to life-giving wisdom. With great clarity and warmth, Rudolf Steiner details the exercises and moral qualities to be cultivated on the path to a conscious experience of supersensible realities.





RUDOLF STEINER, philosopher, scientist and educator, (1861–1925), has achieved world-wide fame as the originator of the Science of the Spirit known as Anthroposophy, and as a pioneer of genius in a variety of fields of learning.

“Steiner's gift to the world was a moral and meditative way to objective vision, a way appropriate to the psychological and physiological constitution of Western man. If accepted in the spirit of humility, altruism and truthfulness in which it was given, it could bridge the existing cleft between a man's religious conviction and his intellect and will. It could add comprehension to our existing knowledge and thus revive the vision without which our generation will hardly find the solution to its problems.”

Franz Winkler, M.D., *Man the Bridge between Two Worlds*.

“That the academic world has managed to dismiss Steiner's works as inconsequential and irrelevant, is one of the intellectual wonders of the twentieth century. Anyone who is willing to study those vast works with an open mind (let us say, a hundred of his titles) will find himself faced with one of the greatest thinkers of all time, whose grasp of the modern sciences is equaled only by his profound learning in the ancient ones.”

Russell W. Davenport, *The Dignity of Man*.

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### *Preface to the Third Edition*

Herewith appear in book form my expositions originally published as single essays under the title *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment*. For the present, this volume offers the first part; one that is to follow will constitute the continuation. This work on a development of man that will enable him to grasp the supersensible worlds cannot be presented to the public in a new form without certain comments which I shall now make. The communications it contains concerning the development of the human soul are intended to fill various needs.

First of all, something is to be offered those people who feel drawn to the results of spiritual research, and who must raise the question: “Well, whence do these persons derive their knowledge who claim the ability to tell us something of the profound riddles of life?” — Spiritual science does this. Whoever wishes to observe the facts leading to such claims must rise to supersensible cognition. He must follow the path I have endeavored to describe in this book. On the other hand, it would be an error to imagine these disclosures of spiritual science to be valueless for one who lacks the inclination or the possibility to pursue this path himself. In order to establish the facts through research, the ability to enter the supersensible worlds is indispensable; but once they have been discovered and communicated, even one who does not perceive them himself can be adequately convinced of their truth. A large proportion of them can be tested offhand, simply by applying ordinary common sense in a genuinely unprejudiced way. Only, one must not let this open-mindedness become confused by any of the pre-conceived ideas so common in human life. Someone can easily believe, for example, that some statement or other contradicts certain facts established by modern science. In reality, there is no such thing as a scientific fact that contradicts spiritual science; but there can easily seem to be contradictions unless scientific conclusions are consulted abundantly and without prejudice. The student will find that the more open-mindedly he compares spiritual science with positive scientific achievements, the more clearly is complete accord to be seen.

Another category of spiritual-scientific disclosures, it is true, will be found to elude purely mental judgment more or less; but the right relation to these also will be achieved without great difficulty by one who understands that not the mind alone but healthy feeling as well is qualified to determine what is true. And when this feeling does not permit itself to be warned by a liking or antipathy for some opinion or

other, but really allows higher knowledge to act without prejudice, a corresponding sentient judgment results.

And there are many more ways of confirming this knowledge for those who cannot or do not wish to tread the path into the supersensible world. Such people can feel very clearly what value this knowledge has in life, even when it comes to them only through the communications of those engaged in spiritual research. Not everyone can immediately achieve spiritual vision; but the discoveries of those who have it can be health-giving life-nourishment for all. For everyone can apply them; and whoever does so will soon discover what life in every branch can be with their aid, and what it lacks without them. The results of supersensible knowledge, when properly employed in life, prove to be — not unpractical, but rather, practical in the highest sense.

One who does not himself intend to follow the path to higher knowledge, but is interested in the facts it reveals, can ask: How does the seer arrive at these facts? To such a one this book is intended to picture the path in such a way that even one not following it can nevertheless have confidence in the communications of the person who has done so. Realizing how the spiritual scientist works, he can approve, and say to himself: The impression made upon me by the description of this path to higher worlds makes clear why the facts reported seem reasonable. Thus this book is intended to help those who want their sense of truth and feeling for truth concerning the supersensible world strengthened and assured.

No less, however, does it aim to offer aid to those who themselves seek the way to supersensible knowledge. The truth of what is here set forth will best be verified by those who achieve its reality within themselves. Anyone with this intention will do well to keep reminding himself that in an exposition on the development of the soul, more is called for than becoming acquainted with the substance, which is frequently the aim in other expositions. It is necessary to familiarize oneself intimately with the presentation. One must postulate the following: no single matter is to be comprehended only by means of what is said about the matter itself, but by means of much else that is disclosed concerning totally different matters. This will develop the conception that what is vital is to be found not in any single truth but in the harmony of all truths. This must be seriously considered by anyone intending to carry out the exercises. An exercise can be rightly understood and even rightly executed, and yet produce a wrong effect unless another be added to it — one that will resolve the one-sidedness of the first into a harmony of the soul. Whoever reads this book in an intimate way, so that the reading resembles an inner experience, will not merely familiarize himself with its content: one passage will evoke a certain feeling.

another passage another feeling; and in that way he will learn how much importance should be seen in the one or the other in the development of his soul. He will also find out in what form he should try this or that exercise, what form best suits his particular individuality. When one has to do, as is the case here, with descriptions of processes that are to be *experienced*, it is necessary to refer again and again to the content; for it will become manifest that much can be satisfactorily assimilated only after trial, which in turn reveals certain finer points that at first are bound to be overlooked.

Even those readers who do not intend to take the way prescribed will find much in the book that can be of service to the inner life, such as maxims, suggestions that throw light on various puzzling problems, and so on.

And those who have had experiences in their lives that serve, to some extent, as an initiation through life may derive a certain satisfaction from finding clarified through co-ordination what had haunted them as separate problems — things they already knew, but perhaps without having been able to consolidate them in adequate conceptions.

## *Preface to the Fifth Edition*

In preparing this new edition of *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment* I have gone over every detail of the subject as I had presented it over ten years ago. The urge to make such a review is natural in the case of disclosures concerning soul experiences and paths such as are indicated in this book. There can be no portion of what is imparted which does not remain intimately a part of the one who communicates it, or which does not contain something that perpetually works upon his soul. And it is inevitable that this work of the soul should be joined by an endeavor to enhance the clarity and lucidity of the presentation as given years before. This engendered what I have endeavored to accomplish in this new edition. All the essential elements of the expositions, all the principal points, have remained as they were; yet important changes have been made. In many passages I have been able to increase the accuracy of characterization in detail, and this seemed to me important. If anyone wishes to apply what is imparted in this book to his own spiritual life, it is important that he should be able to contemplate the paths in question by means of a characterization as exact as possible. Misconceptions can arise in far greater measure in connection with the description of inner spiritual processes than with that of facts in the physical world. The mobility of the soul life, the danger of losing sight of how different it is from all life in the physical world — this and much else renders such misunderstandings possible. In preparing this new edition I have directed my attention to finding passages in which misconceptions might arise, and I have endeavored to forestall them.

At the time I wrote the essays that constitute this book, much had to be discussed in a different way from today, because at that time I had to allude in a different manner to the substance of what had been published since then concerning facts of cognition of the spiritual worlds. In my *Occult Science*, in *The Spiritual Guidance of Mankind*, in *A Road to Self-Knowledge and the Threshold of the Spiritual World*, as well as in other writings, spiritual processes are described whose existence, to be sure, was already inevitably indicated in this book ten years ago, but in words differing from those that seem right today. In connection with a great deal not described in this book I had to explain at that time that it could be learned by oral communication. Much of what this referred to has since been published. But these allusions perhaps did not wholly exclude the possibility of erroneous ideas in the reader's mind. It might be possible, for instance, to imagine that something much more vital in the personal relations between the seeker for spiritual schooling and this or that teacher than is intended. I trust I have here succeeded. by presenting details in a certain way. in

emphasizing more strongly that for one seeking spiritual schooling in accord with present spiritual conditions an absolutely direct relation to the objective spiritual world is of far greater importance than a relation to the personality of a teacher. The latter will gradually become merely the helper; he will assume the same position in spiritual schooling as a teacher occupies, in conformity with modern views, in any other field of knowledge. I believe I have sufficiently stressed the fact that the teacher's authority and the pupil's faith in him should play no greater part in spiritual schooling than in any other branch of knowledge or life. A great deal depends, it seems to me, upon an increasingly true estimate of this relation between the one who carries on spiritual research and those who develop an interest in the results of his research. Thus I believe I have improved the book wherever I was in a position, after ten years, to find what needs improving.

A second part is to be added to this first part, bringing further explanations of the frame of mind that can lead a man to the experience of the higher worlds.

The new edition of the book, the printing completed, lay before me when the great war now being experienced by mankind broke out. I must write these prefatory remarks while my soul is deeply moved by the destiny-laden event.

Berlin, September 7, 1914.  
*Rudolph Steiner*

*Preface to the Edition of May 1918*

In working over this new edition I found only minor changes in its substance necessary; but I have added an appendix in which I have endeavored to explain more clearly the psychological foundations to which the disclosures contained in the book must be traced if they are to be accepted without risk of misunderstanding. I believe that the contents of the appendix will also serve to show many an opponent of anthroposophical spiritual science that his judgment is based upon a misconception of the nature of this spiritual science; that he does not see what it really is.

*Rudolph Steiner*



# I

## How Is Knowledge of the Higher Worlds Attained?

### Conditions

There slumber in every human being faculties by means of which he can acquire for himself a knowledge of higher worlds. Mystics, Gnostics, Theosophists — all speak of a world of soul and spirit which for them is just as real as the world we see with our physical eyes and touch with our physical hands. At every moment the listener may say to himself: that, of which they speak, I too can learn, if I develop within myself certain powers which today still slumber within me. There remains only one question — how to set to work to develop such faculties. For this purpose, they only can give advice who already possess such powers. As long as the human race has existed there has always been a method of training, in the course of which individuals possessing these higher faculties gave instruction to others who were in search of them. Such a training is called occult (esoteric) training, and the instruction received therefrom is called occult (esoteric) teaching, or spiritual science. This designation naturally awakens misunderstanding. The one who hears it may very easily be misled into the belief that this training is the concern of a special, privileged class, withholding its knowledge arbitrarily from its fellow-creatures. He may even think that nothing of real importance lies behind such knowledge, for if it were a true knowledge — he is tempted to think — there would be no need of making a secret of it; it might be publicly imparted and its advantages made accessible to all. Those who have been initiated into the nature of this higher knowledge are not in the least surprised that the uninitiated should so think, for the secret of initiation can only be understood by those who have to a certain degree experienced this initiation into the higher knowledge of existence. The question may be raised: how, then, under these circumstances, are the uninitiated to develop any human interest in this so-called esoteric knowledge? How and why are they to seek for something of whose nature they can form no idea? Such a question is based upon an entirely erroneous conception of the real nature of esoteric knowledge. There is, in truth, no difference between esoteric knowledge and all the rest of man's knowledge and proficiency. This esoteric knowledge is no more of a secret for the average human being than writing is a secret for those who have never learned it. And just as all can learn to write who choose the correct method, so, too, can all who seek the right way become esoteric students and even teachers. In one respect only do the conditions here differ from those that apply to external knowledge and proficiency. The possibility of acquiring the art of writing may be withheld from someone through poverty, or through the conditions of civilization into which he is born; but for the

attainment of knowledge and proficiency in the higher worlds, there is no obstacle for those who earnestly seek them.

Many believe that they must seek, at one place or another, the masters of higher knowledge in order to receive enlightenment. Now in the first place, whoever strives earnestly after higher knowledge will shun no exertion and fear no obstacle in his search for an initiate who can lead him to the higher knowledge of the world. On the other hand, everyone may be certain that initiation will find him under all circumstances if he gives proof of an earnest and worthy endeavor to attain this knowledge. It is a natural law among all initiates to withhold from no man the knowledge that is due him but there is an equally natural law which lays down that no word of esoteric knowledge shall be imparted to anyone not qualified to receive it. And the more strictly he observes these laws, the more perfect is an initiate. The bond of union embracing all initiates is spiritual and not external, but the two laws here mentioned form, as it were, strong clasps by which the component parts of this bond are held together. You may live in intimate friendship with an initiate, and yet a gap severs you from his essential self, so long as you have not become an initiate yourself. You may enjoy in the fullest sense the heart, the love of an initiate, yet he will only confide his knowledge to you when you are ripe for it. You may flatter him; you may torture him; nothing can induce him to betray anything to you as long as you, at the present stage of your evolution, are not competent to receive it into your soul in the right way.

The methods by which a student is prepared for the reception of higher knowledge are minutely prescribed. The direction he is to take is traced with unfading, everlasting letters in the worlds of the spirit where the initiates guard the higher secrets. In ancient times, anterior to our history, the temples of the spirit were also outwardly visible; today, because our life has become so unspiritual, they are not to be found in the world visible to external sight; yet they are present spiritually everywhere, and all who seek may find them.

Only within his own soul can a man find the means to unseal the lips of an initiate. He must develop within himself certain faculties to a definite degree, and then the highest treasures of the spirit can become his own.

He must begin with a certain fundamental attitude of soul. In spiritual science this fundamental attitude is called the *path of veneration*, of devotion to truth and knowledge. Without this attitude no one can become a student. The disposition shown in their childhood by subsequent students of higher knowledge is well known to the experienced in these matters. There are children who look up with religious awe to those whom they venerate. For such people they have a respect which forbids them, even in the deepest recess of their heart, to harbor any thought of criticism or

opposition. Such children grow up into young men and women who feel happy when they are able to look up to anything that fills them with veneration. From the ranks of such children are recruited many students of higher knowledge. Have you ever paused outside the door of some venerated person, and have you, on this your first visit, felt a religious awe as you pressed on the handle to enter the room which for you is a holy place? If so, a feeling has been manifested within you which may be the germ of your future adherence to the path of knowledge. It is a blessing for every human being in process of development to have such feelings upon which to build. Only it must not be thought that this disposition leads to submissiveness and slavery. What was once a childlike veneration for persons becomes, later, a veneration for truth and knowledge. Experience teaches that they can best hold their heads erect who have learnt to venerate where veneration is due; and veneration is always fitting when it flows from the depths of the heart.

If we do not develop within ourselves this deeply rooted feeling that there is something higher than ourselves, we shall never find the strength to evolve to something higher. The initiate has only acquired the strength to lift his head to the heights of knowledge by guiding his heart to the depths of veneration and devotion. The heights of the spirit can only be climbed by passing through the portals of humility. You can only acquire right knowledge when you have learnt to esteem it. Man has certainly the right to turn his eyes to the light, but he must first acquire this right. There are laws in the spiritual life, as in the physical life. Rub a glass rod with an appropriate material and it will become electric, that is, it will receive the power of attracting small bodies. This is in keeping with a law of nature. It is known to all who have learnt a little physics. Similarly, acquaintance with the first principles of spiritual science shows that every feeling of true devotion harbored in the soul develops a power which may, sooner or later, lead further on the path of knowledge.

The student who is gifted with this feeling, or who is fortunate enough to have had it inculcated in a suitable education, brings a great deal along with him when, later in life, he seeks admittance to higher knowledge. Failing such preparation, he will encounter difficulties at the very first step, unless he undertakes, by rigorous self-education, to create within himself this inner life of devotion. In our time it is especially important that full attention be paid to this point. Our civilization tends more toward critical judgment and condemnation than toward devotion and selfless veneration. Our children already criticize far more than they worship. But every criticism, every adverse judgment passed, disperses the powers of the soul for the attainment of higher knowledge in the same measure that all veneration and reverence develops them. In this we do not wish to say anything against our civilization. There is no question here of leveling criticism against it. To this critical faculty, this self-conscious human

judgment, this “test all things and hold fast what is best,” we owe the greatness of our civilization. Man could never have attained to the science, the industry, the commerce, the rights relationships of our time, had he not applied to all things the standard of his critical judgment. But what we have thereby gained in external culture we have had to pay for with a corresponding loss of higher knowledge of spiritual life. It must be emphasized that higher knowledge is not concerned with the veneration of persons but the veneration of truth and knowledge.

Now, the one thing that everyone must acknowledge is the difficulty for those involved in the external civilization of our time to advance to the knowledge of the higher worlds. They can only do so if they work energetically at themselves. At a time when the conditions of material life were simpler, the attainment of spiritual knowledge was also easier. Objects of veneration and worship stood out in clearer relief from the ordinary things of the world. In an epoch of criticism ideals are lowered; other feelings take the place of veneration, respect, adoration, and wonder. Our own age thrusts these feelings further and further into the background, so that they can only be conveyed to man through his every-day life in a very small degree. Whoever seeks higher knowledge must create it for himself. He must instill it into his soul. It cannot be done by study; it can only be done through life. Whoever, therefore, wishes to become a student of higher knowledge must assiduously cultivate this inner life of devotion. Everywhere in his environment and his experiences he must seek motives of admiration and homage. If I meet a man and blame him for his shortcomings, I rob myself of power to attain higher knowledge; but if I try to enter lovingly into his merits, I gather such power. The student must continually be intent upon following this advice. The spiritually experienced know how much they owe to the circumstance that in face of all things they ever again turn to the good, and withhold adverse judgement. But this must not remain an external rule of life; rather it must take possession of our innermost soul. Man has it in his power to perfect himself and, in time, completely to transform himself. But this transformation must take place in his innermost self, in his thought-life. It is not enough that I show respect only in my outward bearing; I must have this respect in my thoughts. The student must begin by absorbing this devotion into this thought-life. He must be wary of thoughts of disrespect, of adverse criticism, existing in his consciousness, and he must endeavor straightaway to cultivate thoughts of devotion.

Every moment that we set ourselves to discover in our consciousness whatever there remains in it of adverse, disparaging and critical judgement of the world and of life; every such moment brings us nearer to higher knowledge. And we rise rapidly when we fill our consciousness in such moments with thoughts evoking in us admiration, respect and veneration for the world and for life. It is well known to those experienced in these

matters that in every such moment powers are awakened which otherwise remain dormant. In this way the spiritual eyes of man are opened. He begins to see things around him which he could not have seen before. He begins to understand that hitherto he had only seen a part of the world around him. A human being standing before him now presents a new and different aspect. Of course, this rule of life alone will not yet enable him to see, for instance, what is described as the human aura, because for this still higher training is necessary. But he can rise to this higher training if he has previously undergone a rigorous training in devotion. (In the last chapter of his book *Theosophy*, the author describes fully the *Path of Knowledge*; here it is intended to give some practical details.)

Noiseless and unnoticed by the outer world is the treading of the *Path of Knowledge*. No change need be noticed in the student. He performs his duties as hitherto; he attends to his business as before. The transformation goes on only in the inner part of the soul hidden from outward sight. At first his entire inner life is flooded by this basic feeling of devotion for everything which is truly venerable. His entire soul-life finds in this fundamental feeling its pivot. Just as the sun's rays vivify everything living, so does reverence in the student vivify all feelings of the soul.

It is not easy, at first, to believe that feelings like reverence and respect have anything to do with cognition. This is due to the fact that we are inclined to set cognition aside as a faculty by itself — one that stands in no relation to what otherwise occurs in the soul. In so thinking we do not bear in mind that it is the soul which exercises the faculty of cognition; and feelings are for the soul what food is for the body. If we give the body stones in place of bread, its activity will cease. It is the same with the soul. Veneration, homage, devotion are like nutriment making it healthy and strong, especially strong for the activity of cognition. Disrespect, antipathy, underestimation of what deserves recognition, all exert a paralyzing and withering effect on this faculty of cognition. For the spiritually experienced this fact is visible in the aura. A soul which harbors feelings of reverence and devotion produces a change in its aura. Certain spiritual colorings, as they may be called, yellow-red and brown-red in tone, vanish and are replaced by blue-red tints. Thereby the cognitional faculty is ripened; it receives intelligence of facts in its environment of which it had hitherto no idea. Reverence awakens in the soul a sympathetic power through which we attract qualities in the beings around us, which would otherwise remain concealed.

The power obtained through devotion can be rendered still more effective when the life of feeling is enriched by yet another quality. This consists in giving oneself up less and less to impressions of the outer world, and to develop instead a vivid inner life. A person who darts from one impression of the outer world to another, who constantly seeks distraction, cannot find

the way to higher knowledge. The student must not blunt himself to the outer world, but while lending himself to its impressions, he should be directed by his rich inner life. When passing through a beautiful mountain district, the traveler with depth of soul and wealth of feeling has different experiences from one who is poor in feeling. Only what we experience within ourselves unlocks for us the beauties of the outer world. One person sails across the ocean, and only a few inward experiences pass through his soul; another will hear the eternal language of the cosmic spirit; for him are unveiled the mysterious riddles of existence. We must learn to remain in touch with our own feelings and ideas if we wish to develop any intimate relationship with the outer world. The outer world with all its phenomena is filled with splendor, but we must have experienced the divine within ourselves before we can hope to discover it in our environment.

The student is told to set apart moments in his daily life in which to withdraw into himself, quietly and alone. He is not to occupy himself at such moments with the affairs of his own ego. This would result in the contrary of what is intended. He should rather let his experiences and the messages from the outer world re-echo within his own completely silent self. At such silent moments every flower, every animal, every action will unveil to him secrets undreamt of. And thus he will prepare himself to receive quite new impressions of the outer world through quite different eyes. The desire to enjoy impression after impression merely blunts the faculty of cognition; the latter, however, is nurtured and cultivated if the enjoyment once experienced is allowed to reveal its message. Thus the student must accustom himself not merely to let the enjoyment reverberate, as it were, but rather to renounce any further enjoyment, and work upon the past experience. The peril here is very great. Instead of working inwardly, it is very easy to fall into the opposite habit of trying to exploit the enjoyment. Let no one underestimate the fact that immense sources of error here confront the student. He must pass through a host of tempters of his soul. They would all harden his ego and imprison it within itself. He should rather open it wide to all the world. It is necessary that he should seek enjoyment, for only through enjoyment can the outer world reach him. If he blunts himself to enjoyment he is like a plant which cannot any longer draw nourishment from its environment. Yet if he stops short at the enjoyment he shuts himself up within himself. He will only be something to himself and nothing to the world. However much he may live within himself, however intensely he may cultivate his ego — the world will reject him. To the world he is dead. The student of higher knowledge considers enjoyment only as a means of ennobling himself for the world. Enjoyment is to him like a scout informing him about the world; but once instructed by enjoyment, he passes on to work. He does not learn in order to accumulate learning as his own treasure, but in order that he may devote his learning to the service of the world.

In all spiritual science there is a fundamental principle which cannot be transgressed without sacrificing success, and it should be impressed on the student in every form of esoteric training. It runs as follows: *All knowledge pursued merely for the enrichment of personal learning and the accumulation of personal treasure leads you away from the path; but all knowledge pursued for growth to ripeness within the process of human ennoblement and cosmic development brings you a step forward.* This law must be strictly observed, and no student is genuine until he has adopted it as a guide for his whole life. This truth can be expressed in the following short sentence: *Every idea which does not become your ideal slays a force in your soul; every idea which becomes your ideal creates within you life-forces.*

### **Inner Tranquility**

At the very beginning of his course, the student is directed to the path of veneration and the development of the inner life. Spiritual science now also gives him practical rules by observing which he may tread that path and develop that inner life. These practical rules have no arbitrary origin. They rest upon ancient experience and ancient wisdom, and are given out in the same manner, wheresoever the ways to higher knowledge are indicated. All true teachers of the spiritual life are in agreement as to the substance of these rules, even though they do not always clothe them in the same words. This difference, which is of a minor character and is more apparent than real, is due to circumstances which need not be dwelt upon here.

No teacher of the spiritual life wishes to establish a mastery over other persons by means of such rules. He would not tamper with anyone's independence. Indeed, none respect and cherish human independence more than the spiritually experienced. It was stated in the preceding pages that the bond of union embracing all initiates is spiritual, and that two laws form, as it were, clasps by which the component parts of this bond are held together. Whenever the initiate leaves his enclosed spiritual sphere and steps forth before the world, he must immediately take a third law into account. It is this: Adapt each one of your actions, and frame each one of your words in such a way that you infringe upon no one's free-will.

The recognition that all true teachers of the spiritual life are permeated through and through with this principle will convince all who follow the practical rules proffered to them that they need sacrifice none of their independence.

One of the first of these rules can be expressed somewhat in the following words of our language: *Provide for yourself moments of inner tranquility, and in these moments learn to distinguish between the essential and the*

*non-essential*. It is said advisedly: “expressed in the words of our language.” Originally all rules and teachings of spiritual science were expressed in a symbolical sign-language, some understanding of which must be acquired before its whole meaning and scope can be realized. This understanding is dependent on the first steps toward higher knowledge, and these steps result from the exact observation of such rules as are here given. For all who earnestly will, the path stands open to tread.

Simple, in truth, is the above rule concerning moments of inner tranquility; equally simple is its observation. But it only achieves its purpose when it is observed in as earnest and strict a manner as it is, in itself, simple. How this rule is to be observed will, therefore, be explained without digression.

The student must set aside a small part of his daily life in which to concern himself with something quite different from the objects of his daily occupation. The way, also, in which he occupies himself at such a time must differ entirely from the way in which he performs the rest of his daily duties. But this does not mean that what he does in the time thus set apart has no connection with his daily work. On the contrary, he will soon find that just these secluded moments, when sought in the right way, give him full power to perform his daily task[s]. Nor must it be supposed that the observance of this rule will really encroach upon the time needed for the performance of his duties. Should anyone really have no more time at his disposal, five minutes a day will suffice. It all depends on the manner in which these five minutes are spent.

During these periods the student should wrest himself entirely free from his work-a-day life. His thoughts and feelings should take on a different coloring. His joys and sorrows, his cares, experiences and actions must pass in review before his soul; and he must adopt such a position that he may regard all his sundry experiences from a higher point of view.

We need only bear in mind how, in ordinary life, we regard the experiences and actions of others quite differently from our own. This cannot be otherwise, for we are interwoven with our own actions and experiences, whereas those of others we only contemplate. Our aim in these moments of seclusion must be so to contemplate and judge our own actions and experiences as though they applied not to ourselves but to some other person. Suppose, for example, a heavy misfortune befalls us. How different would be our attitude toward a similar misfortune had it befallen our neighbor. This attitude cannot be blamed as unjustifiable; it is part of human nature, and applies equally to exceptional circumstances and to the daily affairs of life. The student must seek the power of confronting himself, at certain times, as a stranger. He must stand before himself with the inner tranquility of a judge. When this is attained, our



own experiences present themselves in a new light. As long as we are interwoven with them and stand, as it were, within them, we cling to the non-essential just as much as to the essential. If we attain the calm inner survey, the essential is severed from the non-essential. Sorrow and joy, every thought, every resolve, appear different when we confront ourselves in this way. It is as though we had spent the whole day in a place where we beheld the smallest objects at the same close range as the largest, and in the evening climbed a neighboring hill and surveyed the whole scene at a glance. Then the various parts appear related to each other in different proportions from those they bore when seen from within. This exercise will not and need not succeed with present occurrences of destiny, but it should be attempted by the student in connection with the events of destiny already experienced in the past. The value of such inner tranquil self-contemplation depends far less on what is actually contemplated than on our finding within ourselves the power which such inner tranquility develops.

For every human being bears a higher man within himself besides what we may call the work-a-day man. This higher man remains hidden until he is awakened. And each human being can himself alone awaken this higher being within himself. As long as this higher being is not awakened, the higher faculties slumbering in every human being, and leading to supersensible knowledge, will remain concealed. The student must resolve to persevere in the strict and earnest observation of the rule here given, so long as he does not feel within himself the fruits of this inner tranquility. To all who thus persevere the day will come when spiritual light will envelop them, and a new world will be revealed to an organ of sight of whose presence within them they were never aware.

And no change need take place in the outward life of the student in consequence of this new rule. He performs his duties and, at first, feels the same joys, sorrows, and experiences as before. In no way can it estrange him from life; he can rather devote himself the more thoroughly to this life for the remainder of the day, having gained a higher life in the moments set apart. Little by little this higher life will make its influence felt on his ordinary life. The tranquility of the moments set apart will also affect everyday existence. In his whole being he will grow calmer; he will attain firm assurance in all his actions, and cease to be put out of countenance by all manner of incidents. By thus advancing he will gradually become more and more his own guide, and allow himself less and less to be led by circumstances and external influences. He will soon discover how great a source of strength is available to him in these moments thus set apart. He will begin no longer to get angry at things which formerly annoyed him; countless things he formerly feared cease to alarm him. He acquires a new outlook on life. Formerly he may have approached some occupation in a fainthearted way. He would say: "Oh, I lack the power to do this as well as

I could wish.” Now this thought does not occur to him, but rather a quite different thought. Henceforth he says to himself: “I will summon all my strength to do my work as well as I possibly can.” And he suppresses the thought which makes him faint-hearted; for he knows that this very thought might be the cause of a worse performance on his part, and that in any case it cannot contribute to the improvement of his work. And thus thought after thought, each fraught with advantage to his whole life, flows into the student's outlook. They take the place of those that had a hampering, weakening effect. He begins to steer his own ship on a secure course through the waves of life, whereas it was formerly battered to and fro by these waves.

This calm and serenity react on the whole being. They assist the growth of the inner man, and, with the inner man, those faculties also grow which lead to higher knowledge. For it is by his progress in this direction that the student gradually reaches the point where he himself determines the manner in which the impressions of the outer world shall affect him. Thus he may hear a word spoken with the object of wounding or vexing him. Formerly it would indeed have wounded or vexed him, but now that he treads the path to higher knowledge, he is able — before the word has found its way to his inner self — to take from it the sting which gives it the power to wound or vex. Take another example. We easily become impatient when we are kept waiting, but — if we tread the path to higher knowledge — we so steep ourselves in our moments of calm with the feeling of the uselessness of impatience that henceforth, on every occasion of impatience, this feeling is immediately present within us. The impatience that was about to make itself felt vanishes, and an interval which would otherwise have been wasted in expressions of impatience will be filled by useful observations, which can be made while waiting.

Now, the scope and significance of these facts must be realized. We must bear in mind that the higher man within us is in constant development. But only the state of calm and serenity here described renders an orderly development possible. The waves of outward life constrain the inner man from all sides if, instead of mastering this outward life, it masters him. Such a man is like a plant which tries to expand in a cleft in the rock and is stunted in growth until new space is given it. No outward forces can supply space to the inner man. It can only be supplied by the inner calm which man himself gives to his soul. Outward circumstances can only alter the course of his outward life; they can never awaken the inner spiritual man. The student must himself give birth to a new and higher man within himself.

This higher man now becomes the inner ruler who directs the circumstances of the outer man with sure guidance. As long as the outer man has the upper hand and control, this inner man is his slave and

therefore cannot unfold his powers. If it depends on something other than myself whether I should get angry or not, I am not master of myself, or, to put it better, I have not yet found the ruler within myself. I must develop the faculty of letting the impressions of the outer world approach me only in the way in which I myself determine; then only do I become in the real sense a student. And only in as far as the student earnestly seeks this power can he reach the goal. It is of no importance how far anyone can go in a given time; the point is that he should earnestly seek. Many have striven for years without noticing any appreciable progress; but many of those who did not despair, but remained unshaken, have then quite suddenly achieved the inner victory.

No doubt a great effort is required in many stations of life to provide these moments of inner calm; but the greater the effort needed, the more important is the achievement. In spiritual science everything depends upon energy, inward truthfulness, and uncompromising sincerity with which we confront our own selves, with all our deeds and actions, as a complete stranger.

But only one side of the student's inner activity is characterized by this birth of his own higher being. Something else is needed in addition. Even if he confronts himself as a stranger it is only himself that he contemplates; he looks on those experiences and actions with which he is connected through his particular station of life. He must now disengage himself from it and rise beyond to a purely human level, which no longer has anything to do with his own special situation. He must pass on to the contemplation of those things which would concern him as a human being, even if he lived under quite different circumstances and in quite a different situation. In this way something begins to live within him which ranges above the purely personal. His gaze is directed to worlds higher than those with which every-day life connects him. And thus he begins to feel and realize, as an inner experience, that he belongs to those higher worlds. These are worlds concerning which his senses and his daily occupation can tell him nothing. Thus he now shifts the central point of his being to the inner part of his nature. He listens to the voices within him which speak to him in his moments of tranquility; he cultivates an intercourse with the spiritual world. He is removed from the every-day world. Its noise is silenced. All around him there is silence. He puts away everything that reminds him of such impressions from without. Calm inward contemplation and converse with the purely spiritual world fill his soul. — Such tranquil contemplation must become a natural necessity in the life of the student. He is now plunged in a world of thought. He must develop a living feeling for this silent thought-activity. He must learn to love what the spirit pours into him. He will soon cease to feel that this thought-world is less real than the every-day things which surround him. He begins to deal with his thoughts as with things in space, and the moment approaches

when he begins to feel that which reveals itself in the silent inward thought-work to be much higher, much more real, than the things in space. He discovers that something living expresses itself in this thought-world. He sees that his thoughts do not merely harbor shadow-pictures, but that through them hidden beings speak to him. Out of the silence, speech becomes audible to him. Formerly sound only reached him through his ear; now it resounds through his soul. An inner language, an inner word is revealed to him. This moment, when first experienced, is one of greatest rapture for the student. An inner light is shed over the whole external world, and a second life begins for him. Through his being there pours a divine stream from a world of divine rapture.

This life of the soul in thought, which gradually widens into a life in spiritual being, is called by Gnosis, and by Spiritual Science, *Meditation* (contemplative reflection). This meditation is the means to supersensible knowledge. But the student in such moments must not merely indulge in feelings; he must not have indefinite sensations in his soul. That would only hinder him from reaching true spiritual knowledge. His thoughts must be clear, sharp and definite, and he will be helped in this if he does not cling blindly to the thoughts that rise within him. Rather must he permeate himself with the lofty thoughts by which men already advanced and possessed of the spirit were inspired at such moments. He should start with the writings which themselves had their origin in just such revelation during meditation. In the mystic, gnostic and spiritual scientific literature of today the student will find such writings, and in them the material for his meditation. The seekers of the spirit have themselves set down in such writings the thoughts of the divine science which the Spirit has directed his messengers to proclaim to the world.

Through such meditation a complete transformation takes place in the student. He begins to form quite new conceptions of reality. All things acquire a fresh value for him. It cannot be repeated too often that this transformation does not alienate him from the world. He will in no way be estranged from his daily tasks and duties, for he comes to realize that the most insignificant action he has to accomplish, the most insignificant experience which offers itself to him, stands in connection with cosmic beings and cosmic events. When once this connection is revealed to him in his moments of contemplation, he comes to his daily activities with a new, fuller power. For now he knows that his labor and his suffering are given and endured for the sake of a great, spiritual, cosmic whole. Not weariness, but strength to live springs from meditation.

With firm step the student passes through life. No matter what it may bring him, he goes forward erect. In the past he knew not why he labored and suffered, but now he knows. It is obvious that such meditation leads more surely to the goal if conducted under the direction of experienced

persons who know of themselves how everything may best be done; and their advice and guidance should be sought. Truly, no one loses his freedom thereby. What would otherwise be mere uncertain groping in the dark becomes under this direction purposeful work. All who apply to those possessing knowledge and experience in these matters will never apply in vain, only they must realize that what they seek is the advice of a friend, not the domination of a would-be ruler. It will always be found that they who really know are the most modest of men, and that nothing is further from their nature than what is called the lust for power.

When, by means of meditation, a man rises to union with the spirit, he brings to life the eternal in him, which is limited by neither birth nor death. The existence of this eternal being can only be doubted by those who have not themselves experienced it. Thus meditation is the way which also leads man to the knowledge, to the contemplation of his eternal, indestructible, essential being; and it is only through meditation that man can attain to such knowledge. Gnosis and Spiritual Science tell of the eternal nature of this being and of its reincarnation. The question is often asked: Why does a man know nothing of his experiences beyond the borders of life and death? Not thus should we ask, but rather: How can we attain such knowledge? In right meditation the path is opened. This alone can revive the memory of experiences beyond the border of life and death. Everyone can attain this knowledge; in each one of us lies the faculty of recognizing and contemplating for ourselves what genuine Mysticism, Spiritual Science, Anthroposophy, and Gnosis teach. Only the right means must be chosen. Only a being with ears and eyes can apprehend sounds and colors; nor can the eye perceive if the light which makes things visible is wanting. Spiritual Science gives the means of developing the spiritual ears and eyes, and of kindling the spiritual light; and this method of spiritual training: (1) *Preparation*; this develops the spiritual senses. (2) *Enlightenment*; this kindles the spiritual light. (3) *Initiation*; this establishes intercourse with the higher spiritual beings.

## II

### The Stages of Initiation

The information given in the following chapters constitutes steps in an esoteric training, the name and character of which will be understood by all who apply this information in the right way. It refers to the three stages through which the training of the spiritual life leads to a certain degree of initiation. But only so much will here be explained as can be publicly imparted. These are merely indications extracted from a still deeper and more intimate doctrine. In esoteric training itself a quite definite course of instruction is followed. Certain exercises enable the soul to attain to a conscious intercourse with the spiritual world. These exercises bear about the same relation to what will be imparted in the following pages, as the instruction given in a higher strictly disciplined school bears to the incidental training. But impatient dabbling, devoid of earnest perseverance, can lead to nothing at all. The study of Spiritual Science can only be successful if the student retain what has already been indicated in the preceding chapter, and on the basis of this proceed further.

The three stages which the above-mentioned tradition specifies, are as follows: (1) *preparation*; (2) *enlightenment*; (3) *initiation*. It is not altogether necessary that the first of these three stages should be completed before the second can be begun, nor that the second, in turn, be completed before the third be started. In certain respects it is possible to partake of enlightenment, and even of initiation, and in other respects still be in the preparatory stage. Yet it will be necessary to spend a certain time in the stage of preparation before any enlightenment can begin; and, at least in some respects, enlightenment must be completed before it is even possible to enter upon the stage of initiation. But in describing them it is necessary, for the sake of clarity, that the three stages be made to follow in order.

#### *Preparation*

Preparation consists in a strict and definite cultivation of the life of thought and feeling, through which the psycho-spiritual body becomes equipped with higher senses and organs of activity in the same way that natural forces have fitted the physical body with organs built out of indeterminate living matter.

To begin with, the attention of the soul is directed to certain events in the world that surrounds us. Such events are, on the one hand, life that is budding, growing, and flourishing, and on the other hand, all phenomena connected with fading, decaying, and withering. The student can observe these events simultaneously, wherever he turns his eyes and on every

occasion they naturally evoke in him feelings and thoughts; but in ordinary circumstances he does not devote himself sufficiently to them. He hurries on too quickly from impression to impression. It is necessary, therefore, that he should fix his attention intently and consciously upon these phenomena. Wherever he observes a definite kind of blooming and flourishing, he must banish everything else from his soul, and entirely surrender himself, for a short time, to this one impression. He will soon convince himself that a feeling which heretofore in a similar case, would merely have flitted through his soul, now swells out and assumes a powerful and energetic form. He must now allow this feeling to reverberate quietly within himself while keeping inwardly quite still. He must cut himself off from the outer world, and simply and solely follow what his soul tells him of this blossoming and flourishing.

Yet it must not be thought that much progress can be made if the senses are blunted to the world. First look at the things as keenly and as intently as you possibly can; then only let the feeling which expands to life, and the thought which arises in the soul, take possession of you. The point is that the attention should be directed with perfect inner balance upon both phenomena. If the necessary tranquility be attained and you surrender yourself to the feeling which expands to life in the soul, then, in due time, the following experience will ensue. Thoughts and feelings of a new kind and unknown before will be noticed uprising in the soul. Indeed, the more often the attention be fixed alternately upon something growing, blossoming and flourishing, and upon something else that is fading and decaying, the more vivid will these feelings become. And just as the eyes and ears of the physical body are built by natural forces out of living matter, so will the organs of clairvoyance build themselves out of the feelings and thoughts thus evoked. A quite definite form of feeling is connected with growth and expansion, and another equally definite with all that is fading and decaying. But this is only the case if the effort be made to cultivate these feelings in the way indicated. It is possible to describe approximately what these feelings are like. A full conception of them is within the reach of all who undergo these inner experiences.

If the attention be frequently fixed on the phenomena of growing, blooming and flourishing, a feeling remotely allied to the sensation of a sunrise will ensue, while the phenomena of fading and decaying will produce an experience comparable, in the same way, to the slow rising of the moon on the horizon. Both these feelings are forces which, when duly cultivated and developed to ever increasing intensity, lead to the most significant spiritual results. A new world is opened to the student if he systematically and deliberately surrenders himself to such feelings. The soul-world, the so-called astral plane, begins to dawn upon him. Growth and decay are no longer facts which make indefinite impressions on him as of old, but rather they form themselves into spiritual lines and figures of

which he had previously suspected nothing. And these lines and figures have, for the different phenomena, different forms. A blooming flower, an animal in the process of growth, a tree that is decaying, evoke in his soul different lines. The soul world (astral plane) broadens out slowly before him. These lines and figures are in no sense arbitrary. Two students who have reached the corresponding stage of development will always see the same lines and figures under the same conditions. Just as a round table will be seen as round by two normal persons, and not as round by one and square by the other, so too, at the sight of a flower, the same spiritual figure is presented to the soul. And just as the forms of animals and plants are described in ordinary natural history, so too, the spiritual scientist describes or draws the spiritual forms of the process of growth and decay, according to species and kind.

If the student has progressed so far that he can perceive the spiritual forms of those phenomena which are physically visible to his external sight, he is then not far from the stage where he will behold things which have no physical existence, and which therefore remain entirely hidden (occult) from those who have not received suitable instruction and training.

It should be emphasized that the student must never lose himself in speculations on the meaning of one thing or another. Such intellectualizing will only draw him away from the right road. He should look out on the world with keen, healthy senses and quickened power of observation, and then give himself up to the feeling that arises within him. He should not try to make out, through intellectual speculation, the meaning of things, but rather allow the things to disclose themselves. It should be remarked that artistic feeling, when coupled with a quiet introspective nature, forms the best preliminary condition for the development of spiritual faculties. This feeling pierces through the superficial aspect of things, and in so doing touches their secrets.

A further point of importance is what spiritual science calls orientation in the higher worlds. This is attained when the student is permeated, through and through, with the conscious realization that feelings and thoughts are just as much veritable realities as are tables and chairs in the world of the physical senses. In the soul and thought world, feelings and thoughts react upon each other just as do physical objects in the physical world. As long as the student is not vividly permeated with this consciousness, he will not believe that a wrong thought in his mind may have as devastating an effect upon other thoughts that spread life in the thought world as the effect wrought by a bullet fired at random upon the physical objects it hits. He will perhaps never allow himself to perform a physically visible action which he considers to be wrong, though he will not shrink from harboring wrong thoughts and feelings, for these appear harmless to the rest of the world. There can be no progress, however, on the path to higher



knowledge unless we guard our thoughts and feelings in just the same way we guard our steps in the physical world. If we see a wall before us, we do not attempt to dash right through it, but turn aside. In other words, we guide ourselves by the laws of the physical world. There are such laws, too, for the soul and thought world, only they cannot impose themselves on us from without. They must flow out of the life of the soul itself. This can be attained if we forbid ourselves to harbor wrong thoughts and feelings. All arbitrary flitting to and fro in thought, all accidental ebbing and flowing of emotion must be forbidden in the same way. In so doing we do not become deficient in feeling. On the contrary, if we regulate our inner life in this way, we shall soon find ourselves becoming rich in feelings and creative with genuine imagination. In the place of petty emotionalism and capricious flights of thought, there appear significant emotions and thoughts that are fruitful. Feelings and thoughts of this kind lead the student to orientation in the spiritual world. He gains a right position in relation to the things of the spiritual world; a distinct and definite result comes into effect in his favor. Just as he, as a physical man, finds his way among physical things, so, too, his path now leads him between growth and decay, which he has already come to know in the way described above. On the one hand, he follows all processes of growing and flourishing and, on the other, of withering and decaying in a way that is necessary for his own and the world's advancement.

The student has also to bestow a further care on the world of sound. He must discriminate between sounds that are produced by the so-called inert (lifeless) bodies, for instance, a bell, or a musical instrument, or a falling mass, and those which proceed from a living creature (an animal or a human being.) When a bell is struck, we hear the sound and connect a pleasant feeling with it; but when we hear the cry of an animal, we can, besides our own feeling, detect through it the manifestation of an inward experience of the animal, whether of pleasure or pain. It is with the latter kind of sound that the student sets to work. He must concentrate his whole attention on the fact that the sound tells him of something that lies outside his own soul. He must immerse himself in this foreign thing. He must closely unite his own feeling with the pleasure or pain of which the sound tells him. He must get beyond the point of caring whether, for him, the sound is pleasant or unpleasant, agreeable or disagreeable, and his soul must be filled with whatever is occurring in the being from which the sound proceeds. Through such exercises, if systematically and deliberately performed, the student will develop within himself the faculty of intermingling, as it were, with the being from which the sound proceeds. A person sensitive to music will find it easier than one who is unmusical to cultivate his inner life in this way; but no one should suppose that a mere sense for music can take the place of this inner activity. The student must learn to feel in this way in the face of the whole of nature. This implants a new faculty in his world of thought and feeling. Through her

resounding tones, the whole of nature begins to whisper her secrets to the student. What was hitherto merely incomprehensible noise to his soul becomes by this means a coherent language of nature. And whereas hitherto he only heard sound from the so-called inanimate objects, he now is aware of a new language of the soul. Should he advance further in this inner culture, he will soon learn that he can hear what hitherto he did not even surmise. He begins to hear with the soul.

To this, one thing more must be added before the highest point in this region can be attained. Of very great importance for the development of the student is the way in which he listens to others when they speak. He must accustom himself to do this in such a way that, while listening, his inner self is absolutely silent. If someone expresses an opinion and another listens, assent or dissent will, generally speaking, stir in the inner self of the listener. Many people in such cases feel themselves impelled to an expression of their assent, or more especially, of their dissent. In the student, all such assent or dissent must be silenced. It is not imperative that he should suddenly alter his way of living by trying to attain at all times to this complete inner silence. He will have to begin by doing so in special cases, deliberately selected by himself. Then quite slowly and by degrees, this new way of listening will creep into his habits, as of itself. In spiritual research this is systematically practiced. The student feels it his duty to listen, by way of practice, at certain times to the most contradictory views and, at the same time, bring entirely to silence all assent, and more especially, all adverse criticism. The point is that in so doing, not only all purely intellectual judgment be silenced, but also all feelings of displeasure, denial, or even assent. The student must at all times be particularly watchful lest such feelings, even when not on the surface, should still lurk in the innermost recess of the soul. He must listen, for example, to the statements of people who are, in some respects, far beneath him, and yet while doing so suppress every feeling of greater knowledge or superiority. It is useful for everyone to listen in this way to children, for even the wisest can learn incalculably much from children. The student can thus train himself to listen to the words of others quite selflessly, completely shutting down his own person and his opinions and way of feeling. When he practices listening without criticism, even when a completely contradictory opinion is advanced, when the most hopeless mistake is committed before him, he then learns, little by little, to blend himself with the being of another and become identified with it. Then he hears through the words into the soul of the other. Through continued exercise of this kind, sound becomes the right medium for the perception of soul and spirit. Of course it implies the very strictest self-discipline, but the latter leads to a high goal. When these exercises are practiced in connection with the other already given, dealing with the sounds of nature, the soul develops a new sense of hearing. She is now able to perceive manifestations from the spiritual world which do not find their expression

in sounds perceptible to the physical ear. The perception of the “inner word” awakens. Gradually truths reveal themselves to the student from the spiritual world. He hears speech uttered to him in a spiritual way. Only to those who, by selfless listening, train themselves to be really receptive from within, in stillness, unmoved by personal opinion or feeling only to such can the higher beings speak of whom spiritual science tells. As long as one hurls any personal opinion or feeling against the speaker to whom one must listen, the beings of the spiritual world remain silent.

All higher truths are attained through such inwardly instilled speech, and what we hear from the lips of a true spiritual teacher has been experienced by him in this manner. But this does not mean that it is unimportant for us to acquaint ourselves with the writings of spiritual science before we can ourselves hear such inwardly instilled speech. On the contrary, the reading of such writings and the listening to the teachings of spiritual science are themselves means of attaining personal knowledge. Every sentence of spiritual science we hear is of a nature to direct the mind to the point which must be reached before the soul can experience real progress. To the practice of all that has here been indicated must be added the ardent study of what the spiritual researchers impart to the world. In all esoteric training such study belongs to the preparatory period, and all other methods will prove ineffective if due receptivity for the teachings of the spiritual researcher is lacking. For since these instructions are culled from the living inner word, from the living inwardly instilled speech, they are themselves gifted with spiritual life. They are not mere words; they are living powers. And while you follow the words of one who knows, while you read a book that springs from real inner experience, powers are at work in your soul which make you clairvoyant, just as natural forces have created out of living matter your eyes and your ears.

### *Enlightenment*

Enlightenment proceeds from very simple processes. Here, too, it is a matter of developing certain feelings and thoughts which slumber in every human being and must be awakened. It is only when these simple processes are carried out with unflinching patience, continuously and conscientiously, that they can lead to the perception of the inner light-forms. The first step is taken by observing different natural objects in a particular way; for instance, a transparent and beautifully formed stone (a crystal), a plant, and an animal. The student should endeavor, at first, to direct his whole attention to a comparison of the stone with the animal in the following manner. The thoughts here mentioned should pass through his soul accompanied by vivid feelings, and no other thought, no other feeling, must mingle with them and disturb what should be an intensely attentive observation. The student says to himself: “The stone has a form; the animal also has a form. The stone remains motionless in its place. The

animal changes its place. It is instinct (desire) which causes the animal to change its place. Instincts, too, are served by the form of the animal. Its organs and limbs are fashioned in accordance with these instincts. The form of the stone is not fashioned in accordance with desires, but in accordance with desireless force.” (The fact here mentioned, in its bearing on the contemplation of crystals, is in many ways distorted by those who have only heard of it in an outward, exoteric manner, and in this way such practices as crystal-gazing have their origin. Such manipulations are based on a misunderstanding. They have been described in many books, but they never form the subject of genuine esoteric teaching.)

By sinking deeply into such thoughts, and while doing so, observing the stone and the animal with rapt attention, there arise in the soul two quite separate kinds of feelings. From the stone there flows into the soul the one kind of feeling, and from the animal the other kind. The attempt will probably not succeed at first, but little by little, with genuine and patient practice, these feelings ensue. Only, this exercise must be practiced over and over again. At first the feelings are only present as long as the observation lasts. Later on they continue, and then they grow to something which remains living in the soul. The student has then but to reflect, and both feelings will always arise, even without the contemplation of an external object. Out of these feelings and the thoughts that are bound up with them, the organs of clairvoyance are formed. If the plant should then be included in this observation, it will be noticed that the feeling flowing from it lies between the feelings derived from the stone and the animal, in both quality and degree. The organs thus formed are spiritual eyes. The student gradually learns, by their means, to see something like soul and spirit colors. The spiritual world with its lines and figures remains dark as long as he has only attained what has been described as preparation; through enlightenment this world becomes light. Here it must also be noted that the words “dark” and “light,” as well as the other expressions used, only approximately describe what is meant. This cannot be otherwise if ordinary language is used, for this language was created to suit physical conditions. Spiritual science describes that which, for clairvoyant organs, flows from the stone, as blue, or blue-red; and that which is felt as coming from the animal as red or red-yellow. In reality, colors of a spiritual kind are seen. The color proceeding the plant is green which little by little turns into a light ethereal pink. The plant is actually that product of nature which in higher worlds resembles, in certain respects, its constitution in the physical world. The same does not apply to the stone and the animal. It must now be clearly understood that the above-mentioned colors only represent the principal shades in the stone, plant and animal kingdom. In reality, all possible intermediate shades are present. Every stone, every plant, every animal has its own particular shade of color. In addition to these there are also the beings of the higher worlds who never incarnate physically, but who have their colors, often

wonderful, often horrible. Indeed, the wealth of color in these higher worlds is immeasurably greater than in the physical world.

Once the faculty of seeing with spiritual eyes has been acquired, one then encounters sooner or later the beings here mentioned, some of them higher, some lower than man himself--beings that never enter physical reality.

If this point has been reached, the way to a great deal lies open. But it is inadvisable to proceed further without paying careful heed to what is said or otherwise imparted by the spiritual researcher. And for that, too, which has been described, attention paid to such experienced guidance is the very best thing. Moreover, if a man has the strength and the endurance to travel so far that he fulfills the elementary conditions of enlightenment, he will assuredly seek and find the right guidance.

But in any circumstances, one precaution is necessary, failing which it were better to leave untrodden all steps on the path to higher knowledge. It is necessary that the student should lose none of his qualities as a good and noble man, or his receptivity for all physical reality. Indeed, throughout his training he must continually increase his moral strength, his inner purity, and his power of observation. To give an example: during the elementary exercises on enlightenment, the student must take care always to enlarge his sympathy for the animal and the human worlds, and his sense for the beauty of nature. Failing this care, such exercises would continually blunt that feeling and that sense; the heart would become hardened, and the senses blunted, and that could only lead to perilous results.

How enlightenment proceeds if the student rises, in the sense of the foregoing exercises, from the stone, the plant, and the animal, up to man, and how, after enlightenment, under all circumstances the union of the soul with the spiritual world is effected, leading to initiation--with these things the following chapters will deal, in as far as they can and may do so.

In our time the path to spiritual science is sought by many. It is sought in many ways, and many dangerous and even despicable practices are attempted. It is for this reason that they who claim to know something of the truth in these matters place before others the possibility of learning something of esoteric training. Only so much is here imparted as accords with this possibility. It is necessary that something of the truth should become known, in order to prevent error causing great harm. No harm can come to anyone following the way here described, so long as he does not force matters. Only, one thing should be noted: no student should spend more time and strength upon these exercises than he can spare with due

regard to his station in life and to his duties; nor should he change anything, for the time being, in the external conditions of his life through taking this path. Without patience no genuine results can be attained. After doing an exercise for a few minutes, the student must be able to stop and continue quietly his daily work, and not thought of these exercises should mingle with the day's work. NO one is of use as an esoteric student or will ever attain results of real value who has not learned to wait in the highest and best sense of the word.

### *The Control of Thoughts and Feelings*

When the student seeks the path leading to higher knowledge in the way described in the preceding chapter, he should not omit to fortify himself; throughout his work, with one ever present thought. He must never cease repeating to himself that he may have made quite considerable progress after a certain interval of time, though it may not be apparent to him in the way he perhaps expected; otherwise he can easily lose heart and abandon all attempts after a short time. The powers and faculties to be developed are of a most subtle kind, and differ entirely in their nature from the conceptions previously formed by the student. He had been accustomed to occupy himself exclusively with the physical world; the world of spirit and soul had been concealed from his vision and concepts. It is therefore not surprising if he does not immediately notice the powers of soul and spirit now developing in him. In this respect there is a possibility of discouragement for those setting out on the path to higher knowledge, if they ignore the experience gathered by responsible investigators. The teacher is aware of the progress made by his pupil long before the latter is conscious of it. He knows how the delicate spiritual eyes begin to form themselves long before the pupil is aware of this, and a great part of what he has to say is couched in such terms as to prevent the pupil from losing patience and perseverance before he can himself gain knowledge of his own progress. The teacher, as we know, can confer upon the pupil no powers which are not already latent within him, and his sole function is to assist in the awakening of slumbering faculties. But what he imparts out of his own experience is a pillar of strength for the one wishing to penetrate through darkness to light. Many abandon the path to higher knowledge soon after having set foot upon it, because their progress is not immediately apparent to them. And even when the first experiences begin to dawn upon the pupil, he is apt to regard them as illusions, because he had formed quite different conceptions of what he was going to experience. He loses courage, either because he regards these first experiences as being of no value, or because they appear to him to be so insignificant that he cannot believe they will lead him to any appreciable results within a measurable time. Courage and self-confidence are two beacons which must never be extinguished on the path to higher knowledge. No one will ever travel far who cannot bring himself to repeat,

over and over again, an exercise which has failed, apparently, for a countless number of times.

Long before any distinct perception of progress, there rises in the student, from the hidden depths of the soul, a feeling that he is on the right path. This feeling should be cherished and fostered, for it can develop into a trustworthy guide. Above all, it is imperative to extirpate the idea that any fantastic, mysterious practices are required for the attainment of higher knowledge. It must be clearly realized that a start has to be made with the thoughts and feelings with which we continually live, and that these feelings and thoughts must merely be given a new direction. Everyone must say to himself: *“In my own world of thought and feeling the deepest mysteries lie hidden, only hitherto I have been unable to perceive them.”* In the end it all resolves itself into the fact that man ordinarily carries body, soul and spirit about with him, and yet is conscious in a true sense only of his body, and not of his soul and spirit. The student becomes conscious of soul and spirit, just as the ordinary person is conscious of his body. Hence it is highly important to give the proper direction to thoughts and feelings, for then only can the perception be developed of all that is invisible in ordinary life. One of the ways by which this development may be carried out will now be indicated. Again, like almost everything else so far explained, it is quite a simple matter. Yet its results are of the greatest consequence, if the necessary devotion and sympathy be applied.

Let the student place before himself the small seed of a plant, and while contemplating this insignificant object, form with intensity the right kind of thoughts, and through these thoughts develop certain feelings. In the first place let him clearly grasp what he really sees with his eyes. Let him describe to himself the shape, color and all other qualities of the seed. Then let his mind dwell upon the following train of thought: “Out of the seed, if planted in the soil, a plant of complex structure will grow.” Let him build up this plant in his imagination, and reflect as follows: *“What I am now picturing to myself in my imagination will later on be enticed from the seed by the forces of earth and light. If I had before me an artificial object which imitated the seed to such a deceptive degree that my eyes could not distinguish it from a real seed, no forces of earth or light could avail to produce from it a plant.”* If the student thoroughly grasps this thought so that it becomes an inward experience, he will also be able to form the following thought and couple it with the right feeling: *“All that will ultimately grow out of the seed is now secretly enfolded within it as the force of the whole plant. In the artificial imitation of the seed there is no such force present. And yet both appear alike to my eyes. The real seed, therefore, contains something invisible which is not present in the imitation.”* It is on this invisible something that thought and feeling are to be concentrated. (Anyone objecting that a microscopical examination would reveal the difference between the real seed and the imitation would

only show that he had failed to grasp the point. The intention is not to investigate the physical nature of the object, but to use it for the development of psycho-spiritual forces.)

Let the student fully realize that this invisible something will transmute itself later on into a visible plant, which he will have before him in its shape and color. Let him ponder on the thought: "*The invisible will become visible. If I could not think, then that which will only become visible later on could not already make its presence felt to me.*" Particular stress must be laid on the following point: what the student thinks he must also feel with intensity. In inner tranquility, the thought mentioned above must become a conscious inner experience, to the exclusion of all other thoughts and disturbances. And sufficient time must be taken to allow the thought and the feeling which is coupled with it to bore themselves into the soul, as it were. If this be accomplished in the right way, then after a time — possibly not until after numerous attempts — an inner force will make itself felt. This force will create new powers of perception. The grain of seed will appear as if enveloped in a small luminous cloud. In a sensible-supersensible way, it will be felt as a kind of flame. The center of this flame evokes the same feeling that one has when under the impression of the color lilac, and the edges as when under the impression of a bluish tone. What was formerly invisible now becomes visible, for it is created by the power of the thoughts and feelings we have stirred to life within ourselves. The plant itself will not become visible until later, so that the physically invisible now reveals itself in a spiritually visible way.

It is not surprising that all this appears to many as illusion. "What is the use of such visions," they ask, "and such hallucinations?" And many will thus fall away and abandon the path. But this is precisely the important point: not to confuse spiritual reality with imagination at this difficult stage of human evolution, and further-more, to have the courage to press onward and not become timorous and faint-hearted. On the other hand, however, the necessity must be emphasized of maintaining unimpaired and of perpetually cultivating that healthy sound sense which distinguishes truth from illusion. Fully conscious self-control must never be lost during all these exercises, and they must be accompanied by the same sane, sound thinking which is applied to the details of every-day life. To lapse into reveries would be fatal. The intellectual clarity, not to say the sobriety of thought, must never for a moment be dulled. The greatest mistake would be made if the student's mental balance were disturbed through such exercises, if he were hampered in judging the matters of his daily life as sanely and as soundly as before. He should examine himself again and again to find out if he has remained unaltered in relation to the circumstances among which he lives, or whether he may perhaps have become unbalanced. Above all, strict care must be taken not to drift at random into vague reveries, or to experiment with all kinds of exercises.



The trains of thought here indicated have been tested and practiced in esoteric training since the earliest times, and only such are given in these pages. Anyone attempting to use others devised by himself, or of which he may have heard or read at one place or another, will inevitably go astray and find himself on the path of boundless chimera.

As a further exercise to succeed the one just described, the following may be taken: Let the student place before him a plant which has attained the stage of full development. Now let him fill his mind with the thought that the time will come when this plant will wither and die. *“Nothing will be left of what I now see before me. But this plant will have developed seeds which, in their turn, will develop to new plants. I again become aware that in what I see, something lies hidden which I cannot see. I fill my mind entirely with the thought: this plant with its form and colors, will in time be no more. But the reflection that it produces seeds teaches me that it will not disappear into nothing. I cannot at present see with my eyes that which guards it from disappearance, any more than I previously could discern the plant in the grain of seed. Thus there is something in the plant which my eyes cannot see. If I let this thought live within me, and if the corresponding feeling be coupled with it, then, in due time, there will again develop in my soul a force which will ripen into a new perception.”* Out of the plant there again grows a kind of spiritual flame-form, which is, of course, correspondingly larger than the one previously described. The flame can be felt as being greenish-blue in the center, and yellowish-red at the outer edge.

It must be explicitly emphasized that the colors here described are not seen as the physical eyes see colors, but that through spiritual perception the same feeling is experienced as in the case of a physical color-impression. To apprehend blue spiritually means to have a sensation similar to the one experienced when the physical eye rests on the color blue. This fact must be noted by all who intend to rise to spiritual perception. Otherwise they will expect a mere repetition of the physical in the spiritual. This could only lead to the bitterest deception.

Anyone having reached this point of spiritual vision is the richer by a great deal, for he can perceive things not only in their present state of being but also in their process of growth and decay. He begins to see in all things the spirit, of which physical eyes can know nothing. And therewith he has taken the first step toward the gradual solution, through personal vision, of the secret of birth and death. For the outer senses a being comes into existence through birth, and passes away through death. This, however, is only because these senses cannot perceive the concealed spirit of the being. For the spirit, birth and death are merely a transformation, just as the unfolding of the flower from the bud is a transformation enacted before our physical eyes. But if we desire to learn this through personal

vision we must first awaken the requisite spiritual sense in the way here indicated.

In order to meet another objection, which may be raised by certain people who have some psychic experience, let it at once be admitted that there are shorter and simpler ways, and that there are persons who have acquired knowledge of the phenomena of birth and death through personal vision, without first going through all that has here been described. There are, in fact, people with considerable psychic gifts who need but a slight impulse in order to find themselves already developed. But they are the exceptions, and the methods described above are safer and apply equally to all. It is possible to acquire some knowledge of chemistry in an exceptional way, but if you wish to become a chemist you must follow the recognized and reliable course.

An error fraught with serious consequences would ensue if it were assumed that the desired result could be reached more easily if the grain of seed or the plant mentioned above were merely imagined, were merely pictured in the imagination. This might lead to results, but not so surely as the method here. The vision thus attained would, in most cases, be a mere fragment of the imagination, the transformation of which into genuine spiritual vision would still remain to be accomplished. It is not intended arbitrarily to create visions, but to allow reality to create them within oneself. The truth must well up from the depths of our own soul; it must not be conjured forth by our ordinary ego, but by the beings themselves whose spiritual truth we are to contemplate.

Once the student has found the beginnings of spiritual vision by means of such exercises, he may proceed to the contemplation of man himself. Simple phenomena of human life must first be chosen. But before making any attempt in this direction it is imperative for the student to strive for the absolute purity of his moral character. He must banish all thought of ever using knowledge gained in this way for his own personal benefit. He must be convinced that he would never, under any circumstances, avail himself in an evil sense of any power he may gain over his fellow-creatures. For this reason, all who seek to discover through personal vision the secrets in human nature must follow the golden rule of true spiritual science. This golden rule is as follows: *For every one step that you take in the pursuit of higher knowledge, take three steps in the perfection of your own character.* If this rule is observed, such exercise as the following may be attempted:

*Recall to mind some person whom you may have observed when he was filled with desire for some object. Direct your attention to this desire. It is best to recall to memory that moment when the desire was at its height, and it was still uncertain whether the object of the desire would be*

*attained. And now fill your mind with this recollection, and reflect on what you can thus observe. Maintain the utmost inner tranquility. Make the greatest possible effort to be blind and deaf to everything that may be going on around you, and take special heed that through the conception thus evoked a feeling should awaken in your soul. Allow this feeling to rise in your soul like a cloud on the cloudless horizon.* As a rule, of course, your reflection will be interrupted, because the person whom it concerns was not observed in this particular state of soul for a sufficient length of time. The attempt will most likely fail hundreds and hundreds of times. It is just a question of not losing patience. After many attempts you will succeed in experiencing a feeling in your soul corresponding to the state of soul of the person observed, and you will begin to notice that through this feeling a power grows in your soul that leads to spiritual insight into the state of soul of the other. A picture experienced as luminous appears in your field of vision. This spiritually luminous picture is the so-called astral embodiment of the desire observed in that soul. Again the impression of this picture may be described as flame-like, yellowish-red in the center, and reddish-blue or lilac at the edges. Much depends on treating such spiritual experiences with great delicacy. The best thing is not to speak to anyone about them except to your teacher, if you have one. Attempted descriptions of such experiences in inappropriate words usually only lead to gross self-deception. Ordinary terms are employed which are not intended for such things, and are therefore too gross and clumsy. The consequence is that in the attempt to clothe the experience in words we are misled into blending the actual experience with all kinds of fantastic delusions. Here again is another important rule for the student: *know how to observe silence concerning your spiritual experiences.* Yes, observe silence even toward yourself. Do not attempt to clothe in words what you contemplate in the spirit, or to pore over it with clumsy intellect. Lend yourself freely and without reservation to these spiritual impressions, and do not disturb them by reflecting and pondering over them too much. For you must remember that your reasoning faculties are, to begin with, by no means equal to your new experience. You have acquired these reasoning faculties in a life hitherto confined to the physical world of the senses; the faculties you are not acquiring transcend this world. Do not try, therefore, to apply to the new and higher perceptions the standard of the old. Only he who has gained some certainty and steadiness in the observation of inner experiences can speak about them, and thereby stimulate his fellow-men.

The exercise just described may be supplemented by the following: *Direct your attention in the same way upon a person to whom the fulfillment of some wish, the gratification of some desire, has been granted.* If the same rules and precautions be adopted as in the previous instance, spiritual insight will once more be attained. A spiritual insight will once more be attained. A spiritual flame-form will be distinguished, creating an impression of yellow in the center and green at the edges.

By such observation of his fellow-creatures, the student may easily lapse into a moral fault. He may become cold-hearted. Every conceivable effort must be made to prevent this. Such observation should only be practiced by one who has already risen to the level on which complete certainty is found that thoughts are real things. He will then no longer allow himself to think of his fellow-men in a way that is incompatible with the highest reverence for human dignity and human liberty. The thought that a human being could be merely an object of observation must never for a moment be entertained. Self-education must see to it that this insight into human nature should go hand in hand with an unlimited respect for the personal privilege of each individual, and with the recognition of the sacred and inviolable nature of that which dwells in each human being. A feeling of reverential awe must fill us, even in our recollections.

For the present, only these two examples can be given to show how enlightened insight into human nature may be achieved; they will at least serve to point out the way to be taken. By gaining the inner tranquility and repose indispensable for such observation, the student will have undergone a great inner transformation. He will then soon reach the point where this enrichment of his inner self will lend confidence and composure to his outward demeanor. And this transformation of his outward demeanor will again react favorably on his soul. Thus he will be able to help himself further along the road. He will find ways and means of penetrating more and more into the secrets of human nature which are hidden from our external senses, and he will then also become ripe for a deeper insight into the mysterious connections between human nature and all else that exists in the universe. By following this path the student approaches closer and closer to the moment when he can effectively take the first steps of initiation. But before these can be taken, one thing more is necessary, though at first its need will be least of all apparent; later on, however, the student will be convinced of it.

The would-be initiate must bring with him a certain measure of courage and fearlessness. He must positively go out of his way to find opportunities for developing these virtues. His training should provide for their systematic cultivation. In this respect, life itself is a good school — possibly the best school. The student must learn to look danger calmly in the face and try to overcome difficulties unswervingly. For instance, when in the presence of some peril, he must swiftly come to the conviction that fear is of no possible use; I must not feel afraid; I must only think of what is to be done. And he must improve to the extent of feeling, upon occasions which formerly inspired him with fear, that to be frightened, to be disheartened, are things that are out of the question as far as his own inmost self is concerned. By self-discipline in this direction, quite definite qualities are developed which are necessary for initiation into the higher mysteries. Just as man requires nervous force in his physical being in

order to use his physical sense, so also he requires in his soul nature the force which is only developed in the courageous and the fearless. For in penetrating to the higher mysteries he will see things which are concealed from ordinary humanity by the illusion of the senses. If the physical senses do not allow us to perceive the higher truth, they are for this very reason our benefactors. Things are thereby hidden from us which, if realized without due preparation, would throw us into unutterable consternation, and the sight of which would be unendurable. The student must be fit to endure this sight. He loses certain supports in the outer world which he owes to the very illusion surrounding him. It is truly and literally as if the attention of someone were called to a danger which had threatened him for a long time, but of which he knew nothing. Hitherto he felt no fear, but now that he knows, he is overcome by fear, though the danger has not been rendered greater by his knowing it.

The forces at work in the world are both destructive and constructive; the destiny of manifested beings is birth and death. The seer is to behold the working of these forces and the march of destiny. The veil enshrouding the spiritual eyes in ordinary life is to be removed. But man is interwoven with these forces and with this destiny. His own nature harbors destructive and constructive forces. His own soul reveals itself to the seer as undisguised as the other objects. He must not lose strength in the face of this self-knowledge; but strength will fail him unless he brings a surplus on which to draw. For this purpose he must learn to maintain inner calm and steadiness in the face of difficult circumstances; he must cultivate a strong trust in the beneficent powers of existence. He must be prepared to find that many motives which had actuated him hitherto will do so no longer. He will have to recognize that previously he thought and acted in a certain way only because he was still in the throes of ignorance. Reasons that influenced him formerly will now disappear. He often acted out of vanity; he will now see how utterly futile all vanity is for the seer. He often acted out of greed; he will now become aware how destructive all greed is. He will have to develop quite new motives for his thoughts and actions, and it is just for this purpose that courage and fearlessness are required.

It is pre-eminently a question of cultivating this courage and this fearlessness in the inmost depths of thought-life. The student must learn never to despair over failure. He must be equal to the thought: I shall forget that I have failed in this matter, and I shall try once more as though this had not happened. Thus he will struggle through to the firm conviction that the fountain-head of strength from which he may draw is inexhaustible. He struggles ever onward to the spirit which will uplift him and support him, however weak and impotent his earthly self may have proved. He must be capable of pressing on to the future undismayed by any experiences of the past. If the student has acquired these faculties up

to a certain point, he is then ripe to hear the real names of things, which are the key to higher knowledge. For initiation consists in this very act of learning to call the things of the world by those names which they bear in the spirit of their divine authors. In these, their names, lies the mystery of things. It is for this reason that the initiates speak a different language from the uninitiated, for the former know the names by which the beings themselves are called into existence.

In as far as initiation itself can be discussed, this will be done in the following chapter.

### III

#### Initiation

Initiation is the highest stage in an esoteric training concerning which it is possible to give some indications in a book intended for the genuine public. Whatever lives beyond forms a subject difficult to understand, yet the way to it can be found by all who have passed through *preparation*, *enlightenment*, and *initiation* as far as the lesser mysteries.

The knowledge and proficiency conferred by initiation cannot be obtained in any other manner, except in some far distant future, after many incarnations, by quite different means and in quite a different form. The initiate of today undergoes experiences which would otherwise come to him much later, under quite different circumstances.

The secrets of existence are only accessible to an extent corresponding to man's own degree of maturity. For this reason alone the path to the higher stages of knowledge and power is beset with obstacles. A firearm should not be used until sufficient experience has been gained to avoid disaster, caused by its use. A person initiated today without further ado would lack the experience which he will gain during his future incarnations before he can attain to higher knowledge in the normal course of his development. At the portal of initiation, therefore, this experience must be supplied in some other way. Thus the first instructions given to the candidate for initiation serve as a substitute for these future experiences. These are the so-called *trials*, which he has to undergo, and which constitute a normal course of inner development resulting from due application to such exercises as are described in the preceding chapters.

These trials are often discussed in books, but it is only natural that such discussions should as a rule give quite false impressions of their nature; for without passing through preparation and enlightenment no one can know anything of these tests and appropriately describe them.

The would-be initiate must come into contact with certain things and facts belonging to the higher worlds, but he can only see and hear them if his feeling is ripe for the perception of the spiritual forms, colors and tones described in the chapters on *Preparation* and *Enlightenment*.

The first trial consists in obtaining a truer vision than the average man has of the corporeal attributes of lifeless things, and later of plants, animals and human beings. This does not mean what at present is called scientific knowledge, for it is a question not of science but of vision. As a rule, the would-be initiate proceeds to learn how the objects of nature and the beings gifted with life manifest themselves to the spiritual ear and the

spiritual eye. In a certain way these things then lie stripped — naked — before the beholder. The qualities which can then be seen and heard are hidden from the physical eyes and ears. For physical perception they are concealed as if by a veil, and the falling away of this veil for the would-be initiate consists in a process designated as the process of *Purification by Fire*. The first trial is therefore known as the *Fire-Trial*.

For many people, ordinary life is itself a more or less unconscious process of initiation through the Fire-Trial. Such people have passed through a wealth of experience, so that their self-confidence, courage and fortitude have been greatly strengthened in a normal manner while learning to bear sorrow, disappointment and failure in their undertakings with greatness of soul, and especially with equanimity and unbroken strength. Thus they are often initiates without knowing it, and it then needs but little to unseal their spiritual hearing and sight so that they become clairvoyant. For it must be noted that a genuine fire-trial is not intended to satisfy the curiosity of the candidate. It is true that he learns many uncommon things of which others can have no inkling, but this acquisition of knowledge is not the end, but the means to the end; the end consists in the attainment, thanks to this knowledge of the higher worlds, of greater and truer self-confidence, a higher degree of courage, and a magnanimity and perseverance such as cannot, as a rule, be acquired in the lower world.

The candidate may always turn back after the fire-trial. He will then resume his life, strengthened in body and soul, and wait for a future incarnation to continue his initiation. In his present incarnation he will prove himself a more useful member of society and of humanity than he was before. In whatever position he may find himself, his firmness, prudence, resoluteness, and his beneficent influence over his fellows will have greatly increased.

But if, after completing the fire-trial, he should wish to continue the path, a certain writing-system generally adopted in esoteric training must now be revealed to him. The actual teachings manifest themselves in this writing, because the hidden (occult) qualities of things cannot be directly expressed in the words of ordinary writing. The pupils of the initiates translate the teachings into ordinary language as best they can. The occult script reveals itself to the soul when the latter has attained spiritual perception, for it is traced in the spiritual world and remains there for all time. It cannot be learned as an artificial writing is learned and read. The candidate grows into clairvoyant knowledge in an appropriate way, and during this growth a new strength is developed in his soul, as a new faculty, through which he feels himself impelled to decipher the occurrences and the beings of the spiritual world like the characters of a writing. This strength, with the experience it brings of the corresponding trial, might possibly awaken in the soul as though of its own accord, as the



soul continually develops, but it will be found safer to follow the instructions of those who are spiritually experienced, and who have some proficiency in deciphering the occult script.

The signs of the occult script are not arbitrarily invented; they correspond to the forces actively engaged in the world. They teach us the language of things. It becomes immediately apparent to the candidate that the signs he is now learning correspond to the forms, colors, and tones which he learned to perceive during his preparation and enlightenment. He realizes that all he learned previously was only like learning to spell, and that he is only now beginning to read in the higher worlds. All the isolated figures, tones, and colors reveal themselves to him now in one great connected whole. Now for the first time he attains complete certainty in observing the higher worlds. Hitherto he could never know positively whether the things he saw were rightly seen. A regular understanding, too, is now at last possible between the candidate and the initiate in the spheres of higher knowledge. For whatever form the intercourse between an initiate and another person may take in ordinary life, the higher knowledge in its immediate form can only be imparted by the initiate in the above-mentioned sign-language.

Thanks to this language the student also learns certain rules of conduct and certain duties of which he formerly knew nothing. Having learned these he is able to perform actions endowed with a significance and a meaning such as the actions of one not initiated can never possess. He acts out of the higher worlds. Instructions concerning such action can only be read and understood in the writing in question.

Yet it must be emphasized that there are people unconsciously gifted with the ability and faculty of performing such actions, though they have never undergone an esoteric training. Such helpers of the world and of humanity pass through life bestowing blessings and performing good deeds. For reasons here not to be discussed, gifts have been bestowed on them which appear supernatural. What distinguishes them from the candidate for initiation is only that the latter acts consciously and with full insight into the entire situation. He acquires by training the gifts bestowed on others by higher powers for the good of humanity. We can sincerely revere these favored of God; but we should not for this reason regard the work of esoteric training as superfluous.

Once the student has learned the sign-language there awaits him yet another trial, to prove whether he can move with freedom and assurance in the higher worlds. In ordinary life he is impelled to action by exterior motives. He works at one occupation or another because one duty he is impelled to action by exterior motives. He works at one occupation or another because one duty or another is imposed on him by outward

circumstances. It need hardly be mentioned that the student must in no way neglect any of his duties in ordinary life because he is living and working in higher worlds. There is no duty in a higher world that can force a person to neglect any single one of his duties in the ordinary world. The father will remain just as good a father to his family, the mother just as good a mother, and neither the official nor the soldier, nor anyone else will be diverted from his work by becoming an esoteric student. On the contrary, all the qualities which make a human being capable and efficient are enhanced in the student to a degree incomprehensible to the uninitiated. If, in the eyes of the uninitiated, this does not always appear to be the case, it is simply because he often lacks the ability to judge the initiate correctly. The deeds of the latter are not always intelligible to the former. But this only happens in special cases.

At this stage of initiation there are duties to be performed for which no outward stimulus is given. The candidate will not be moved to action by external pressure, but only through adherence to the rules of conduct revealed to him in the occult script. He must now show in this second trial that, led by such rules, he can act with the same firmness and precision with which, for instance, an official performs the duties that belong to him. For this purpose, and in the course of his further training, he will find himself faced by a certain definite task. He must perform some action in consequence of observations made on the basis of what he has learned during preparation and enlightenment. The nature of this action can be understood by means of the occult script with which he is now familiar. If he recognizes his duty and acts rightly, his trial has been successful. The success can be recognized in the alteration produced by his action in the figures, colors, and tones apprehended by his spiritual eyes and ears. Exact indications are given, as the training progresses, showing how these figures appear and are experienced after the action has been performed, and the candidate must know how to produce this change. This trial is known as the *Water-Trial*, because in his activity in these higher worlds the candidate is deprived of the support derived from outward circumstances, as a swimmer is without support when swimming in water that is beyond his depth. This activity must be repeated until the candidate attains absolute poise and assurance.

The importance of this trial lies again in the acquisition of a quality. Through his experiences in the higher worlds, the candidate develops this quality in a short time to such a high degree that he would otherwise have to go through many incarnations, in the ordinary course of his development, before he could acquire it to the same extent. It all centers around the fact that he must be guided only by the results of his higher perception and reading of the occult script, in order to produce the changes in question in these higher regions of existence. Should he, in the course of his activity, introduce any of his own opinions and desires, or should he

diverge for one moment from the laws which he has recognized to be right, in order to follow his own willful inclination, then the result produced would differ entirely from what was intended. He would lose sight of the goal to which his action tended, and confusion would result. Hence ample opportunity is given him in the course of this trial to develop self-control. This is the object in view. Here again, this trial can be more easily passed by those whose life, before initiation, has led them to acquire self-control. Anyone having acquired the faculty of following high principles and ideals, while putting into the background all personal predilection; anyone capable of always performing his duty, even though inclinations and sympathies would like to seduce him from this duty — such a person is unconsciously an initiate in the midst of ordinary life. He will need but little to succeed in this particular trial. Indeed, a certain measure of initiation thus unconsciously acquired in life will, as a rule, be indispensable for success in this second trial. For even as it is difficult for those who have not learned to spell correctly in their childhood to make good this deficiency when fully grown up, so too it is difficult to develop the necessary degree of self-control at the moment of looking into the higher worlds, if this ability has not been acquired to a certain degree in ordinary life. The objects of the physical world do not alter, whatever the nature of our wishes, desires, and inclinations. In the higher worlds, however, our wishes, desires, and inclinations are causes that produce effects. If we wish to produce a particular effect in these worlds, we must strictly follow the right rules and subdue every arbitrary impulse.

One human quality is of very special importance at this stage of initiation, namely, an *unquestionably sound judgment*. Attention should be paid to the training of this faculty during all the previous stages; for it now remains to be proved whether the candidate is shaping in a way that shows him to be fit for the truth path of knowledge. Further progress is now only possible if he is able to distinguish illusion, superstition, and everything fantastic, from true reality. This is, at first, more difficult to accomplish in the higher stages of existence than in the lower. Every prejudice, every cherished opinion with regard to the things in question, must vanish; truth alone must guide. There must be perfect readiness to abandon at once any idea, opinion, or inclination when logical thought demands it. Certainty in higher worlds is only likely to be attained when personal opinion is never considered.

People whose mode of thought tends to fancifulness and superstition can never make progress on the path to higher knowledge. It is indeed a precious treasure that the student is to acquire. All doubt regarding the higher worlds is removed from him. With all their laws they reveal themselves to his gaze. But he cannot acquire this treasure so long as he is the prey of fancies and illusions. It would indeed be fatal if his imagination and his prejudices ran away with his intellect. Dreamers and

fantastical people are as unfit for the path to higher knowledge as superstitious people. This cannot be over-emphasized. For the most dangerous enemies on the way to knowledge of the higher worlds lurk in such fantastical reveries and superstitions. Yet no one need to believe that the student loses all sense of poetry in life, all power of enthusiasm because the words: *You must be rid of all prejudice*, are written over the portal leading to the second trial of initiation, and because over the portal at the entrance to the first trial he read: *Without normal common sense all thine efforts are in vain*.

If the candidate is in this way sufficiently advanced, a third trial awaits him. He finds here no definite goal to be reached. All is left in his own hands. He finds himself in a situation where nothing impels him to act. He must find his way all alone and out of himself. Things or people to stimulate him to action are non-existent. Nothing and nobody can give him the strength he needs but he himself alone. Failure to find this inner strength will leave him standing where he was. Few of those, however, who have successfully passed the previous trials will fail to find the necessary strength at this point. Either they will have turned back already or they succeed at this point also. All that the candidate requires is the ability to come quickly to terms with himself, for he must here find his *higher self* in the truest sense of the word. He must rapidly decide in all things to listen to the inspiration of the spirit. There is no time for doubt or hesitation. Every moment of hesitation would prove that he was still unfit. Whatever prevents him from listening to the voice of the spirit must be courageously overcome. It is a question of showing presence of mind in this situation, and the training at this stage is concerned with the perfect development of this quality. All the accustomed inducements to act or even to think now cease. In order not to remain inactive he must not lose himself, for only within himself can he find the one central point of vantage where he can gain a firm hold. No one on reading this, without further acquaintance with these matters, should feel an antipathy for this principle of being thrown back on oneself, for success in this trial brings with it a moment of supreme happiness.

At this stage, no less than at the others, ordinary life is itself an esoteric training for many. For anyone having reached the point of being able, when suddenly confronted with some task or problem in life, to come to a swift decision without hesitation or delay, for him life itself has been a training in this sense. Such situations are here meant in which success is instantly lost if action is not rapid. A person who is quick to act when a misfortune is imminent, whereas a few moments of hesitation would have seen the misfortune an accomplished fact, and who has turned this ability into a permanent personal quality, has unconsciously acquired the degree of maturity necessary for the third trial. For at this stage everything centers round the development of absolute presence of mind. This trial is known

as the *Air-Trial*, because while undergoing it the candidate can support himself neither upon the firm basis of external incentive nor upon the figures, tones, and colors which he has learned at the stages of *preparation* and *enlightenment*, but exclusively upon himself.

Upon successfully passing this trial the student is permitted to enter the *temple of higher wisdom*. All that is here said on this subject can only be the slenderest allusion. The task now to be performed is often expressed in the statement that the student must take an oath never to betray anything he has learned. These expressions, however, “oath” and “betray”, are inappropriate and actually misleading. There is no question of an oath in the ordinary sense of the word, but rather of an experience that comes at this stage of development. The candidate learns how to apply the higher knowledge, how to place it at the service of humanity. He then begins really and truly to understand the world. It is not so much a question of withholding the higher truths, but far more of serving them in the right way and with the necessary tact. The silence he is to keep refers to something quite different. He acquires this fine quality with regard to things he had previously spoken, and especially with regard to the manner in which they were spoken. He would be a poor initiate who did not place all the higher knowledge he had acquired at the service of humanity, as well and as far as this is possible. The only obstacle to giving information in these matters is the lack of understanding on the part of the recipients. It is true, of course, that the higher knowledge does not lend itself to promiscuous talk; but no one having reached the stage of development described above is actually forbidden to say anything. No other person, no being exacts an oath from him with this intent. Everything is left to his own responsibility, and he learns in every situation to discover within himself what he has to do, and an oath means nothing more than that he has been found qualified to be entrusted with such a responsibility.

If the candidate is found fit for the foregoing experiences, he is then given what is called symbolically the *draught of forgetfulness*. This means that he is initiated into the secret knowledge that enables him to act without being continually disturbed by the lower memory. This is necessary for the initiate, for he must have full faith in the immediate present. He must be able to destroy the veil of memory which envelops man every moment of his life. If we judge something that happens to us today according to the experience of yesterday, we are exposed to a multitude of errors. Of course this does not mean that experience gained in life should be renounced. It should always be kept in mind as clearly as possible. But the initiate must have the ability to judge every new experience wholly according to what is inherent in it, and let it react upon him, unobscured by the past. We must be prepared at every moment that every object and every being can bring to us some new revelation. If we judge the new by the standard of the old we are liable to error. The memory of past

experiences will be of greatest use for the very reason that it enables us to perceive the new. Had we not gone through a definite experience we should perhaps be blind to the qualities of the object or being that comes before us. Thus experience should serve the purpose of perceiving the new and not of judging it by the standard of the old. In this respect the initiate acquires certain definite qualities, and thereby many things are revealed to him which remain concealed from the uninitiated.

The second draught presented to the initiate is the *draught of remembrance*. Through its agency he acquires the faculty of retaining the knowledge of the higher truths ever present in his soul. Ordinary memory would be unequal to this task. We must unite ourselves and become as one with the higher truths.

We must not only know them, but be able, quite as a matter of course, to manifest and administer them in living actions, even as we ordinarily eat and drink. They must become our practice, our habit, our inclination. There must be no need to keep thinking about them in the ordinary sense; they must come to living expression through man himself; they must flow through him as the functions of life through his organism. *Thus doth man ever raise himself, in a spiritual sense, to that same stature to which nature raised him in a physical sense.*

## IV

### Some Practical Aspects

The training of thoughts and feelings, pursued in the way described in the chapters on *Preparation, Enlightenment, and Initiation*, introduces into the soul and spirit the same organic symmetry with which nature has constructed the physical body. Before this development, soul and spirit are undifferentiated masses. The clairvoyant perceives them as interlacing, rotating, cloud-like spirals, dully glimmering in reddish, reddish-brown, or reddish-yellow tones. After this training they begin to assume a brilliant yellowish-green, or greenish-blue color, and show a regular structure. This inner regularity leading to higher knowledge, is attained when the student introduces into his thoughts and feelings the same orderly system with which nature has endowed his bodily organs that enable him to see, hear, digest, breath, speak. Gradually he learns to breath and see with this soul, to speak and hear with the spirit.

In the following pages some practical aspects of the higher education of soul and spirit will be treated in greater detail. They are such that anyone can put them into practice regardless of other rules, and thereby be led some distance further into spiritual science.

A particular effort must be made to cultivate the quality of patience. Every symptom of impatience produces a paralyzing, even a destructive effect on the higher faculties that slumber in us. We must not expect an immeasurable view into the higher worlds from one day to the next, for we should assuredly be disappointed. Contentment with the smallest fragment attained, repose and tranquility, must more and more take possession of the soul. It is quite understandable that the student should await results with impatience; but he will achieve nothing so long as he fails to master this impatience. Nor is it of any use to combat this impatience merely in the ordinary sense, for it will become only that much stronger. We overlook it in self-deception while it plants itself all the more firmly in the depths of the soul. It is only when we ever and again surrender ourselves to a certain definite thought, making it absolutely our own, that any results can be attained. This thought is as follows: *I must certainly do everything I can for the training and development of my soul and spirit; but I shall wait patiently until higher powers shall have found me worthy of definite enlightenment.* If this thought becomes so powerful in the student that it grows into an actual feature of his character, he is treading the right path. This feature soon sets its mark on his exterior. The gaze of his eye becomes steady, the movement of his body becomes sure, his decisions definite, and all that goes under the name of nervousness gradually disappears. Rules that appear trifling and insignificant must be taken into account. For example, supposing someone affronts us. Before our training

we should have directed our resentment against the offender; a wave of anger would have surged up within us. In a similar case, however, the thought is immediately present in the mind of the student that such an affront makes no difference to his intrinsic worth. And he does whatever must be done to meet the affront with calm and composure, and not in a spirit of anger. Of course it is not a case of simply accepting every affront, but of acting with the same calm composure when dealing with an affront against our own person as we would if the affront were directed against another person, in whose favor we had the right to intervene. It must always be remembered that this training is not carried out in crude outward processes, but in subtle, silent alterations in the life of thought and feeling.

Patience has the effect of attraction, impatience the effect of repulsion on the treasures of higher knowledge. In the higher regions of existence nothing can be attained by haste and unrest. Above all things, desire and craving must be silenced, for these are qualities of the soul before which all higher knowledge shyly withdraws. However precious this knowledge is accounted, the student must not crave it if he wishes to attain it. If he wishes to have it for his own sake, he will never attain it. This requires him to be honest with himself in his innermost soul. He must in no case be under any illusion concerning his own self. With a feeling of inner truth he must look his own faults, weaknesses, and unfitness full in the face. The moment he tries to excuse to himself any of his weaknesses, he has placed a stone in his way on the path which is to lead him upward. Such obstacles can only be removed by self-enlightenment. There is only one way to get rid of faults and failings, and that is by a clear recognition of them. Everything slumbers in the human soul and can be awakened. A person can even improve his intellect and reason, if he quietly and calmly makes it clear to himself why he is weak in this respect. Such self-knowledge is, of course, difficult, for the temptation to self-deception is immeasurably great. Anyone making a habit of being truthful with himself opens the portal leading to a deeper insight.

All curiosity must fall away from the student. He must rid himself as much as possible of the habit of asking questions merely for the sake of gratifying a selfish thirst for knowledge. He must only ask when knowledge can serve to perfect his own being in the service of evolution. Nevertheless, his delight in knowledge and his devotion to it should in no way be hampered. He should listen devoutly to all that contributes to such an end, and should seek every opportunity for such devotional attention.

Special attention must be paid in esoteric training to the education of the life of desires. This does not mean that we are to become free of desire, for if we are to attain something we must also desire it, and desire will always tend to fulfillment if backed by a particular force. This force is derived



from a right knowledge. *Do not desire at all until you know what is right in any one sphere.* That is one of the golden rules for the student. The wise man first ascertains the laws of the world, and then his desires become powers which realize themselves. The following example brings this out clearly. There are certainly many people who would like to learn from their own observation something about their life before birth. Such a desire is altogether useless and leads to no result so long as the person in question has not acquired a knowledge of the laws that govern the nature of the eternal, a knowledge of these laws in their subtlest and most intimate character, through the study of spiritual science. But if, having really acquired this knowledge, he wishes to proceed further, his desire, now ennobled and purified, will enable him to do so.

It is also no use saying: I particularly wish to examine my previous life, and shall study only for this purpose. We must rather be capable of abandoning this desire, of eliminating it altogether, and of studying, at first, with no such intention. We should cultivate a feeling of joy and devotion for what we learn, with no thought of the above end in view. We should learn to cherish and foster a particular desire in such a way that it brings with it its own fulfillment.

If we become angered, vexed or annoyed, we erect a wall around ourselves in the soul-world, and the forces which are to develop the eyes of the soul cannot approach. For instance, if a person angers me he sends forth a psychic current into the soul-world. I cannot see this current as long as I am myself capable of anger. My own anger conceals it from me. We must not, however, suppose that when we are free from anger we shall immediately have a psychic (astral) vision. For this purpose an organ of vision must have been developed in the soul. The beginnings of such an organ are latent in every human being, but remain ineffective as long as he is capable of anger. Yet this organ is not immediately present the moment anger has been combated to a small extent. We must rather persevere in this combating of anger and proceed patiently on our way; then some day we shall find that this eye of the soul has become developed. Of course, anger is not the only failing to be combated for the attainment of this end. Many grow impatient or skeptical, because they have for years combated certain qualities, and yet clairvoyance has not ensued. In that case they have just trained some qualities and allowed others to run riot. The gift of clairvoyance only manifests itself when all those qualities which stunt the growth of the latent faculties are suppressed. Undoubtedly, the beginnings of such seeing and hearing may appear at an earlier period, but these are only young and tender shoots which are subjected to all possible error, and which, if not carefully tended and guarded, may quickly die.

Other qualities which, like anger and vexation, have to be combated, are timidity, superstition, prejudice, vanity and ambition, curiosity, the mania

for imparting information, and the making of distinctions in human beings according to the outward characteristics of rank, sex, race, and so forth. In our time it is difficult for people to understand how the combating of such qualities can have anything to do with the heightening of the faculty of cognition. But every spiritual scientist knows that much more depends upon such matters than upon the increase of intelligence and employment of artificial exercises. Especially can misunderstanding arise if we believe that we must become foolhardy in order to be fearless; that we must close our eyes to the differences between people, because we must combat the prejudices of rank, race, and so forth. Rather is it true that a correct estimate of all things is to be attained only when we are no longer entangled in prejudice. Even in the ordinary sense it is true that the fear of some phenomenon prevents us from estimating it rightly; that a racial prejudice prevents us from seeing into a man's soul. It is this ordinary sense that the student must develop in all its delicacy and subtlety.

Every word spoken without having been thoroughly purged in thought is a stone thrown in the way of esoteric training. And here something must be considered which can only be explained by giving an example. If anything be said to which we must reply, we must be careful to consider the speaker's opinion, feeling, and even his prejudice, rather than what we ourselves have to say at the moment on the subject under discussion. In this example a refined quality of tact is indicated, to the cultivation of which the student must devote his care. He must learn to judge what importance it may have for the other person if he opposes the latter's opinion with his own. This does not mean that he must withhold his opinion. There can be no question of that. But he must listen to the speaker as carefully and as attentively as he possibly can and let his reply derive its form from what he has just heard. In such cases one particular thought recurs ever and again to the student, and he is treading the right path if this thought lives with him to the extent of becoming a trait of his character. This thought is as follows: *The importance lies not in the difference of our opinions but in his discovering through his own effort what is right if I contribute something toward it.* Thoughts of this and of a similar nature cause the character and the behavior of the student to be permeated with a quality of gentleness, which is one of the chief means used in all esoteric training. Harshness scares away the soul-pictures that should open the eye of the soul; gentleness clears the obstacles away and unseals the inner organs.

Along with gentleness, another quality will presently be developed in the soul of the student: that of quietly paying attention to all the subtleties in the soul-life of his environment, while reducing to absolute silence any activity within his own soul. The soul-life of his environment will impress itself on him in such a way that his own soul will grow, and as it grows, become regular in its structure, as a plant expanding in the sunlight.

Gentleness and patient reserve open the soul to the soul-world and the spirit to the spirit-world. Persevere in silent inner seclusion; close the senses to all that they brought you before your training; reduce to absolute immobility all the thoughts which, according to your previous habits, surged within you; become quite still and silent within, wait in patience, and then the higher worlds will begin to fashion and perfect the organs of sights and hearing in your soul and spirit. Do not expect immediately to see and hear in the world of soul and spirit, for all that you are doing does but contribute to the development of your higher senses, and you will only be able to hear with soul and spirit when you possess these higher senses. Having persevered for a time in silent inner seclusion, go about your customary daily affairs, imprinting deeply upon your mind this thought: *“Some day, when I have grown sufficiently, I shall attain that which I am destined to attain,”* and make no attempt to attract forcefully any of these higher powers to yourself. Every student receives these instructions at the outset. By observing them he perfects himself. If he neglects them, all his labor is in vain. But they are only difficult of achievement for the impatient and the unpersevering. No other obstacles exist save those which we ourselves place in our own path, and which can be avoided by all who really will. This point must be continually emphasized, because many people form an altogether wrong conception of the difficulties that beset the path to higher knowledge. It is easier, in a certain sense, to accomplish the first steps along this path than to get the better of the commonest every-day difficulties without this training. Apart from this, only such things are here imparted as are attended by no danger whatsoever to the health of soul and body. There are other ways which lead more quickly to the goal, but what is here explained has nothing to do with them, because they have certain effects which no experienced spiritual scientist considers desirable. Since fragmentary information concerning these ways is continually finding its way into publicity, express warning must be given against entering upon them. For reasons which only the initiated can understand, these ways can never be made public in their true form. The fragments appearing here and there can never lead to profitable results, but may easily undermine health, happiness, and peace of mind. It would be far better for people to avoid having anything to do with such things than to risk entrusting themselves to wholly dark forces, of whose nature and origin they can know nothing.

Something may here be said concerning the environment in which this training should be undertaken, for this is not without some importance. And yet the case differs for almost every person. Anyone practicing in an environment filled only with self-seeking interests, as for example, the modern struggle for existence, must be conscious of the fact that these interests are not without their effect on the development of his spiritual organs. It is true that the inner laws of these organs are so powerful that this influence cannot be fatally injurious. Just as a lily can never grow into

a thistle, however inappropriate its environment, so, too, the eye of the soul can never grow to anything but its destined shape even though it be subjected to the self-seeking interests of modern cities. But under all circumstances it is well if the student seeks, now and again, his environment in the restful peace, the inner dignity and sweetness of nature. Especially fortunate is the student who can carry out his esoteric training surrounded by the green world of plants, or among the sunny hills, where nature weaves her web of sweet simplicity. This environment develops the inner organs in a harmony which can never ensue in a modern city. More favorably situated than the townsman is the person who, during his childhood at least, had been able to breathe the fragrance of pines, to gaze on snowy peaks, and observe the silent activity of woodland creatures and insects. Yet no city-dweller should fail to give to the organs of his soul and spirit, as they develop, the nurture that comes from the inspired teachings of spiritual research. If our eyes cannot follow the woods in their mantel of green every spring, day by day, we should instead open our soul to the glorious teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, or of St. John's Gospel, or of St. Thomas à Kempis, and to the descriptions resulting from spiritual science. There are many ways to the summit of insight, but much depends on the right choice. The spiritually experienced could say much concerning these paths, much that might seem strange to the uninitiated. Someone, for instance, might be very far advanced on the path; he might be standing, so to speak, at the very entrance of sight and hearing with soul and spirit; he is then fortunate enough to make a journey over the calm or maybe tempestuous ocean, and a veil falls away from the eyes of his soul; suddenly he becomes a seer. Another is also so far advanced that this veil only needs to be loosened; this occurs through some stroke of destiny. On another this stroke might well have had the effect of paralyzing his powers and undermining his energy; for the esoteric student it becomes the occasion of his *enlightenment*. A third perseveres patiently for years without any marked result. Suddenly, while silently seated in his quiet chamber, spiritual light envelops him; the walls disappear, become transparent for his soul, and a new world expands before his eyes that have become seeing, or resounds in his ears that have become spiritually hearing.

## V

### The Conditions of Esoteric Training

The conditions attached to esoteric training are not arbitrary. They are the natural outcome of esoteric knowledge. Just as no one can become a painter who refuses to handle a paint-brush, so, too, no one can receive esoteric training who is unwilling to meet the demands considered necessary by the teacher. In the main, the latter can give nothing but advice, and everything he says should be accepted in this sense. He has already passed through the preparatory stages leading to a knowledge of the higher worlds, and knows from experience what is necessary. It depends entirely upon the free-will of each individual human being whether or not he choose to tread the same path. To insist on being admitted to esoteric training without fulfilling the conditions would be equivalent to saying: "Teach me how to paint, but do not ask me to handle a paint-brush." The teacher can never offer anything unless the recipient comes forward to meet him of his own free-will. But it must be emphasized that a general desire for higher knowledge is not sufficient. This desire will, of course, be felt by many, but nothing can be achieved by it alone so long as the special conditions attached to esoteric training are not accepted. This point should be considered by those who complain that the training is difficult. Failure or unwillingness to fulfill these strict conditions must entail the abandonment of esoteric training, for the time being. It is true, the conditions are strict, yet they are not harsh, since their fulfillment not only should be, but indeed must be a voluntary action.

If this fact be overlooked, esoteric training can easily appear in the light of a coercion of the soul or the conscience; for the training is based on the development of the inner life, and the teacher must necessarily give advice concerning this inner life. But there is no question of compulsion when a demand is met out of free choice. To ask of the teacher: "Give me your higher knowledge, but leave me my customary emotions, feelings, and thoughts," would be an impossible demand. In this case the gratification of curiosity and desire for knowledge would be the only motive. When pursued in such a spirit, however, higher knowledge can never be attained.

Let us now consider in turn the conditions imposed on the student. It should be emphasized that the complete fulfillment of any one of these conditions is not insisted upon, but only the corresponding effort. No one can wholly fulfill them, but everyone can start on the path toward them. It is the effort of will that matters, and the ready disposition to enter upon this path.

1. *The first condition is that the student should pay heed to the advancement of bodily and spiritual health.* Of course,

health does not depend, in the first instance, upon the individual; but the effort to improve in this respect lies within the scope of all. Sound knowledge can alone proceed from sound human beings. The unhealthy are not rejected, but it is demanded of the student that he should have the will to lead a healthy life. In this respect he must attain the greatest possible independence. The good counsels of others, freely bestowed though generally unsought, are as a rule superfluous. Each must endeavor to take care of himself. From the physical aspect it will be more a question of warding off harmful influences than of anything else. In fulfilling our duties we must often do things that are detrimental to our health. We must decide at the right moment to place duty higher than the care of our health. But just think how much can be avoided with a little good will. Duty must in many cases stand higher than health, often, even, than life itself; but pleasure must never stand higher, as far as the student is concerned. For him pleasure can only be a means to health and to life, and in this connection we must, above all, be honest and truthful with ourselves. There is no use in leading an ascetic life when the underlying motive is the same in this case as in other enjoyments. Some may derive satisfaction from asceticism just as others can from wine-bibbing, but they must not imagine that this sort of asceticism will assist them in attaining higher knowledge. Many ascribe to their circumstances everything which apparently prevents them from making progress. They say they cannot develop themselves under their conditions of life. Now, many may find it desirable for other reasons to change their conditions of life, but no one need do so for the purpose of esoteric training. For the latter, a person need only do as much as possible, whatever his position, to further the health of body and soul. Every kind of work can serve the whole of humanity; and it is a surer sign of greatness of soul to perceive clearly how necessary for this whole is a petty, perhaps even an offensive employment than to think: "This work is not good enough for me; I am destined for something better." Of special importance for the student is the striving for complete health of mind. An unhealthy life of thought and feeling will not fail to obstruct the path to higher knowledge. Clear, calm thinking, with stability of feeling and emotion, form here the basis of all work. Nothing should be further removed from the student than an inclination toward a fantastical, excitable life, toward nervousness, exaggeration, and fanaticism. He should

acquire a healthy outlook on all circumstances of life; he should meet the demands of life with steady assurance, quietly letting all things make their impression on him and reveal their message. He should be at pains to do justice to life on every occasion. All one-sided and extravagant tendencies in his sentiments and criticisms should be avoided. Failing this, he would find his way merely into worlds of his own imagination, instead of higher worlds; in place of truth, his own pet opinions would assert themselves. It is better for the student to be matter-of-fact, than excitable and fantastic.

2. *The second condition is that the student should feel himself co-ordinated as a link in the whole of life.* Much is included in the fulfillment of this condition, but each can only fulfill it in his own manner. If I am a teacher, and my pupil does not fulfill my expectations, I must not divert my resentment against him but against myself. I must feel myself as one with my pupil, to the extent of asking myself: "Is my pupil's deficiency not the result of my own action?" Instead of directing my feelings against him I shall rather reflect on my own attitude, so that the pupil may in the future be better able to satisfy my demands. Proceeding from such an attitude, a change will come over the student's whole way of thinking. This holds good in all things, great or small. Such an attitude of mind, for instance, alters the way I regard a criminal. I suspend my judgment and say to myself: "I am, like him, only a human being. Through favorable circumstances I received an education which perhaps alone saved me from a similar fate." I may then also come to the conclusion that this human brother of mine would have become a different man had my teachers taken the same pains with him they took with me. I shall reflect on the fact that something was given to me which was withheld from him, that I enjoy my fortune precisely because it was denied him. And then I shall naturally come to think of myself as a link in the whole of humanity and a sharer in the responsibility for everything that occurs. This does not imply that such a thought should be immediately translated into external acts of agitation. It should be cherished in stillness within the soul. Then quite gradually it will set its mark on the outward demeanor of the student. In such matters each can only begin by reforming himself. It is of no avail, in the sense of the foregoing thoughts, to make general demands on the whole of humanity. It is easy to decide what men ought to be; but the student works in

the depths, not on the surface. It would therefore be quite wrong to relate the demand here indicated with an external, least of all political, demands; with such matters this training can have nothing to do. Political agitators know, as a rule, what to demand of other people; but they say little of demands on themselves.

3. This brings us to *the third condition*. *The student must work his way upward to the realization that his thoughts and feelings are as important for the world as his actions. It must be realized that it is equally injurious to hate a fellow-being as to strike him.* The realization will then follow that by perfecting ourselves we accomplish something not only for ourselves, but for the whole world. The world derives equal benefit from our untainted feelings and thoughts as from our good demeanor, and as long as we cannot believe in this cosmic importance of our inner life, we are unfit for the path that is here described. We are only filled with the right faith in the significance of our inner self, of our soul, when we work at it as though it were at least as real as all external things. We must admit that our every feeling produces an effect, just as does every action of our hand.

4. These words already express *the fourth condition: to acquire the conviction that the real being of man does not lie in his exterior but in his interior.* Anyone regarding himself as a product of the outer world, as a result of the physical world, cannot succeed in this esoteric training, for the feeling that we are beings of soul and spirit forms its very basis. The acquisition of this feeling renders the student fit to distinguish between inner duty and outward success. He learns that the one cannot be directly measured by the other. He must find the proper mean between what is indicated by external conditions and what he recognizes as the right conduct for himself. He should not force upon his environment anything for which it can have no understanding, but also he must be quite free from the desire to do only what can be appreciated by those around him. The voice of his own soul struggling honestly toward knowledge must bring him the one and only recognition of the truths for which he stands. But he must learn as much as he possibly can from his environment so as to discover what those around him need, and what is good for them. In this way he will develop within himself what is known in spiritual science as the “spiritual balance.” An open heart



for the needs of the outer world lies on one of the scales, and inner fortitude and unfaltering endurance on the other.

5. This brings us to *the fifth condition: steadfastness in carrying out a resolution*. Nothing should induce the student to deviate from a resolution he may have taken, save only the perception that he was in error. Every resolution is a force, and if this force does not produce an immediate effect at the point to which it was applied, it works nevertheless on in its own way. Success is only decisive when an action arises from desire. But all actions arising from desire are worthless in relation to the higher worlds. There, love for an action is alone the decisive factor. In this love, every impulse that impels the student to action should fulfill itself. Undismayed by failure, he will never grow weary of endeavoring repeatedly to translate some resolution into action. And in this way he reaches the stage of not waiting to see the outward effect of his actions, but of contenting himself with performing them. He will learn to sacrifice his actions, even his whole being, to the world, however the world may receive his sacrifice. Readiness for a sacrifice, for an offering such as this, must be shown by all who would pursue the path of esoteric training.

6. *A sixth condition is the development of a feeling of thankfulness for everything with which man is favored*. We must realize that our existence is a gift from the entire universe. How much is needed to enable each one of us to receive and maintain his existence! How much to we not owe to nature and to our fellow human beings! Thoughts such as these must come naturally to all who seek esoteric training, for if the latter do not feel inclined to entertain them, they will be incapable of developing within themselves that all-embracing love which is necessary for the attainment of higher knowledge. Nothing can reveal itself to us which we do not love. And every revelation must fill us with thankfulness, for we ourselves are the richer for it.

7. *All these conditions must be united in a seventh: to regard life unceasingly in the manner demanded by these conditions*. The student thus makes it possible to give his life the stamp of uniformity. All his modes of expression will, in this way, be brought into harmony, and no longer contradict each other. And thus he will prepare himself for

the inner tranquillity he must attain during the preliminary steps of his training.

Anyone sincerely showing the good will to fulfill these conditions may decide to seek esoteric training. He will then be ready to follow the advice given above. Much of his advice may appear to be merely on the surface, and many will perhaps say that they did not expect the training to proceed in such strict forms. But everything interior must manifest itself in an exterior way, and just as a picture is not evident when it exists only in the mind of the painter, so, too, there can be no esoteric training without outward expression. Disregard for strict forms is only shown by those who do not know that the exterior is the avenue of expression for the interior. No doubt it is the spirit that really matters, and not the form; but just as form without spirit is null and void, so also would spirit remain inactive if it did not create for itself a form.

The above conditions are calculated to render the student strong enough to fulfill the further demands made on him during this training. If he fail in these conditions he will hesitate before each new demand, and without them he will lack that faith in man which he must possess. For all striving for truth must be founded on faith in and true love for man. But though this is the foundation it is not the source of all striving for truth, for such striving can only flow from the soul's own fountain-head of strength. And the love of man must gradually widen to a love for all living creatures, yes, for all existence. Through failure to fulfill the condition here given, the student will lack the perfect love for everything that fashions and creates, and the inclination to refrain from all destruction as such. He must so train himself that not only in his actions but also in his words, feelings, and thoughts he will never destroy anything for the sake of destruction. His joy must be in growth and life, and he must only lend his hand to destruction, when he is also able, through and by means of destruction, to promote new life. This does not mean that the student must simply look on while evil runs riot, but rather that he must seek even in evil that side through which he may transform it into good. He will then see more and more clearly that evil and imperfection may best be combated by the creation of the good and the perfect. The student knows that out of nothing, nothing can be created, but also that the imperfect can be transformed into the perfect. Anyone developing within himself the disposition to create, will soon find himself capable of facing evil in the right way.

It must be clearly realized that the purpose of this training is to build and not to destroy. The student should therefore bring with him the good will for sincere and devoted work, and not the intention to criticize and destroy. He should be capable of devotion, for he must learn what he does not yet know; he should look reverently on that which discloses itself.

Work and devotion, these are the fundamental qualities which must be demanded of the student. Some come to realize that they are making no progress, though in their own opinion they are untiringly active. The reason is that they have not grasped the meaning of work and devotion in the right way. Work done for the sake of success will be the least successful, and learning pursued without devotion will be the least conducive to progress. Only the love of work, and not of success, leads to progress. And if in learning the student seeks straight thinking and sound judgment, he need not stunt his devotion by doubts and suspicions.

We are not reduced to service subjection in listening to some information with quiet devotion and because we do not at once oppose it with our own opinion. Anyone having advanced some way in the attainment of higher knowledge knows that he owes everything to quiet attention and active reflection, and not to willful personal judgment. We should always bear in mind that we do not need to learn what we are already able to judge. Therefore if our sole intention is to judge, we can learn nothing more. Esoteric training, however, centers in learning; we must have absolutely the good will to be learners. If we cannot understand something, it is far better not to judge than to judge adversely. We can wait until later for a true understanding. The higher we climb the ladder of knowledge, the more do we require the faculty of listening with quiet devotion. All perception of truth, all life and activity in the world of the spirit, become subtle and delicate in comparison with the processes of the ordinary intellect and of life in the physical world. The more the sphere of our activity widens out before us, the more delicate are the processes in which we are engaged. It is for this reason that men arrive at such different opinions and points of view regarding the higher regions. But there is one and only one opinion regarding higher truths and this one opinion is within reach of all who, through work and devotion, have so risen that they can really behold truth and contemplate it. Opinions differing from the one true opinion can only be arrived at when people, insufficiently prepared, judge in accordance with their pet theories, their habitual ways of thought, and so forth. Just as there is only one correct opinion concerning a mathematical problem, so also is this true with regard to the higher worlds. But before such an opinion can be reached, due preparation must first be undergone. If this were only considered, the conditions attached to esoteric training would be surprising to none. It is indeed true that truth and the higher life abide in every soul, and that each can and must find them for himself. But they lie deeply buried, and can only be brought up from their deep shafts after all obstacles have been cleared away. Only the experienced can advise how this may be done. Such advice is found in spiritual science. No truth is forced on anyone; no dogma is proclaimed; a way only is pointed out. It is true that everyone could find this way unaided, but only perhaps after many incarnations. By esoteric training this way is shortened. We thus

reach more quickly a point from which we can cooperate in those worlds where the salvation and evolution of man are furthered by spiritual work.

This brings to an end the indications to be given in connection with the attainment of knowledge of higher worlds. In the following chapter, and in further connection with the above, it will be shown how this development affects the higher elements of the human organism (the soul-organism or astral body, and the spirit or thought-body.) In this way the indications here given will be placed in a new light, and it will be possible to penetrate them in a deeper sense.

## VI

### Some Results of Initiation

One of the fundamental principles of true spiritual science is that the one who devotes himself to its study should do so with full consciousness; he should attempt nothing and practice nothing without knowledge of the effect produced. A teacher of spiritual science who gives advice or instruction will, at the same time, always explain to those striving for higher knowledge the effects produced on body, soul and spirit, if his advice and instructions be followed.

Some effects produced upon the soul of the student will here be indicated. For only those who know such things as they are here communicated can undertake in full consciousness the exercises that lead to knowledge of the higher worlds. Without the latter no genuine esoteric training is possible, for it must be understood that all groping in the dark is discouraged, and that failure to pursue this training with open eyes may lead to mediumship, but not to exact clairvoyance in the sense of spiritual science.

The exercises described in the preceding chapters, if practiced in the right way, involve certain changes in the organism of the soul (astral body). The latter is only perceptible to the clairvoyant, and may be compared to a cloud, psycho-spiritually luminous to a certain degree, in the center of which the physical body is discernible. (A description will be found in the author's book, *Theosophy*.) In this astral body desires, lusts, passions, and ideas become visible in a spiritual way. Sensual appetites, for instance, create the impression of a dark red radiance with a definite shape; a pure and noble thought finds its expression in a reddish-violet radiance; the clear-cut concept of the logical thinker is experienced as a yellowish figure with sharply defined outline; the confused thought of the muddled head appears as a figure with vague outline. The thoughts of a person with one-sided, queer views appear sharply outlined but immobile, while the thoughts of people accessible to the points of view of others are seen to have mobile, changeable outlines. (In all these and the following descriptions it must be noted that by seeing a color, spiritual seeing is meant. When the clairvoyant speaks of "seeing red," he means: "I have an experience, in a psycho-spiritual way, which is equivalent to the physical experience when an impression of red is received." This mode of expression is here used because it is perfectly natural to the clairvoyant. If this point is over-looked, a mere color-vision may easily be mistaken for a genuine clairvoyant experience.)

The further the student advances in his inner development, the more regular will be the differentiation within his astral body. The latter is confused and undifferentiated in the case of a person of undeveloped inner

life; yet the clairvoyant can perceive even the unorganized astral body as a figure standing out distinctly from its environment. It extends from the center of the head to the middle of the physical body, and appears like an independent body possessing certain organs. The organs now to be considered are perceptible to the clairvoyant near the following part of the physical body: the first between the eyes; the second near the larynx; the third in the region of the heart; the fourth in the so-called pit of the stomach; the fifth and sixth are situated in the abdomen. These organs are technically known as wheels, *chakrams*, or lotus flowers. They are so called on account of their likeness to wheels or flowers, but of course it should be clearly understood that such an expression is not to be applied more literally than is the term “wings” when referring to the two halves of the lungs. Just as there is no question of wings in the case of the lungs, so, too, in the case of the lotus flowers the expression must be taken figuratively. In undeveloped persons these lotus flowers are dark in color, motionless and inert. In the clairvoyant, however, they are luminous, mobile, and of variegated color. Something of this kind applies to the medium, though in a different way; this question, however, need not be pursued here any further.

Now, when the student begins his exercises, the lotus flowers become more luminous; later on they begin to revolve. When this occurs, clairvoyance begins. For these flowers are the sense-organs of the soul, and their revolutions express the fact that the clairvoyant perceives supersensibly. What was said previously concerning spiritual seeing applies equally to these revolutions and even to the lotus flowers themselves. No one can perceive the supersensible until he has developed his astral senses in this way. Thanks to the spiritual organ situated in the vicinity of the larynx, it becomes possible to survey clairvoyantly the thoughts and mentality of other beings, and to obtain a deeper insight into the true laws of natural phenomena. The organ situated near the heart permits of clairvoyant knowledge of the sentiments and disposition of other souls. When developed, this organ also makes it possible to observe certain deeper forces in animals and plants. By means of the organ in the so-called pit of the stomach, knowledge is acquired of the talents and capacities of souls; by its means, too, the part played by animals, plants, stones, metals, atmospheric phenomena and so on in the household of nature becomes apparent.

The organ in the vicinity of the larynx has sixteen petals or spokes; the one in the region of the heart twelve, and the one in the pit of the stomach ten.

Now certain activities of the soul are connected with the development of these organs, and anyone devoting himself to them in a certain definite way contributes something to the development of the corresponding organs. In the sixteen-petalled lotus, eight of its sixteen petals were

developed in the remote past during an earlier stage of human evolution. Man himself contributed nothing to this development; he received them as a gift from nature, at a time when his consciousness was in a dull, dreamy condition. At that stage of human evolution they were in active use, but the manner of their activity was only compatible with that dull state of consciousness. As consciousness became clearer and brighter, the petals became obscured and ceased their activity. Man himself can now develop the remaining eight petals by means of conscious exercises, and thereby the whole lotus flower becomes luminous and mobile. The acquisition of certain faculties depends on the development of each one of the sixteen petals. Yet, as already shown, only eight can be consciously developed; the remainder then appear of their own accord.

The development proceeds in the following manner. The student must first apply himself with care and attention to certain functions of the soul hitherto exercised by him in a careless and inattentive manner. *There are eight such functions. The first is the way in which ideas and conceptions are acquired.* In this respect people usually allow themselves to be led by chance alone. They see or hear one thing or another and form their ideas accordingly. As long as this is the case the sixteen petals of the lotus flower remain ineffective. It is only when the student begins to take his self-education in hand, in this respect, that the petals become effective. His ideas and conceptions must be guarded; each single idea should acquire significance for him; he should see it in a definite message instructing him concerning the things of the outer world, and he should derive no satisfaction from ideas devoid of such significance. He must govern his mental life so that it becomes a true mirror of the outer world, and direct his effort to the exclusion of incorrect ideas from his soul.

*The second of these functions is concerned with the control of resolutions.* The student must not resolve upon even the most trifling act without well-founded and thorough consideration. Thoughtless and meaningless actions should be foreign to his nature. He should have well-considered grounds for everything he does, and abstain from everything to which no significant motive urges him.

*The third function concerns speech.* The student should utter no word that is devoid of sense and meaning; all talking for the sake of talking draws him away from his path. He must avoid the usual kind of conversation, with its promiscuous discussion of indiscriminately varied topics. This does not imply his preclusion from intercourse with his fellows. It is precisely in such intercourse that his conversation should develop to significance. He is ready to converse with everyone, but he does so thoughtfully and with thorough deliberation. He never speaks without grounds for what he says. He seeks to use neither too many nor too few words.

*The fourth is the regulation of outward action.* The student tries to adjust his actions in such a way that they harmonize with the actions of his fellow-men and with the events in his environment. He refrains from actions which are disturbing to others and in conflict with his surroundings. He seeks to adjust his actions so that they combine harmoniously with his surroundings and with his position in life. When an external motive causes him to act he considers how he can best respond. When the impulse proceeds from himself he weighs with minute care the effects of his activity.

*The fifth function includes the management of the whole of life.* The student endeavors to live in conformity with both nature and spirit. Never overhasty, he is also never indolent. Excessive activity and laziness are equally alien to him. He looks upon life as a means for work and disposes it accordingly. He regulates his habits and the care of his health in such a way that a harmonious whole is the outcome.

*The sixth is concerned with human endeavor.* The student tests his capacities and proficiency, and conducts himself in the light of such self-knowledge. He attempts nothing beyond his powers, yet seems to omit nothing within their scope. On the other hand, he sets himself aims that have to do with the ideals and the great duties of a human being. He does not mechanically regard himself as a wheel in the vast machinery of mankind but seeks to comprehend the tasks of his life, and to look out beyond the limit of the daily and trivial. He endeavors to fulfill his obligations ever better and more perfectly.

*The seventh deals with the effort to learn as much from life as possible.* Nothing passes before the student without giving him occasion to accumulate experience which is of value to him for life. If he has performed anything wrongly or imperfectly, he lets this be an incentive for meeting the same contingency later on rightly and perfectly. When others act he observes them with the same end in view. He tries to gather a rich store of experience, ever returning to it for counsel; nor indeed will he ever do anything without looking back on experiences from which he can derive help in his decisions and affairs.

*Finally, the eighth is as follows: The student must, from time to time, glance introspectively into himself, sink back into himself, take counsel with himself, form and test the fundamental principles of his life, run over in his thoughts the sum total of his knowledge, weigh his duties, and reflect upon the content and aim of life.* All these things have been mentioned in the preceding chapters; here they are merely recapitulated in connection with the development of the sixteen-petalled lotus. By means of these exercises the latter will become ever more and more perfect, for it is upon such exercises that the development of clairvoyance depends. The



better the student's thoughts and speech harmonize with the processes in the outer world, the more quickly will he develop this faculty. Whoever thinks and speaks what is contrary to truth destroys something in the germ of his sixteen-petalled lotus. Truthfulness, uprightness, and honesty are in this connection creative forces, while mendacity, deceitfulness, and dishonesty are destructive forces. The student must realize, however, that actual deeds are needed, and not merely good intentions. If I think or say anything that does not conform with reality, I kill something in my spiritual organs, even though I believe my intentions to be ever so good. It is here as with the child which needs must burn itself when it touches fire, even though it did so out of ignorance. The regulation of the above activities of the soul in the manner described causes the sixteen-petalled lotus to shine in glorious hues, and imparts to it a definite movement. Yet it must be noted that the faculty of clairvoyance cannot make its appearance before a definite degree of development of the soul has been reached. It cannot appear as long as it is irksome for the student to regulate his life in this manner. He is still unfit as long as the activities described above are a matter of special pre-occupation for him. The first traces of clairvoyance only appear when he has reached the point of being able to live in the specified way, as a person habitually lives. These things must then no longer be laborious, but must have become a matter of course. There must be no need for him to be continually watching himself and urging himself on to live in this way. It must all have become a matter of habit.

Now this lotus flower may be made to develop in another way by following certain other instructions. But all such methods are rejected by true spiritual science, for they lead to the destruction of physical health and to moral ruin. They are easier to follow than those here described. The latter, though protracted and difficult, lead to the true goal and cannot but strengthen morally.

The distorted development of a lotus flower results not only in illusions and fantastic conceptions, should a certain degree of clairvoyance be acquired, but also in errors and instability in ordinary life. Such a development may be the cause of timidity, envy, vanity, haughtiness, willfulness and so on in a person who hitherto was free from these defects. It has already been explained that eight of the sixteen petals of this lotus flower were developed in a remote past, and that these will re-appear of themselves in the course of esoteric development. All the effort and attention of the student must be devoted to the remaining eight. Faulty training may easily result in the re-appearance of the earlier petals alone, while the new petals remain stunted. This will ensue especially if too little logical, rational thinking is employed in the training. It is of supreme importance that the student should be a rational and clear-thinking person, and of further importance that he should practice the greatest clarity of

speech. People who begin to have some presentiment of supersensible things are apt to wax talkative on this subject, thereby retarding their normal development. The less one talks about these matters the better. Only someone who has achieved a certain degree of clarity should speak about them. At the beginning of their instruction, students are as a rule astonished at the teacher's lack of curiosity concerning their own experiences. It would be much better for them to remain entirely silent on this subject, and to content themselves with mentioning only whether they have been successful or unsuccessful in performing the exercises and observing the instructions given them. For the teacher has quite other means of estimating their progress than the students' own statements. The eight petals now under consideration always become a little hardened through such statements, whereas they should be kept soft and supple. The following example taken, for the sake of clarity, not from the supersensible world but from ordinary life, will illustrate this point. Suppose I hear a piece of news and thereupon immediately form an opinion. Shortly afterwards I receive some further news which does not tally with the previous information. I am thereby obliged to reverse my previous judgment. The result is an unfavorable influence upon my sixteen-petalled lotus. Quite the contrary would have been the case had I, in the first place, suspended judgment, and remained silent both inwardly in thought and outwardly in word concerning the whole affair, until I had acquired reliable grounds for forming my judgment. Caution in the formation and pronouncement of judgments becomes, by degrees, the special characteristic of the student. On the other hand his receptivity for impressions and experiences increases; he lets them pass over him silently, so as to collect and have the largest possible number of facts at his disposal when the time comes to form his opinions. Bluish-red and reddish-pink shades color the lotus flower as the result of such circumspection, whereas in the opposite case dark red and orange shades appear. (Students will recognize in the conditions attached to the development of the sixteen-petalled lotus the instructions given by the Buddha to his disciples for the Path. Yet there is no question here of teaching Buddhism, but of describing conditions governing development which are the natural outcome of spiritual science. The fact that these conditions correspond with certain teachings of the Buddha is no reason for not finding them true in themselves.)

The twelve-petalled lotus situated in the region of the heart is developed in a similar way. Half its petals, too, were already existent and in active use in a remote stage of human evolution. Hence these six petals need not now be especially developed in esoteric training; they appear of themselves and begin to revolve when the student sets to work on the other six. Here again he learns to promote this development by consciously controlling and directing certain inner activities in a special way.

It must be clearly understood that the perceptions of each single organ of soul or spirit bear a different character. The twelve and sixteen-petalled lotus flowers transmit quite different perceptions. The latter perceives forms. The thoughts and mentality of other beings and the laws governing natural phenomena become manifest, through the sixteen-petalled lotus, as figures, not rigid motionless figures but mobile forms filled with life. The clairvoyant in whom this sense is developed can describe, for every mode of thought and for every law of nature, a form which expresses them. A revengeful thought, for example, assumes an arrow-like, pronged form, while a kindly thought is often formed like an opening flower, and so on. Clear-cut, significant thoughts are regular and symmetrical in form, while confused thoughts have wavy outlines. Quite different perceptions are received through the twelve-petalled lotus. These perceptions may, in a sense, be likened to warmth and cold, as applied to the soul. A clairvoyant equipped with this faculty feels this warmth and cold streaming out from the forms discerned by the sixteen-petalled lotus. Had he developed the sixteen and not the twelve-petalled lotus he would only perceive, in the kindly thought, for instance, the figure described above, while a clairvoyant in whom both senses were developed would also notice what can only be described as soul-warmth, flowing from the thought. It would be noted in passing that esoteric training never develops one organ without the other, so that the above-mentioned example may be regarded as a hypothetical case in behalf of clarity. The twelve-petalled lotus, when developed, reveals to the clairvoyant a deep understanding of the processes of nature. Rays of soul-warmth issue from every manifestation of growth and development, while everything in the process of decay, destruction, ruin, gives an impression of cold.

The development of this sense may be furthered in the following manner. *To begin with, the student endeavors to regulate his sequence of thought (control of thought).* Just as the sixteen-petalled lotus is developed by cultivating thoughts that conform with truth and are significant, so, too, the twelve-petalled lotus is developed by inwardly controlling the trains of thought. Thoughts that dart to and fro like will-o'-the-wisps and follow each other in no logical or rational sequence, but merely by pure chance, destroy its form. The closer thought is made to follow upon thought, and the more strictly everything of illogical nature is avoided, the more suitable will be the form this sense organ develops. If the student hears illogical thoughts he immediately lets the right thoughts pass through his mind. He should not, however, withdraw in a loveless way from what is perhaps an illogical environment in order to further his own development. Neither should he feel himself impelled to correct all the illogical thoughts expressed around him. He should rather silently co-ordinate the thoughts as they pour in upon him, and make them conform to logic and sense, and at the same time endeavor in every case to retain this same method in his own thinking.

*An equal consistency in his actions forms the second requirement (control of actions).* All inconstancy, all disharmony of action, is baneful for the lotus here in question. When the student performs some action he must see to it that his succeeding action follows in logical sequence, for if he acts from day to day with variable intent he will never develop the faculty here considered.

*The third requirement is the cultivation of endurance (perseverance).* The student is impervious to all influences which would divert him from the goal he has set himself, as long as he can regard it as the right goal. For him, obstacles contain a challenge that impels him to surmount them, but never a reason for giving up.

*The fourth requirement is forbearance (tolerance) toward persons, creatures, and also circumstances.* The student suppresses all superfluous criticism of everything that is imperfect, evil and bad, and seeks rather to understand everything that comes under his notice. Even as the sun does not withdraw its light from the bad and the evil, so he, too, does not refuse them an intelligent sympathy. Should some trouble befall him he does not proceed to condemn and criticize, but accepts the inevitable, and endeavors to the best of his ability to give the matter a turn for the best. He does not consider the opinions of others merely from his own standpoint, but seeks to put himself into the other's position.

*The fifth requirement is impartiality toward everything that life brings.* In this connection we speak of faith and trust. The student meets every human being and every creature with this trust, and lets it inspire his every action. Upon hearing some information, he never says to himself: "I don't believe it; it contradicts my present opinions." He is far rather ready to test and rectify his views and opinions. He ever remains receptive for everything that confronts him, and he trusts in the efficacy of his undertakings. Timidity and skepticism are banished from his being. He harbors a faith in the power of his intentions. A hundred failures cannot rob him of this faith. This is the "*faith which can move mountains.*"

*The sixth requirement is the cultivation of a certain inner balance (equanimity).* The student endeavors to retain his composure in the face of joy and sorrow, and eradicates the tendency to fluctuate between the seventh heaven of joy and the depths of despair. Misfortune and danger, fortune and advancement alike find him ready armed.

The reader will recognize in the qualities here described the six *attributes* which the candidate for initiation strives to acquire. The intention has been to show their connection with the spiritual organ known as the twelve-petalled lotus flower. As before, special instructions can be given to bring this lotus flower to fruition, but here again the perfect symmetry of its

form depends on the development of the qualities mentioned, the neglect of which results in this organ being formed into a caricature of its proper shape. In this case, should a certain clairvoyance be attained, the qualities in question may take an evil instead of a good direction. A person may become intolerant, timid, or contentious toward his environment; may, for instance, acquire some feeling for the sentiments of others, and for this reason shun them or hate them. This may even reach the point where, by reason of the inner coldness that overwhelms him when he hears repugnant opinions, he is unable to listen, or he may behave in an objectionable manner.

The development of this organ may be accelerated if, in addition to all that has been stated, certain other injunctions are observed which can only be imparted to the student by word of mouth. Yet the instructions given above do actually lead to genuine esoteric training, and more-over, the regulation of life in the way described can be advantageous to all who cannot or will not undergo esoteric training. For it does not fail to produce an effect upon the organism of the soul, even though slowly. As regards the esoteric student, the observance of these principles is indispensable. Should he attempt esoteric training without conforming to them, this could only result in his entering the higher worlds with inadequate organs, and instead of perceiving the truth he would be subject to deceptions and illusions. He would attain a certain clairvoyance, but for the most part, be the victim of greater blindness than before. Formerly he at least stood firmly within the physical world; now he looks beyond this physical world and grows confused about it before acquiring a firm footing in a higher world. All power of distinguishing truth from error would then perhaps fail him, and he would entirely lose his way in life. It is just for this reason that patience is so necessary in these matters. It must ever be borne in mind that the instructions given in esoteric training may go no further than is compatible with the willing readiness shown to develop the lotus flowers to their regular shape. Should these flowers be brought to fruition before they have quietly attained their correct form, mere caricatures would be the result. Their maturity can be brought about by the special instructions given in esoteric training, but their form is dependent on the method of life described above.

An inner training of a particularly intimate character is necessary for the development of the ten-petalled lotus flower, for it is now a question of learning consciously to control and dominate the sense-impressions themselves. This is of particular importance in the initial stages of clairvoyance, for it is only by this means that a source of countless illusions and fancies is avoided. People as a rule do not realize by what factors their sudden ideas and memories are dominated, and how they are produced. Consider the following case. Someone is traveling by railway; his mind is busy with one thought; suddenly his thought diverges; he

recollects an experience that befell him years ago and interweaves it with his present thought. He did not notice that in looking through the window he had caught sight of a person who resembled another intimately connected with the recollected experience. He remains conscious, not of what he saw, but of the effect it produced, and thus believes that it all came to him of its own accords. How much in life occurs in such a way! How great is the part played in our life by things we hear and learn, without our consciously realizing the connection! Someone, for instance, cannot bear a certain color, but does not realize that this is due to the fact that the schoolmaster who used to worry him many years ago wore a coat of that color. Innumerable illusions are based upon such associations. Many things leave their mark upon the soul while remaining outside the pale of consciousness. The following may occur. Someone reads in the paper about the death of a well-known person, and forthwith claims to have had a presentiment of it yesterday, although he had neither heard nor seen anything that might have given rise to such a thought. And indeed it is quite true that the thought occurred to him yesterday, as though of its own accord, that this particular person would die; only one thing escaped his attention: two or three hours before this thought occurred to him yesterday, he went to visit an acquaintance; a newspaper lay on the table; he did not actually read it, but his eyes unconsciously fell on the announcement of the dangerous illness of the person in question. He remained unconscious of the impression he had received, and yet this impression resulted in his presentiment.

Reflection upon these matters will show how great is the source of illusion and fantasy contained in such associations. It is just this source which must be dammed up by all who seek to develop their ten-petalled lotus flower. Deeply hidden characteristics in other souls can be perceived by this organ, but their truth depends on the attainment of immunity from the above-mentioned illusions. For this purpose it is necessary that the student should control and dominate everything that seeks to influence him from outside. He should reach the point of really receiving no impressions beyond those he wishes to receive. This can only be achieved by the development of a powerful inner life; by an effort of the will he only allows such things to impress him to which his attention is directed, and he actually evades all impressions to which he does not voluntarily respond. If he sees something it is because he wills to see it, and if he does not voluntarily take notice of something it is actually non-existent for him. The greater the energy and inner activity devoted to this work, the more extensively will this faculty be attained. The student must avoid all vacuous gazing and mechanical listening. For him only those things exist to which he turns his eye or his ear. He must practice the power of hearing nothing, even in the greatest disturbance, if he does not will to hear; and he must make his eyes unimpressionable to things of which he does not particularly take notice. He must be shielded as by an inner armor against

all unconscious impressions. In this connection the student must devote special care to his thought-life. He singles out a particular thought and endeavors to link with it only such other thoughts as he can himself consciously and voluntarily produce. He rejects all casual ideas and does not connect this thought with another until he has investigated the origin of the latter. He goes still further. If, for instance, he feels a particular antipathy for something, he will combat it and endeavor to establish a conscious relation between himself and the thing in question. In this way the unconscious elements that intrude into his soul will become fewer and fewer. Only by such severe self-discipline can the ten-petalled lotus flower attain its proper form. The student's inner life must become a life of attention, and he must learn really to hold at a distance everything to which he should not or does not wish to direct his attention.

If this strict self-discipline be accompanied by meditation as prescribed in esoteric training, the lotus flower in the region of the pit of the stomach comes to maturity in the right way, and light and color of a spiritual kind are now added to the form and warmth perceptible to the organs described above. The talents and faculties of other beings are thereby revealed, also the forces and the hidden attributes of nature. The colored aura of living creatures then becomes visible; all that is around us manifests its spiritual attributes. It must be understood that the very greatest care is necessary at this stage of development, for the play of unconscious memories is here exceedingly active. If this were not the case, many people would possess this inner sense, for it comes almost immediately into evidence when the impressions delivered by the outer senses are held so completely under control that they become dependent on nothing save attention or inattention. This inner sense remains ineffective as long as the powerful outer sense smother and benumb it.

Still greater difficulty attends the development of the six-petalled lotus flower situated in the center of the body, for it can only be achieved as the result of complete mastery and control of the whole personality through consciousness of self, so that body, soul and spirit form one harmonious whole. The functions of the body, the inclinations and passions of the soul, the thoughts and ideas of the spirit must be tuned to perfect unison. The body must be so ennobled and purified that its organs incite to nothing that is not in the service of soul and spirit. The soul must not be impelled through the body to lusts and passions which are antagonistic to pure and noble thought. Yet the spirit must not stand like a slave-driver over the soul, dominating it with laws and commandments; the soul must rather learn to obey these laws and duties out of its own free inclination. The student must not feel duty to be an oppressive power to which he unwillingly submits, but rather something which he performs out of love. His task is to develop a free soul that maintains equilibrium between body and spirit, and he must perfect himself in this way to the extent of being

free to abandon himself to the functions of the senses, for these should be so purified that they lose the power to drag him down to their level. He must no longer require to curb his passions, in as much as they of their own accord follow the good. So long as self-chastisement is necessary, no one can pass a certain stage of esoteric development; for a virtue practiced under constraint is futile. If there is any lust remaining, it interferes with esoteric development, however great the effort made not to humor it. Nor does it matter whether this desire proceeds from the soul or the body. For example, if a certain stimulant be avoided for the purpose of self-purification, this deprivation will only prove helpful if the body suffers no harm from it. Should the contrary to be the case, this proves that the body craves the stimulant, and that abstinence from it is of no value. In this case it may actually be a question of renouncing the ideal to be attained, until more favorable physical conditions, perhaps in another life, shall be forthcoming. A wise renunciation may be a far greater achievement than the struggle for something which, under given conditions, remains unattainable. Indeed, a renunciation of this kind contributes more toward development than the opposite course.

The six-petalled lotus flower, when developed, permits intercourse with beings of higher worlds, though only when their existence is manifested in the astral or soul-world. The development of this lotus flower, however, is not advisable unless the student has made great progress on that path of esoteric development which enables him to raise his spirit into a still higher world. This entry into the spiritual world proper must always run parallel with the development of the lotus flowers, otherwise the student will fall into error and confusion. He would undoubtedly be able to see, but he would remain incapable of forming a correct estimate of what he saw. Now, the development of the six-petalled lotus flower itself provides a certain security against confusion and instability, for no one can be easily confused who has attained perfect equilibrium between sense (or body), passion (or soul), and idea (or spirit). And yet, something more than this security is required when, through the development of the six-petalled lotus flower, living beings of independent existence are revealed to his spirit, beings belonging to a world so completely different from the world known to his physical senses. The development of the lotus flowers alone does not assure sufficient security in these higher worlds; still higher organs are necessary. The latter will now be described before the remaining lotus flowers and the further organization of the soul-body are discussed. (This expression — soul-body — although obviously contradictory when taken literally, is used because to clairvoyant perception the impression received spiritually corresponds to the impression received physically when the physical body is perceived.)

The development of the soul-body in the manner described above permits perception in a supersensible world, but anyone wishing to find his way in



this world must not remain stationary at this stage of development. The mere mobility of the lotus flowers is not sufficient. The student must acquire the power of regulating and controlling the movement of his spiritual organs independently and with complete consciousness; otherwise he would become a plaything for external forces and powers. To avoid this he must acquire the faculty of hearing what is called the *inner world*, and this involves the development not only of the soul-body but also of the etheric body. The latter is that tenuous body revealed to the clairvoyant as a kind of double of the physical body, and forms to a certain extent an intermediate step between the soul nature and the physical body. (See the description on the author's book *Theosophy*.) It is possible for one equipped with clairvoyant powers consciously to suggest away the physical body of a person. This corresponds on a higher plane to an exercise in attentiveness on a lower plane. Just as a person can divert his attention from something in front of him so that it becomes non-existent for him, the clairvoyant can extinguish a physical body from his field of observation so that it becomes physically transparent to him. If he exerts this faculty in the case of some person standing before him, there remains visible to his clairvoyant sight only the etheric body, besides the soul-body which is larger than the other two — etheric and physical bodies — and interpenetrates them both. The etheric body has approximately the size and form of the physical body, so that it practically fills the same space. It is an extremely delicate and finely organized structure. (I beg the physicist not to be disturbed at the expression “etheric body”. The word ether here is merely used to suggest the fineness of the body in question, and need not in any way be connected with the hypothetical ether of physics.)

Its ground-color is different from any of the seven colors contained in the rainbow. Anyone capable of observing it will find a color which is actually non-existent for sense perception but to which the color of the young peach-blossom may be comparable. If desired, the etheric body can be examined alone; for this purpose the soul-body must be extinguished by an effort of attentiveness in the manner described above. Otherwise the etheric body will present an ever changing picture owing to its interpenetration by the soul-body.

Now, the particles of the etheric body are in continual motion. Countless currents stream through it in every direction. By these currents, life itself is maintained and regulated. Every body that has life, including animals and plants, possesses an etheric body. Even in minerals traces of it can be observed. These currents and movements are, to begin with, independent of human will and consciousness, just as the action of the heart or stomach is beyond our jurisdiction, and this independence remains unaltered so long as we do not take our development in hand in the sense of acquiring supersensible faculties. For, at a certain stage, development consists

precisely in adding to the unconscious currents and movements of the etheric body others that are consciously produced and controlled.

When esoteric development has progressed so far that the lotus flowers begin to stir, much has already been achieved by the student which can result in the formation of certain quite definite currents and movements in his etheric body. The object of this development is the formation of a kind of center in the region of the physical heart, from which radiate currents and movements in the greatest possible variety of colors and forms. The center is in reality not a mere point, but a most complicated structure, a most wonderful organ. It glows and shimmers with every shade of color and displays forms of great symmetry, capable of rapid transformation. Other forms and streams of color radiate from this organ to the other parts of the body, and beyond it to the astral body, completely penetrating and illuminating it. The most important of these currents flow to the lotus flowers. They permeate each petal and regulate its revolutions; then streaming out at the points of the petals, they lose themselves in outer space. The higher the development of a person, the greater the circumference to which these rays extend.

The twelve-petalled lotus flower has a particularly close connection with this central organ. The currents flow directly into it and through it, proceeding on the one side to the sixteen and the two-petalled lotus flowers, and on the other, the lower side, to the flowers of eight, six and four petals. It is for this reason that the very greatest care must be devoted to the development of the twelve-petalled lotus, for an imperfection in the latter would result in irregular formation of the whole structure. The above will give an idea of the delicate and intimate nature of esoteric training, and of the accuracy needed if the development is to be regular and correct. It will also be evident beyond doubt that directions for the development of supersensible faculties can only be the concern of those who have themselves experienced everything which they propose to awaken in others, and who are unquestionably in a position to know whether the directions they give lead to the exact results desired. If the student follows the directions that have been given him, he introduces into his etheric body currents and movements which are in harmony with the laws and the evolution of the world to which he belongs. Consequently these instructions are reflections of the great laws of cosmic evolution. They consist of the above-mentioned and similar exercises in meditation and concentration which, if correctly practiced, produce the results described. The student must at certain times let these instructions permeate his soul with their content, so that he is inwardly entirely filled with it. A simple start is made with a view to the deepening of the logical activity of the mind and the producing of an inward intensification of thought. Thought is thereby made free and independent of all sense impressions and experiences; it is concentrated in one point which is held entirely under

control. Thus a preliminary center is formed for the currents of the etheric body. This center is not yet in the region of the heart but in the head, and it appears to the clairvoyant as the point of departure for movements and currents. No esoteric training can be successful which does not first create this center. If the latter were first formed in the region of the heart the aspiring clairvoyant would doubtless obtain glimpses of the higher worlds, but would lack all true insight into the connection between these higher worlds and the world of our senses. This, however, is an unconditional necessity for man at the present stage of evolution. The clairvoyant must not become a visionary; he must retain a firm footing upon the earth.

The center in the head, once duly fixed, is then moved lower down, to the region of the larynx. This is effected by further exercises in concentration. Then the currents of the etheric body radiate from this point and illumine the astral space surrounding the individual.

Continued practice enables the student to determine for himself the position of this etheric body. Hitherto this position depended upon external forces proceeding from the physical body. Through further development the student is able to turn his etheric body to all sides. This faculty is effected by currents moving approximately along both hands and centered in the two-petalled lotus in the region of the eyes. All this is made possible through the radiations from the larynx assuming round forms, of which a number flow to the two-petalled lotus and thence form undulating currents along the hands. As a further development, these currents branch out and ramify in the most delicate manner and become, as it were, a kind of web which then encompasses the entire etheric body as though with a network. Whereas hitherto the etheric body was not closed to the outer world, so that the life currents from the universal ocean of life flowed freely in and out, these currents now have to pass through this membrane. Thus the individual becomes sensitive to these external streams; they become perceptible to him.

And now the time has come to give the complete system of currents and movements its center situated in the region of the heart. This again is effected by persevering with the exercises in concentration and meditation; and at this point also the stage is reached when the student becomes gifted with the inner word. All things now acquire a new significance for him. They become as it were spiritually audible in their innermost self, and speak to him of their essential being. The currents described above place him in touch with the inner being of the world to which he belongs. He begins to mingle his life with the life of his environment and can let it reverberate in the movements of his lotus flowers.

At this point the spiritual world is entered. If the student has advanced so far, he acquires a new understanding for all that the great teachers of humanity have uttered. The sayings of the Buddha and the Gospels, for instance, produce a new effect on him. They pervade him with a rapture of which he had not dreamed before. For the tone of their words follows the movements and rhythms which he has himself formed within himself. He can now have positive knowledge that a Buddha or the Evangelists did not utter their own revelations but those which flowed into them from the inmost being of all things. A fact must here be pointed out which can only be understood in the light of what has been said above. The many repetitions in the sayings of the Buddha are not comprehensible to people of our present evolutionary stage. For the esoteric student, however, they become a force on which he gladly lets his inner senses rest, for they correspond with certain movements in the etheric body. Devotional surrender to them, with perfect inner peace, creates an inner harmony with these movements; and because the latter are an image of certain cosmic rhythms which also at certain points repeat themselves and revert to former modes, the student listening to the wisdom of the Buddha unites his life with that of the cosmic mysteries.

In esoteric training there is question of *four attributes* which must be acquired on the so-called preparatory path for the attainment of higher knowledge. *The first* is the faculty of discriminating in thoughts between truth and appearance or mere opinion. *The second* attribute is the correct estimation of what is inwardly true and real, as against what is merely apparent. *The third* rests in the practice of the six qualities already mentioned in the preceding pages: thought-control, control of actions, perseverance, tolerance, faith and equanimity. *The fourth* attribute is the love of inner freedom.

A mere intellectual understanding of what is included in these attributes is of no value. They must be so incorporated into the soul that they form the basis of inner habits. Consider, for instance, the first of these attributes: The discrimination between truth and appearance. The student must so train himself that, as a matter of course, he distinguishes in everything that confronts him between the non-essential elements and those that are significant and essential. He will only succeed in this if, in his observation of the outer world, he quietly and patiently ever and again repeats the attempt. And at the end he will naturally single out the essential and the true at a glance, whereas formerly the non-essential, the transient, too, could content him. "All that is transient is but a seeming" ("*Alles Vergänglich ist nur ein Gleichnis*," Goethe, *Faust II.* ) is a truth which becomes an unquestionable conviction of the soul. The same applies to the remaining three of the four attributes mentioned.

Now these four inner habits do actually produce a transformation of the delicate human etheric body. By the first, discrimination between truth and appearance, the center in the head already described is formed and the center in the region of the larynx prepared. The actual development of these centers is of course dependent on the exercises in concentration described above; the latter make for development and the four attributes bring to fruition. Once the center in the larynx has been prepared, the free control of the etheric body and its enclosure within a network covering, as explained above, results from the correct estimation of what is true as against what is apparent and non-essential. If the student acquires this faculty of estimation, the facts of the higher worlds will gradually become perceptible to him. But he must not think that he has to perform only such actions which appear significant when judged by the standard of a mere intellectual estimate. The most trifling action, every little thing accomplished, has something of importance in the great cosmic household, and it is merely a question of being aware of this importance. A correct estimation of the affairs of daily life is required, not an underestimation of them. The six virtues of which the third attribute consists have already been dealt with; they are connected with the development of the twelve-petalled lotus in the region of the heart, and, as already indicated, it is to this center that the life-currents of the etheric body must be directed. The fourth attribute, the longing for liberation, serves to bring to fruition the etheric organ in the heart region. Once this attribute becomes an inner habit, the individual frees himself from everything which depends only upon the faculties of his own personal nature. He ceases to view things from his own separate standpoint, and the boundaries of his own narrow self fettering him to this point of view disappear. The secrets of the spiritual world gain access to his inner self. This is liberation. For those fetters constrain the individual to regard things and beings in a manner corresponding to his own personal traits. It is from this personal manner of regarding things that the student must become liberated and free.

It will be clear from the above that the instructions given in esoteric training exert a determining influence reaching the innermost depths of human nature. Such are the instructions regarding the four qualities mentioned above. They can be found in one form or another in all the great cosmogonies that take account of the spiritual world. The founders of the great cosmogonies did not give mankind these teachings from some vague feeling. They gave them for the good reason that they were great initiates. Out of their knowledge did they shape their moral teachings. They knew how these would act upon the finer nature of man, and desired that their followers should gradually achieve the development of this finer nature. To live in the sense of these great cosmogonies means to work for the attainment of personal spiritual perfection. Only by so doing can man become a servant of the world and of humanity. Self-perfection is by no

means self-seeking, for the imperfect man is an imperfect servant of the world and of humanity. The more perfect a man is, the better does he serve the world. "If the rose adorns itself, it adorns the garden."

The founders of the great cosmogonies are therefore the great initiates. Their teaching flows into the soul of men, and thus, with humanity, the whole world moves forward. Quite consciously did they work to further this evolutionary process of humanity. Their teachings can only be understood if it be remembered that they are the product of knowledge of the innermost depths of human nature. The great initiates knew, and it is out of their knowledge that they shaped the ideals of humanity. And man approaches these great leaders when he uplifts himself, in his own development, to their heights.

A completely new life opens out before the student when the development of his etheric body begins in the way described above, and at the proper time, in the course of his training, he must receive that enlightenment which enables him to adapt himself to this new existence. The sixteen-petalled lotus, for instance, enables him to perceive spiritual figures of a higher world. He must learn now how different these figures can be when caused by different objects or beings. In the first place, he must notice that his own thoughts and feelings exert a powerful influence on certain of these figures, on others little or no influence. One kind of figure alters immediately if the observer, upon seeing it, says to himself: "that is beautiful," and then in the course of his observation changes this thought to: "that is useful." It is characteristic of the forms proceeding from minerals or from artificial objects that they change under the influence of every thought and every feeling directed upon them by the observer. This applies in a lesser degree to the forms belonging to plants, and still less to those corresponding to animals. These figures, too, are full of life and motion, but this motion is only partially due to the influence of human thoughts and feelings; in other respects it is produced by causes which are beyond human influence. Now, there appears within this whole world a species of form which remains almost entirely unaffected by human influence. The student can convince himself that these forms proceed neither from minerals nor from artificial objects, nor, again, from plants or animals. To gain complete understanding, he must study those forms which he can realize to have proceeded from the feelings, instincts, and passions of human beings. Yet he can find that these forms too are influenced by his own thoughts and feelings, if only to a relatively small extent. But there always remains a residuum of forms in this world upon which such influences are negligible. Indeed, at the outset of this career the student can perceive little beyond this residuum. He can only discover its nature by observing himself. He then learns what forms he himself produces, for his will, his wishes, and so on, are expressed in these forms. An instinct that dwells in him, a desire that fills him, an intention that he

harbors, and so forth, are all manifested in these forms: his whole character displays itself in this world of forms. Thus by his conscious thoughts and feelings a person can exercise an influence on all forms which do not proceed from himself; but over those which he brings about in the higher world, once he has created them. Now, it follows from what has been said that on this higher plan man's inner life of instincts, desires, ideas displays itself outwardly in definite forms, just like all the other beings and objects. To higher knowledge, the inner world appears as part of the outer world. In a higher world man's inner being confronts him as a reflected image, just as though in the physical world he were surrounded by mirrors and could observe his physical body in that way.

At this stage of development the student has reached the point where he can free himself from the illusion resulting from the initiation of his personal self. He can now observe that inner self as outer world, just as he hitherto regarded as outer world everything that affected his senses. Thus he learns by gradual experience to deal with himself as hitherto he dealt with the beings around him.

Were the student to obtain an insight into these spiritual worlds without sufficient preparation regarding their nature, he would find himself confronted by the picture of his own soul as though by an enigma. There his own desires and passions confront him in animal or, more rarely, in human forms. It is true that animal forms of this world are never quite similar to those of the physical world, yet they possess a remote resemblance: inexpert observers often take them to be identical. Now, upon entering this world, an entirely new method of judgment must be acquired; for apart from the fact that things actually pertaining to inner nature appear as outer world, they also bear the character of mirrored reflections of what they really are. When, for instance, a number is perceived, it must be read in reverse, as a picture in a mirror: 265 would mean here in reality, 562. A sphere is perceived as thought from its center. This inner perception must then be translated in the right way. The qualities of the soul appear likewise as in a mirror. A wish directed toward an outer object appears as a form moving toward the person wishing. Passions residing in the lower part of human nature can assume animal forms or similar shapes that hurl themselves against the individual. In reality, these passions are headed outward; they seek satisfaction in the outer world, but this striving outward appears in the mirrored reflection as an attack on the individual from whom they proceed.

If the student, before attaining insight into higher worlds, has learned by quiet and sincere self-observation to realize the qualities and the defects of his own character, he will then, at the moment when his own inner self confronts him as a mirrored image, find strength and courage to conduct himself in the right way. People who have failed to test themselves in this

way, and are insufficiently acquainted with their own inner self, will not recognize themselves in their own mirrored image and will mistake it for an alien reality. Or they may become alarmed at the vision and, because they cannot endure the sight, deceive themselves into believing the whole thing is nothing but an illusion which cannot lead them anywhere. In either case the person in question, through prematurely attaining a certain stage of inner development, would fatally obstruct his own progress.

It is absolutely necessary that the student should experience this spiritual aspect of his own inner self before progressing to higher spheres; for his own self constitutes that psycho-spiritual element of which he is the best judge. If he has thoroughly realized the nature of his own personality in the physical world, and if the image of his personality first appears to him in a higher world, he is then able to compare the one with the other. He can refer the higher to something already known to him, so that his point of departure is on firm ground. Whereas, no matter how many other spiritual beings appeared to him, he would find himself unable to discover their nature and qualities, and would soon feel the ground giving way beneath him. Thus it cannot be too often repeated that the only safe entrance into the higher worlds is at the end of a path leading through a genuine knowledge and estimate of one's own nature.

Pictures, then, of a spiritual kind are first encountered by the student on his progress into higher worlds; and the reality to which these pictures correspond is actually within himself. He should be far enough advanced to refrain from desiring reality of a more robust kind at this initial stage, and to regard these pictures as timely. He will soon meet something quite new within this world of pictures. His lower self is before him as a mirrored image; but from within this image there appears the true reality of his higher self. Out of the picture of his lower personality the form of the spiritual ego becomes visible. Then threads are spun from the latter to other and higher spiritual realities.

This is the moment when the two-petalled lotus in the region of the eyes is required. If it now begins to stir, the student finds it possible to bring his higher ego in contact with higher spiritual beings. The currents from this lotus flower flow toward the higher realities in such a way that the movements in question are fully apparent to the individual. Just as the light renders the physical objects visible, so, too, these currents disclose spiritual beings of higher worlds.

Through inward application to the fundamental truths derived from spiritual science the student learns to set in motion and then to direct the currents proceeding from the lotus flower between the eyes.



It is at this stage of development especially that the value of sound judgment and a training in clear and logical thought come to the fore. The higher self, which hitherto slumbered unconsciously in an embryonic state, is now born into conscious existence. This is not a figurative but a positive birth in the spiritual world, and the being now born, the higher self, must enter that world with all the necessary organs and aptitudes if it is to be capable of life. Just as nature must provide for a child being born into the world with suitable eyes and ears, so, too, the laws of self-development must provide for the necessary capacities with which the higher self can enter existence. These laws governing the development of the higher spiritual organs are none other than the laws of sound reason and morality of the physical world. The spiritual self matures in the physical self as a child in the mother's womb. The child's health depends upon the normal functioning of natural laws in the maternal womb. The constitution of the spiritual self is similarly conditioned by the laws of common intelligence and reason that govern physical life. No one can give birth to a soundly constituted higher self whose life in thought and feeling, in the physical world, is not sound and healthy. Natural, rational life is the basis of all genuine spiritual development. Just as the child when still in the maternal womb lives in accordance with the natural forces to which it has access, after its birth, through its organs of sense, so, too, the human higher self lives in accordance with the laws of the spiritual world, even during physical existence. And even as the child, out of a dim life instinct, acquired the requisite forces, so, too, can man acquire the powers of the spiritual world before his higher self is born. Indeed, he must do this if the latter is to enter the world as a fully developed being. It would be quite wrong for anyone to say: "I cannot accept the teachings of spiritual science until I myself become a seer," for without inward application to the results of spiritual research there is no chance whatever of attaining genuine higher knowledge. It would be as though a child, during gestation, were to refuse the forces coming to it through its mother, and proposed to wait until it could procure them for itself. Just as the embryonic child in its incipient feeling for life learns to appreciate what is offered to it, so can the non-seer appreciate the truth of the teachings of spiritual science. An insight into these teachings based on a deeply rooted feeling for truth, and a clear, sound, all-around critical and reasoning faculty are possible even before spiritual things are actually perceived. The esoteric knowledge must first be studied, so that this study becomes a preparation for clairvoyance. A person attaining clairvoyance without such preparation would resemble a child born with eyes and ears but without a brain. The entire world of sound and color would display itself before him, but he would be helpless in it.

At this stage of his esoteric development the student realizes, through personal inward experience, all that had previously appealed to his sense of truth, to his intellect and reason. He has now direct knowledge of his

higher self. He learns how his higher self is connected with exalted spiritual beings and forms with them a united whole. He sees how the lower self originates in a higher world, and it is revealed to him how his higher nature outlasts his lower. He can now distinguish the imperishable in himself from the perishable; that is, he learns through personal insight to understand the doctrine of the incarnation of the higher self in the lower. It will become plain to him that he is part of a great spiritual complex and that his qualities and destiny are due to this connection. He learns to recognize the law of his life, his *karma*. He realizes that his lower self, constituting his present existence, is only one of the forms which his higher being can adopt. He discerns the possibility of working down from his higher self in his lower self, so that he may perfect himself ever more and more. Now, too, he can comprehend the great differences between human beings in regard to their level of perfection. He becomes aware that there are others above him who have already traversed the stages which still lie before him, and he realizes that the teachings and deeds of such men proceed from the inspiration of a higher world. He owes this knowledge to his first personal glimpse into this higher world. The so-called initiates of humanity now become vested with reality for him.

These, then, are the gifts which the student owes to his development at this stage: insight into his higher self; insight into the doctrine of the incarnation of this higher being in a lower; insight into the laws by which life in the physical world is regulated according to its spiritual connections, that is, the law of karma; and finally, insight into the existence of the great initiates.

Thus it is said of a student who has reached this stage, that all doubt has vanished from him. His former faith, based on reason and sound thoughts, is now replaced by knowledge and insight which nothing can undermine. The various religions have presented, in their ceremonies, sacraments, and rites, externally visible patterns of the higher spiritual beings and events. None but those who have not penetrated to the depths of the great religions can fail to recognize this fact. Personal insight into spiritual reality explains the great significance of these externally visible cults. Religious service, then, becomes for the seer an image of his own communion with the higher, spiritual world.

It has been shown how the student, by attaining this stage, becomes in truth a new being. He can now mature to still higher faculties and, by means of the life-currents of his etheric body, control the higher and actual life-element, thus attaining a high degree of independence from the restrictions of the physical body.

## VII

### The Transformation of Dream Life

An intimation that the student has reached or will soon reach the stage of development described in the preceding chapter will be found in the change which comes over his dream life. His dreams, hitherto confused and haphazard, now begin to assume a more regular character. Their pictures begin to succeed each other in sensible connection, like the thoughts and ideas of daily life. He can discern in them law, cause, and effect. The content, too, of his dreams is changed. While hitherto he discerned only reminiscences of daily life and transformed impressions of his surroundings or of his physical condition, there now appear before him pictures of a world he has hitherto not known. At first the general character of his dream life remains unchanged, in as far as dreams are distinguished from waking mental activity by the symbolical presentation of what they wish to express. No attentive observer of dream life can fail to detect this characteristic. For instance, a person may dream that he has caught some horrible creature, and he feels an unpleasant sensation in his hand. He wakes to discover that he is tightly grasping a corner of the blanket. The truth is not presented to the mind, except through the medium of a symbolical image. A man may dream that he is flying from some pursuer and is stricken with fear. On waking, he finds that he has been suffering, during sleep, from palpitations of the heart. Disquieting dreams can also be traced to indigestible food. Occurrences in the immediate vicinity may also reflect themselves symbolically in dreams. The striking of a clock may evoke the picture of a troop of soldiers marching by to the beat of drums. A falling chair may be the occasion of a whole dream drama in which the sound of the fall is reproduced as the report of a gun, and so forth. The more regulated dreams of esoteric students whose etheric body has begun its development retain this symbolical method of expression, but they will cease merely to reflect reality connected with the physical body and physical environment. As the dreams due to the latter causes become more connected, they are mingled with similar pictures expressing things and events of another world. These are the first experiences lying beyond the range of waking consciousness.

Yet no true mystic will ever make his experiences in dreams the basis of any authoritative account of the higher world. Such dreams must be merely considered as providing the first hint of a higher development. Very soon and as a further result, the student's dreams will no longer remain beyond the reach of intellectual guidance as heretofore, but on the contrary, will be mentally controlled and supervised like the impressions and conceptions of waking consciousness. The difference between dream and waking consciousness grows ever smaller. The dreamer remains

awake in the fullest sense of the word during his dream life; that is, he is aware of his mastery and control over his own vivid mental activity.

During our dreams we are actually in a world other than that of our senses; but with undeveloped spiritual organs we can form none other than the confused conceptions of it described above. It is only in so far present for us as, for instance, the world of sense could be for a being equipped with no more than rudimentary eyes. That is why we can see nothing in this world but counterfeits and reflections of daily life. The latter are perceptible to us because our own soul paints its daily experiences in pictorial form into the substance of which that other world consists. It must be clearly understood that in addition to our ordinary conscious work-a-day life we lead a second, unconscious life in that other world. We engrave in it all our thoughts and perceptions. These tracings only become visible when the lotus flowers are developed. Now, in every human being there are slender rudiments of these lotus flowers. We cannot perceive by means of them during waking consciousness because the impressions made on them are very faint. We cannot see the stars during the daytime for a similar reason: their visibility is extinguished by the mighty glare of the sun. Thus, too, the faint spiritual impressions cannot make themselves felt in the face of the powerful impressions received through the senses.

Now, when the gate of the senses is closed during sleep, these other impressions begin to emerge confusedly, and the dreamer becomes aware of experiences in another world. But as already explained, these experiences consist at first merely of pictures engraved in the spiritual world by our mental activity attached to the physical senses. Only developed lotus flowers make it possible for manifestations not derived from the physical world to be imprinted in the same way. And then the etheric body, when developed, brings full knowledge concerning these engraved impressions derived from other worlds.

This is the beginning of life and activity in a new world, and at this point esoteric training must set the student a twofold task. To begin with, he must learn to take stock of everything he observes in his dreams, exactly as though he were awake. Then, if successful in this, he is led to make the same observations during ordinary waking consciousness. He will so train his attention and receptivity for these spiritual impressions that they need no longer vanish in the face of the physical impressions, but will always be at hand for him and reach him in addition to the others.

When the student has acquired this faculty there arises before his spiritual eyes something of the picture described in the preceding chapter, and he can henceforth discern all that the spiritual world contains as the cause of the physical world. Above all things he can perceive and gain knowledge of his own higher self in this world. The next task now confronting him is

to grow, as it were, into this higher self, that is, really to regard it as his own true self and to act accordingly. He realizes ever more clearly and intensely that his physical body and what he hitherto called his "I" are merely the instruments of his higher self. He adopts an attitude toward his lower self such as a person limited to the world of the senses adopts toward some instrument or vehicle that serves him. No one includes as part of himself the vehicle in which he is traveling, even though he says: "I travel"; so, too, when an inwardly developed person says: "I go through the door," his actual conception is: "I carry my body through the door." Only this must become a natural concept for him, so that he never for a moment loses his firm footing in the physical world, or feels estranged from it. If the student is to avoid becoming a fantastic visionary he must not impoverish his life through his higher consciousness, but on the contrary, enrich it, as a person enriches his life by using the railway and not merely his legs to cover a certain distance.

When the student has thus raised himself to a life in the higher ego, or rather during his acquisition of the higher consciousness, he will learn how to stir to life the spiritual perceptive force in the organ of the heart and control it through the currents described in the foregoing chapter. This perceptive force is an element of higher sustainability, which proceeds from the organ in question and flows with beautiful radiance through the moving lotus flowers and the other channels of the developed etheric body. Thence it radiates outward into the surrounding spiritual world rendering it spiritually visible, just as the sunlight falling on the objects of the physical world renders them visible.

How this perceptive force in the heart organ is created can only be gradually understood in the course of actual development.

It is only when this organ of perception can be sent through the etheric body and into the outer world, to illumine the objects there, that the actual spiritual world, as composed of objects and beings, can be clearly perceived. Thus it will be seen that complete consciousness of an object in the spiritual world is only possible when man himself casts upon it the spiritual light. Now, the ego which creates this organ of perception does not dwell within, but outside the physical body, as already shown. The heart organ is only the spot where the individual man kindles, from without, this spiritual light organ. Were the latter kindled elsewhere, the spiritual perceptions produced by it would have no connection with the physical world. But all higher spiritual realities must be related to the physical world, and man himself must act as a channel through which they flow into it. It is precisely through the heart organ that the higher ego governs the physical self, making it into its instrument.

Now, the feelings of an esoterically developed person toward the things of the spiritual world are very different from the feelings of the undeveloped person toward the things of the physical world. The latter feels himself to be at a particular place in the world of sense, and the surrounding objects to be external to him. The spiritually developed person feels himself to be united with, and as though in the interior of, the spiritual objects he perceives. He wanders, in fact, from place to place in spiritual space, and is therefore called *the wanderer* in the language of occult science. He has no home at first. Should he, however, remain a mere wanderer he would be unable to define any object in spiritual space. Just as objects and places in physical space are defined from a fixed point of departure, this, too, must be the case in the other world. He must seek out some place, thoroughly investigate it, and take spiritual possession of it. In this place he must establish his spiritual home and relate everything else to it. In physical life, too, a person sees everything in terms of his physical home. Natives of Berlin and Paris will involuntarily describe London in a different way. And yet there is a difference between the spiritual and the physical home. We are born into the latter without our co-operation and instinctively absorb, during our childhood, a number of ideas by which everything is henceforth involuntarily colored. The student, however, himself founds his own spiritual home in full consciousness. His judgment, therefore, based on this spiritual home, is formed in the light of freedom. This founding of a spiritual home is called in the language of occult science *the building of the hut*.

Spiritual vision at this stage extends to the spiritual counterparts of the physical world, so far as these exist in the so-called astral world. There everything is found which in its nature is similar to human instincts, feelings, desires, and passions. For powers related to all these human characteristics are associated with all physical objects. A crystal, for instance, is cast in its form by powers which, seen from a higher standpoint, appear as an active human impulse. Similar forces drive the sap through the capillaries of the plant, cause the blossoms to unfold and the seed vessels to burst. To developed spiritual organs of perception all these forces appear gifted with form and color, just as the objects of the physical world have form and color for physical eyes. At this stage in his development the student sees not only the crystal and the plant, but also the spiritual forces mentioned above. Animal and human impulses are perceptible to him not only through their physical manifestation in the individual, but directly as objects; he perceives them just as he perceives tables and chairs in the physical world. The whole range of instincts, impulses, desires and passions, both of an animal and of a human being, constitute the astral cloud or aura in which the being is enveloped.

Furthermore, the clairvoyant can at this stage perceive things which are almost or entirely withheld from the senses. He can, for instance, tell the

astral difference between a room full of low or of high-minded people. Not only the physical but also the spiritual atmosphere of a hospital differs from that of a ballroom. A commercial town has a different astral air from that of a university town. In the initial stages of clairvoyance this perceptive faculty is but slightly developed; its relation to the objects in question is similar to the relation of dream consciousness to waking consciousness in ordinary life; it will, however, become fully awakened at this stage as well.

The highest achievement of a clairvoyant who has attained the degree of vision described above is that in which the astral counter-effects of animal and human impulses and passions are revealed to him. A loving action is accompanied by quite a different astral concomitant from one inspired by hate. Senseless desire gives rise to an ugly astral counterpart, while a feeling evoked by a high ideal creates one that is beautiful. These astral images are but faintly perceptible during physical life, for their strength is diminished by life in the physical world. The desire for an object, for example, produces a counterpart of this sort in addition to the semblance of the desire itself in the astral world. If, however, the object be attained and the desire satisfied, or if, at any rate, the possibility of satisfaction is forthcoming, the corresponding image will show but faintly. It only attains its full force after the death of the individual human being, when the soul in accordance with her nature still harbors such desires, but can no longer satisfy them, because the object and the physical organ are both lacking. The gourmand, for instance, will still retain, after death, the desire to please his palate; but there is no possibility of satisfying this desire because he no longer has a palate. As a result, the desire produces an especially powerful counterpart, by which the soul is tormented. These experiences evoked by the counterparts of the lower soul-nature after death are called the experiences in the soul-world, especially in the region of desires. They only vanish when the soul has purified herself from all desires inclining toward the physical world. Then only does the soul mount to the higher regions, to the world of spirit. Even though these images are faint during life in the physical world, they are none the less present, following man as his world of desire, in the way a comet is followed by its tail. They can be seen by a clairvoyant at the requisite stage of development.

Such and similar experiences fill the life of the student during the period described above. He cannot attain higher spiritual experience at this stage of development, but must climb still higher from this point.

## VIII

### The Continuity of Consciousness

Human life runs its course in three alternating states or conditions, namely, waking, dreaming sleep, and dreamless sleep. The attainment of the higher knowledge of spiritual worlds can be readily understood if a conception be formed of the changes occurring in these three conditions, as experienced by one seeking such higher knowledge. When no training has been undertaken to attain this knowledge, human consciousness is continually interrupted by the restful interval of sleep. During these intervals the soul knows nothing of the outer world, and equally little of itself. Only at certain periods dreams emerge from the deep ocean of insensibility, dreams linked to the occurrences of the outer world or the conditions of the physical body. At first, dreams are only regarded as a particular manifestation of sleep-life, and thus only two states are generally spoken of, namely, sleeping and waking. For spiritual science, however, dreams have an independent significance apart from the other two conditions. In the foregoing chapter a description was given of the alteration ensuing in the dream-life of the person undertaking the ascent to higher knowledge. His dreams lose their meaningless, irregular and disconnected character and form themselves more and more into a world of law and order. With continued development, not only does this new world born out of the dream world come to be in no way inferior to outer physical reality as regards its inner truth, but facts reveal themselves in it representing a higher reality in the fullest sense of the word. Secrets and riddles lie concealed everywhere in the physical world. In the latter, the effects are seen of certain higher facts, but no one can penetrate to the causes whose perception is confined merely to his senses. These causes are partly revealed to the student in the condition described above and developed out of dream life, a condition, however, in which he by no means remains stationary. True, he must not regard these revelations as actual knowledge so long as the same things do not also reveal themselves during ordinary waking life. But in time he achieves this as well: he develops this faculty of carrying over into waking consciousness the condition he created for himself out of dream life. Thus something new is introduced into the world of his senses that enriches it. Just as a person born blind and successfully operated upon will recognize the surrounding objects as enriched by all that the eye perceives, to, too, will anyone having become clairvoyant in the above manner perceive the whole world surrounding him peopled with new qualities, things, beings, and so forth. He now need no longer wait for his dreams to live in another world, but he can at any suitable moment put himself into the above condition for the purpose of higher perception. This condition then acquires a significance for him similar to the perception, in ordinary life, of things with active senses as opposed to inactive senses. It can truly be said that the student



opens the eyes of his soul and beholds things which necessarily remain concealed from the bodily senses.

Now this condition is only transitional to still higher stages of knowledge. If the student continues his esoteric exercises he will find, in due time, that the radical change, as described above, does not confine itself to his dream life, but that this transformation also extends to what was previously a condition of deep dreamless sleep. Isolated conscious experiences begin to interrupt the complete insensibility of this deep sleep. Perceptions previously unknown to him emerge from the pervading unknown to him emerge from the pervading darkness of sleep. It is, of course, not easy to describe these perceptions, for our language is only adapted to the physical world, and therefore only approximate terms can be found to express what does not at all belong to that world. Still, such terms must be used to describe the higher worlds, and this is only possible by the free use of simile; yet seeing that everything in the world is interrelated, the attempt may be made. The things and beings of the higher worlds are closely enough related to those of the physical world to enable, with a little good will, some sort of conception of these higher worlds to be formed, even though words suitable for the physical world are used. Only the reader must always bear in mind that such descriptions of supersensible worlds must, to a large extent, be in the nature of simile and symbol. The words of ordinary language are only partially adopted in the course of esoteric training; for the rest, the student learns another symbolical language, as a natural outcome of his ascent to higher worlds. The knowledge of this language is acquired during esoteric training itself, but that does not preclude the possibility of learning something concerning the higher worlds even from such ordinary descriptions as those here given.

Some idea can be given of those experiences which emerge from the insensibility of deep sleep if they be compared to a kind of hearing. We may speak of perceptible tones and words. While the experiences during dreaming sleep may fitly be designated as a kind of vision, the facts observed during deep sleep may be compared to auricular impressions. (It should be remarked in passing that for the spiritual world, too, the faculty of sight remains the higher. There, too, colors are higher than sounds and words. The student's first perceptions in this world do not yet extend to the higher colors, but only to the lower tones. Only because man, according to his general development, is already more qualified for the world revealing itself in dreaming sleep does he at once perceive colors there. He is less qualified for the higher world unveiling itself in deep sleep; therefore the first revelations of it he receives are in tones and words; later on, he can here, too, ascend to colors and forms.)

Now, when these experiences during deep sleep first come to the notice of the student, his next task must be to sense them as clearly and vividly as

possible. At first this presents great difficulty, the perception of these experiences being exceedingly slight. The student knows very well, on waking, that he has had an experience, but is completely in the dark as regards its nature. The most important thing during this initial stage is to remain quiet and composed, and not for a moment lapse into any unrest or impatience. The latter is under all circumstances detrimental; it can never accelerate development, but only delays it. The student must cultivate a quiet and yielding receptivity for the gift that is presented to him; all violence must be repressed. Should he at any period not become aware of experiences during sleep he must wait patiently until this is possible. Some day this moment will assuredly arrive. And this perceptive faculty, if awaited with patience and composure, remains a secure possession; while should it appear momentarily in answer to forcible methods, it may be completely lost for a long time.

Once this perceptive faculty is acquired and the experiences during sleep are present to the student's consciousness in complete lucidity and clarity, his attention should be directed to the following point. All these experiences are seen to consist of two kinds, which can be clearly distinguished. The first kind will be totally different from anything that he has ever experienced. These experiences may be a source of joy and edification, but otherwise they should be left to themselves for the time being. They are the first harbinger of higher spiritual worlds in which the student will find his way later on. In the other kind of experiences the attentive observer will discover a certain relationship with the ordinary world in which he lives. The subjects of his reflections during life, what he would like to understand in these things around him but cannot understand with the ordinary intellect, these are the things concerning which the experiences during sleep give him information. During every-day life man reflects on his environment; his mind tries to conceive and understand the connection existing between things; he seeks to grasp in thought and idea what his senses perceive. It is to these ideas and concepts that the experiences during sleep refer. Obscure, shadowy concepts become sonorous and living in a way comparable only to the tones and the words of the physical world. It seems to the student ever more and more as though the solution of the riddles over which he ponders is whispered to him in tones and words out of a higher world. And he is able to connect with ordinary life whatever comes to him from a higher world. What was formerly only accessible to his thought now becomes actual experience, just as living and substantial as an experience in this physical world can be. The things and beings of this physical world are by no means only what they appear to be for physical perception. They are the expression and effluence of a spiritual world. This spiritual world, hitherto concealed from the student, now resounds for him out of his whole environment.

It is easy to see that this higher perceptive faculty can prove a blessing only if the opened soul-senses are in perfect order, just as the ordinary senses can only be used for a true observation of the world if their equipment is regular and normal. Now man himself forms these higher senses through the exercises indicated by spiritual science. The latter include concentration, in which the attention is directed to certain definite ideas and concepts connected with the secrets of the universe; and meditation, which is a life in such ideas, a complete submersion in them, in the right way. By concentration and meditation the student works upon his soul and develops within it the soul-organs of perception. While thus applying himself to the task of concentration and meditation his soul grows within his body, just as the embryo child grows in the body of the mother. When the isolated experiences during sleep begin, as described, the moment of birth is approaching for the liberated soul; for she has literally become a new being, developed by the individual within himself, from seed to fruit. The effort required for concentration and meditation must therefore be carefully and accurately maintained, for it contains the laws governing the germination and fruition of the higher human soul-being. The latter must appear at its birth as a harmonious, well-proportioned organism. Through an error in following the instructions, no such normal being will come to existence in the spiritual spheres, but a miscarriage incapable of life.

That this higher soul-being should be born during deep sleep will be easily grasped, for if that delicate organism lacking all power of resistance chanced to appear during physical every-day life it could not prevail against the harsh and powerful processes of this life. Its activity would be of no account against that of the body. During sleep, however, when the body rests in as far as its activity is dependent on sense perception, the activity of the higher soul, at first so delicate and inconspicuous, can come into evidence. Here again the student must bear in mind that these experiences during sleep may not be regarded as fully valid knowledge, so long as he is not in a position to carry over his awakened higher soul into waking consciousness as well. The acquisition of this faculty will enable him to perceive the spiritual world in its own character, among and within the experiences of the day; that is, the hidden secrets of his environment will be conveyed to his soul as tones and words.

Now, the student must realize at this stage of development that he is dealing with separate and more or less isolated spiritual experiences. He should therefore beware of constructing out of them a complete whole or even a connected system of knowledge. In this case, all manner of fantastic ideas and conceptions would be mixed into the soul-world, and a world might thus easily be constructed which had nothing to do with the real spiritual world. The student must continually practice self-control. The right thing to do is to strive for an ever clearer conception of the

isolated real experiences, and to await the spontaneous arrival of new experiences which will connect themselves, as though of their own accord, with those already recorded. By virtue of the power of the spiritual world into which he has now found his way, and through continued application to his prescribed exercises, the student experiences an ever increasing extension and expansion of consciousness during sleep. The unconscious intervals during sleep-life grow ever smaller, while more and more experiences emerge from erstwhile unconsciousness. These experiences thus link themselves together increasingly of their own accord, without this true unity being disturbed by all manner of combinations and inferences, which in any case would only originate in an intellect accustomed to the physical world. Yet the less the habits of thought acquired in the physical world are allowed to play into these higher experiences, the better it is.

By thus conducting himself the student approaches ever nearer to the attainment of that condition, on his path to higher knowledge, in which the unconsciousness of sleep-life is transformed into complete consciousness. When his body rests, man lives in surroundings which are just as real as those of his waking daily life. It is needless to say that the reality during sleep is different from physical reality surrounding the physical body. The student learns — indeed he must learn if he is to retain a firm footing in the physical world and not become a visionary — to connect the higher experiences of sleep with his physical environment. At first, however, the world entered during sleep is a completely new revelation. This important stage of development, at which consciousness is retained in the life during sleep, is known in spiritual science as the *continuity of consciousness*. The condition here indicated is regarded, at a certain stage of development, as a kind of ideal, attainable at the end of a long path. What the student first learns is the extension of consciousness into two soul-states, in the first of which only disordered dreams were previously possible, and in the second only unconscious dreamless sleep. Anyone having reached this stage of development does not cease experiencing and learning during those intervals when the physical body rests, and when the soul receives no impressions through the instrumentality of senses.

## IX

### **The Splitting of the Human Personality During Spiritual Training**

During sleep no impressions are conveyed to the human soul through the instrumentality of the physical sense-organs. The impressions from the ordinary outer world do not find their way to the soul when in that condition. In certain respects the soul is actually outside the part of the human being — the so-called physical body — which in waking life is the medium for sense perceptions and thought. The soul is then only connected with the finer bodies (the etheric body and the astral body), which are beyond the scope of physical sense observation. But the activity of these finer bodies does not cease during sleep. Just as the physical body is connected and lives with the things and beings of the physical world, affecting them and being affected by them, so, too, does the soul live in a higher world; only, this life of the soul continues also during sleep. The soul is in full activity during sleep, but we can know nothing of this activity so long as we have no spiritual organs of perception through which to observe what is going on around us and see what we ourselves are doing during sleep, as we observe our daily physical environment with our ordinary senses. The preceding chapters have shown that esoteric training consists in the development of such spiritual sense organs. Now if, as a result of esoteric training, the student's life during sleep is transformed in the manner described in the foregoing chapter, he will, when in that condition, be able to follow consciously everything going on around him. He can at will find his way in his environment as he could, when awake, with his ordinary senses. It should here be noted that a higher degree of clairvoyance is required for the higher perception of ordinary physical environment. This was indicated in the last chapter. In the initial stages of his development the student perceives things pertaining to another world without being able to discern their connection with the objects of his daily physical environment.

These characteristics of life during sleep or in dreams illustrate what is continually taking place in the human being. The soul lives in uninterrupted activity in the higher worlds, even gathering from them the impulse to act upon the physical body. Ordinarily unconscious of his higher life, the esoteric student renders himself conscious of it, and thereby his whole life becomes transformed. As long as the soul remains unseeing in the higher sense it is guided by superior cosmic beings. And just as the life of a person born blind is changed, through a successful operation, from its previous dependence on a guide, so too is the life of a person changed through esoteric training. He outgrows the principle of being guided by a master and must henceforward undertake to be his own guide. The moment this occurs he is, of course, liable to commit errors

totally unknown to ordinary consciousness. He acts now from a world from which, formerly, higher powers unknown to him influenced him. These higher powers are directed by the universal cosmic harmony. The student withdraws from this cosmic harmony, and must now himself accomplish things which were hitherto done for him without his co-operation.

It is for this reason that so much is found in books dealing with these matters concerning the dangers connected with the ascent into higher worlds. The descriptions sometimes given of these dangers may well make timid souls shudder at the prospect of this higher life. Yet the fact is that dangers only arise when the necessary precautions are neglected. If all the measures counseled by true esoteric science are adopted, the ascent will indeed ensue through experiences surpassing in power and magnitude everything the boldest flights of sense-bound fantasy can picture; and yet there can be no question of injury to health or life. The student meets with horrible powers threatening life at every turn and from every side. It will even be possible for him to make use of certain forces and beings existing beyond physical perception, and the temptation is great to control these forces for the furtherance of personal and forbidden interests, or to employ them wrongly out of a deficient knowledge of the higher worlds. Some of these especially important experiences, for instance, the meeting with Guardian of the Threshold, will be described in the following chapters. Yet we must realize that the hostile powers are none the less present, even though we know nothing of them. It is true that in this case their relation to man is ordained by higher power, and that this relation alters when the human being consciously enters this world hitherto concealed from him. But at the same time his own existence is enhanced and the circle of his life enriched by a great and new field of experience. A real danger can only arise if the student, through impatience or arrogance, assumes too early a certain independence with regard to the experiences of the higher worlds; if he cannot wait to gain really sufficient insight into the supersensible laws. In these spheres, modesty and humility are far less empty words than in ordinary life. If the student possesses these qualities in the very best sense he may be certain that his ascent into the higher life will be achieved without danger to all that is commonly called health and life. Above all things, no disharmony must ensue between the higher experiences and the events and demands of every-day life. Man's task must be entirely sought for on this earth, and anyone desiring to shirk his earthly task and to escape into another world may be certain he will never reach his goal. Yet what the senses perceive is only part of the world, and it is in the spirit world that the beings dwell who express themselves in the facts of the physical world. Man must become a partaker of the spirit in order to carry its revelations into the physical world. He transforms the earth by implanting in it what he has ascertained in the spiritual world. That is his task. It is only because the physical world is dependent upon

the spiritual, and because man can work upon earth, in a true sense, only if he is a participator in those worlds in which the creative forces lie concealed — only for these reasons should he have the desire to ascend to the higher worlds. No one approaching esoteric training with these sentiments, and resolved not to deviate for a moment from these prescribed directions, need fear the slightest danger. No one should allow the prospect of these dangers to deter him from esoteric training; it should rather act as a strong challenge to one and all to acquire those faculties which every true esoteric student must possess.

After these preliminary observations that should dispel any element of terror, a description of some of the so-called dangers will be given. It is true that great changes take place in the student's finer bodies, as described above. These changes are connected with certain processes in the development of the three fundamental forces of the soul, with willing, feeling, and thinking. Before esoteric training, these forces are subject to a connection ordained by higher cosmic laws. Man's willing, feeling and thinking are not arbitrary. A particular idea arising in the mind is attended by a particular feeling, according to natural laws; or it is followed by a resolution of the will in equally natural sequence. We enter a room, find it stuffy, and open the window. We hear our name called and follow the call. We are questioned and we answer. We perceive an ill-smelling object and experience a feeling of disgust. These are simple connections between thinking, feeling, and willing. When we survey human life we find that everything is built up on such connections. Indeed, life is not termed normal unless such a connection, founded on the laws of human nature, is observed between thinking, feeling and willing. It would be found contrary to these laws if the sight of an ill-smelling object gave anyone pleasure, or if anyone, on being questioned, did not answer. The success anticipated from a right education or fitting instruction is based upon the presumption that a connection between thinking, feeling, and willing, corresponding to human nature, can be established in the pupil. Certain ideas are conveyed to him on the assumption that they will be associated, in regular fashion, with his feelings and volitions.

All this arises from the fact that in the finer soul-vehicles of man the central points of the three forces — thinking, feeling and willing — are connected with each other according to laws. This connection in the finer soul organism has its counterpart in the coarser physical body. In the latter, too, the organs of will are connected according to laws with those of thinking and feeling. A particular thought, therefore, inevitably evokes a feeling or an activity of will. In the course of higher development, the threads interconnecting the three fundamental forces are severed. At first this severance occurs only within the finer soul organism, but at a still higher stage the separation extends also to the physical body. It is a fact that in higher spiritual development the brain divides into three separate

parts. This separation is not physically perceptible in the ordinary way, nor can it be demonstrated by the keenest instruments. Yet it occurs, and the clairvoyant has means of observing it. The brain of the higher clairvoyant divides into three independently active entities: The thought-brain, the feeling-brain, and the will-brain.

Thus the organs of thinking, feeling, and willing become individualized; their connection henceforth is not maintained by laws inherent in themselves, but must be managed by the awakened higher consciousness of the individual. This, then, is the change which the student observes coming over him: that no connection arises of itself between an idea and a feeling or a will-impulse, unless he himself provides one. No impulse urges him from thought to action unless he himself in freedom give rise to this impulse. He can henceforth confront, devoid of feeling, a fact which before his training would have filled him with glowing love or bitter hatred; and he can remain impassive at the thought which formerly would have spurred him on to action, as though of its own accord. He can perform actions through resolutions of the will for which there is not the slightest reason for anyone not having undergone esoteric training. The student's great achievement is the attainment of complete mastery over the combined activity of the three soul forces; but at the same time the responsibility for this activity is placed entirely in his own hands.

It is only through this transformation of his being that the student can enter consciously into relation with certain supersensible forces and beings, for his own soul forces are related to certain fundamental forces of the world. The force, for instance, inherent in the will can affect definite things and the beings of the higher worlds, and also perceive them; but it can only do so when liberated from its connection with thinking and feeling within the soul. The moment this connection is severed, the activity of the will can be exteriorized. The same applies to the forces of thinking and feeling. A feeling of hatred sent out by a person is visible to the clairvoyant as a fine luminous cloud of special coloring; and the clairvoyant can ward off this feeling of hatred, just as an ordinary person wards off a physical blow that is aimed at him. In the supersensible world, hatred becomes a visible phenomenon, but the clairvoyant can only perceive it in so far as he is able to project outwards the force lying in his feeling, just as the ordinary person directs outwards the receptive faculty of his eye. And what is said of hatred applies also to far more important phenomena of the physical world. The student can enter into conscious intercourse with them, thanks to the liberation of the fundamental forces of his soul.

Through the separation of the forces of thinking, feeling, and willing, the possibility of a three-fold aberration arises for anyone neglecting the injunctions given by esoteric science. Such an aberration can occur if the connecting threads are severed before the higher consciousness is



sufficiently advanced to hold the reins and guide properly the separated forces into free and harmoniously combined activity. For as a rule, the three human soul-forces are not equally advanced in their development at any given period of life. In one person, thinking is ahead of feeling and willing; in a second, another soul-force has the upper hand over its companions. As long as the connection between the soul-forces is maintained as established by higher cosmic laws, no injurious irregularity, in a higher sense, can occur through the predominance of one force or another. Predominating will, for instance, is prevented by the leveling influence of thinking and feeling from lapsing into any particular excesses. When, however, a person of such predominating will undertakes esoteric training, feeling and thinking cease to exert their regular influence on the will when the latter constantly presses on to great exertions of power. If, then, such a person is not sufficiently advanced to control completely the higher consciousness and himself restore harmony, the will pursues its own unbridled way, continually overpowering its possessor. Feeling and thought lapse into complete impotence; the individual is scourged by his over-mastering will. A violent nature is the result, rushing from one unbridled action to another.

A second deviation occurs when feeling unduly shakes off its proper control. A person inclined to the revering of others may then diverge into unlimited dependence, to the extent of losing all personal will and thoughts. Instead of higher knowledge, the most pitiful vacuity and feebleness would become such a person's lot. Or, in the case of such inordinate predominance of the feeling life, a person with an inclination toward religious devotion can sink into the most degenerate welter.

The third evil is found when thought predominates, resulting in a contemplative nature, hostile to life and locked up within itself. The world, for such people, has no further importance save that it provides them with objects for satisfying their boundless thirst for wisdom. No thought ever moves them to an action or a feeling. They appear everywhere as cold and unfeeling creatures. They flee from every contact with the things of ordinary life as though from something exciting their aversion, or which, at any rate, had lost all meaning for them.

These are the three ways of error into which the student can stray: (1) exuberant violence of will, (2) sentimental emotionalism, and (3) cold, loveless striving for wisdom. For outward observation, and also from the ordinary (materialistic) medical standpoint, anyone thus gone astray is hardly distinguishable (especially in degree) from an insane or, at least, a highly neurasthenic person. Of course, the student must not resemble these. It is essential for him that the three fundamental soul-forces, thinking, feeling, and willing, should have undergone harmonious development before being released from their inherent connection and

subordinated to the awakened higher consciousness. For once a mistake is made and one of the soul-forces falls a prey to unbridled excess, the higher soul comes into existence as a miscarriage. The unrestrained force pervades the individual's entire personality, and for a long time there can be no question of the balance being restored. What appears to be a harmless characteristic as long as its possessor is without esoteric training, namely, a predominance of thinking or feeling or willing, is so intensified in an esoteric student that the universally human element, indispensable for life, becomes obscured.

Yet a really serious danger cannot threaten the student until he has acquired the ability to include in his waking consciousness the experiences forthcoming during sleep. As long as there is only the question of illumination of the intervals of sleep, the life of the senses, regulated by universal cosmic laws, reacts during the waking hours on the disturbed equilibrium of the soul, tending to restore the balance. That is why it is so essential that the waking life of the student should be in every respect regular and healthy. The more capable he is of meeting the demands made by the outer world upon a healthy, sound constitution of body, soul, and spirit, the better it is for him. On the other hand, it may be very bad for him if his ordinary waking life affects him in an exciting or irritating way, that is, if destructive or hampering influences of outer life affect him in addition to the great changes taking place in his inner self. He must seek to find everything corresponding to his powers and faculties which can lead him into undisturbed, harmonious communion with his surroundings, while avoiding everything detrimental to this harmony — everything that brings unrest and feverish haste into his life. And here it is not so much a question of casting off this unrest and haste in an external sense, but much more of taking care that thoughts, feelings, intentions, and bodily health are not thereby exposed to continual fluctuation. All this is not so easy for the student to accomplish as it was before esoteric training, for the higher experiences now playing into his life act upon his entire existence. Should anything within these higher experiences not be as it should, the irregularity continues lying in wait for him and may at every turn throw him off the right path. For this reason the student should omit nothing which can secure for him unflinching mastery over his whole being. He should never be found wanting in presence of mind or in calm penetration of all situations of life. In the main, a genuine esoteric training gives rise of itself to all these qualities, and as it progresses the student only becomes acquainted with the dangers while simultaneously and at the right moment acquiring the full power to rout them from the field.

## X

### The Guardian of the Threshold

The important experiences marking the student's ascent into the higher worlds include his meeting with the *Guardian of the Threshold*. Strictly speaking, there are two *Guardians*: a *lesser* and a *greater*. The student meets the lesser Guardian when the threads connecting willing, feeling, and thinking within the finer astral and etheric bodies begin to loosen, in the way described in the foregoing chapter. The greater Guardian is encountered when this sundering of the connections extends to the physical parts of the body, that is, at first to the brain. The lesser Guardian is a sovereign being. He does not come into existence, as far as the student is concerned, until the latter has reached the requisite stage of development. Only some of his most important characteristics can here be indicated.

The attempt will now be made to describe in narrative form this meeting with the lesser Guardian of the Threshold, as a result of which the student learns that his thinking, feeling, and willing have become released within him from their inherent connection.

A truly terrible spectral being confronts him, and he will need all the presence of mind and faith in the security of his path which he has had ample opportunity to acquire in the course of his previous training.

The Guardian proclaims his signification somewhat in the following words: "Hitherto, powers invisible to thyself watched over thee. They saw to it that in the course of thy lives each of thy good deeds brought its reward, and each of thine evil deeds was attended by its evil results. Thanks to their influence thy character formed itself out of thy life-experiences and thy thoughts. They were the instruments of thy destiny. They ordained that measure of joy and pain allotted to thee in thine incarnations, according to thy conduct in lives gone by. They ruled over thee as the all-embracing law of *karma*. These powers will now partly release thee from their constraining influence; and henceforth must thou accomplish for thyself a part of the work which hitherto they performed for thee. Destiny struck thee many a hard blow in the past. Thou knewest not why. Each blow was the consequence of a harmful deed in a bygone life. Thou foundest joy and gladness, and thou didst take them as they came. They, too, were the fruits of former deeds. Thy character shows many a beautiful side, and many an ugly flaw. Thou hast thyself to thank for both, for they are the result of thy previous experiences and thoughts. These were till now unknown to thee; their effects alone were made manifest. The karmic powers, however, beheld all thy deeds in former lives, and all thy most secret thoughts and feelings, and determined

accordingly thy present self and thy present mode of life. But now all the good and evil sides of thy bygone lives shall be revealed to thee. Hitherto they were interwoven with thine own being; they were in thee and thou couldst not see them, even as thou canst not behold thine own brain with physical eyes. But now they become released from thee; they detach themselves from thy personality. They assume an independent form which thou canst see even as thou beholdest the stones and plants of the outer world. And . . . I am that very being who shaped my body out of thy good and evil achievements. My spectral form is woven out of thine own life's record. Till now thou hast borne me invisibly within thee, and it was well that this was so; for the wisdom of thy destiny, though concealed from thee, could thus work within thee, so that the hideous stains on my form should be blotted out. Now that I have come forth from within thee, that concealed wisdom, too, has departed from thee. It will pay no further heed to thee; it will leave the work in thy hands alone. I must become a perfect and glorious being, or fall a prey to corruption; and should this occur, I would drag thee also down with me into a dark and corrupt world. If thou wouldst avoid this, then thine own wisdom must become great enough to undertake the task of that other, concealed wisdom, which has departed from thee. As a form visible to thyself I will never for an instant leave thy side, once thou hast crossed my Threshold. And in future, whenever thou dost act or think wrongly thou wilt straightway perceive thy guilt as a hideous, demoniacal distortion of my form. Only when thou hast made good all thy bygone wrongs and hast so purified thyself that all further evil is, for thee, a thing impossible, only then will my being have become transformed into radiant beauty. Then, too, shall I again become united with thee for the welfare of thy future activity.

“Yet my Threshold is fashioned out of all the timidity that remains in thee, out of all the dread of the strength needed to take full responsibility for all thy thoughts and actions. As long as there remains in thee a trace of fear of becoming thyself the guide of thine own destiny, just so long will this Threshold lack what still remains to be built into it. And as long as a single stone is found missing, just so long must thou remain standing as though transfixed; or else stumble. Seek not, then, to cross this Threshold until thou dost feel thyself entirely free from fear and ready for the highest responsibility. Hitherto I only emerged from thy personality when death recalled thee from an earthly life; but even then my form was veiled from thee. Only the powers of destiny who watched over thee beheld me and could thus, in the intervals between death and a new birth, build in thee, in accordance with my appearance, that power and capacity thanks to which thou couldst labor in a new earth life at the beautifying of my form, for thy welfare and progress. It was I, too, whose imperfection ever and again constrained the powers of destiny to lead thee back to a new incarnation upon earth. I was present at the hour of thy death, and it was on my account that the Lords of Karma ordained thy reincarnation. And it is only

by thus unconsciously transforming me to complete perfection in ever recurring earthly lives that thou couldst have escaped the powers of death and passed over into immortality united with me.

“Visible do I thus stand before thee today, just as I have ever stood invisible beside thee in the hour of death. When thou shalt have crossed my Threshold, thou wilt enter those realms to which thou hast hitherto only had access after physical death. Thou dost now enter them with full knowledge, and henceforth as thou wanderest outwardly visible upon the earth thou wilt at the same time wander in the kingdom of death, that is, in the kingdom of life eternal. I am indeed the Angel of Death; but I am at the same time the bearer of a higher life without end. Through me thou wilt die with thy body still living, to be reborn into an imperishable existence.

“Into this kingdom thou art now entering; thou wilt meet beings that are supersensible, and happiness will be thy lot. But I myself must provide thy first acquaintance with that world, and I am thine own creation. Formerly I drew my life from thine; but now thou hast awakened me to a separate existence so that I stand before thee as the visible gauge of thy future deeds — perhaps, too, as thy constant reproach. Thou hast formed me, but by so doing thou hast undertaken, as thy duty, to transform me.”

(It will be gathered from the above that the Guardian of the Threshold is an (astral) figure, revealing itself to the student's awakened higher sight; and it is to this supersensible encounter that spiritual science conducts him. It is a lower magical process to make the Guardian of the Threshold physically visible also. That was attained by producing a cloud of fine substance, a kind of frankincense resulting from a particular mixture of a number of substances. The developed power of the magician is then able to mould the frankincense into shape, animating it with the still unredeemed karma of the individual. Such physical phenomena are no longer necessary for those sufficiently prepared for the higher sight; and besides this, anyone who sees, without adequate preparation, his unredeemed karma appear before his eyes as a living creature would run the risk of straying into evil byways. Bulwer Lytton's *Zanoni* contains in novel form a description of the Guardian of the Threshold.)

What is here indicated in narrative form must not be understood in the sense of an allegory, but as an experience of the highest possible reality befalling the esoteric student.

The Guardian must warn him not to go a step further unless he feels in himself the strength to fulfill the demands made in the above speech. However horrible the form assumed by the Guardian, it is only the effect of the student's own past life, his own character risen out of him into

independent existence. This awakening is brought about by the separation of will, thought, and feeling. To feel for the first time that one has oneself called a spiritual being into existence is in itself an experience of deepest significance. The student's preparation must aim at enabling him to endure the terrible sight without a trace of timidity and, at the moment of the meeting, to feel his strength so increased that he can undertake fully conscious the responsibility for transforming and beautifying the Guardian.

If successful, this meeting with the Guardian results in the student's next physical death being an entirely different event from the death as he knew it formerly. He experiences death consciously by laying aside the physical body as one discards a garment that is worn out or perhaps rendered useless through a sudden rent. Thus his physical death is of special importance only for those living with him, whose perception is still restricted to the world of the senses. For them the student dies; but for himself nothing of importance is changed in his whole environment. The entire supersensible world stood open to him before his death, and it is this same world that now confronts him after death.

The Guardian of the Threshold is also connected with other matters. The person belongs to a family, a nation, a race; his activity in this world depends upon his belonging to some such community. His individual character is also connected with it. The conscious activity of individual persons by no means exhausts everything to be reckoned with in a family, a nation, or a race. Besides their character, families, nations, and races have also their destiny. For persons restricted to their senses these things remain mere general ideas; and the materialistic thinker, in his prejudice, will look down with contempt on the spiritual scientist when he hears that for him, family and national character, lineal or racial destiny, are vested in beings just as real as the personality in which the character and destiny of the individual man are vested. The spiritual scientist becomes acquainted with higher worlds of which the separate personalities are members, just as arms and legs are members of the human being. Besides the separate individuals, a very real family and national group soul and racial spirit is at work in the life of a family, a people, or a race. Indeed, in a certain sense the separate individuals are merely the executive organs of these family group souls, racial spirits, and so on. It is nothing but the truth to say, for instance, that a national group soul makes use of each individual man belonging to that nation for the execution of some work. The group soul of a people does not descend into physical reality but dwells in the higher worlds and, in order to work in the physical world, makes use of the physical organs of each individual human being. In a higher sense, it is like an architect making use of workmen for executing the details of a building. In the truest sense, everyone receives his allotted task from his family, national, or racial group soul. Now, the ordinary

person is by no means initiated into the higher design of his work. He joins unconsciously in the tasks of his people and of his race. From the moment the student meets the Guardian, he must not only know his own tasks, but must knowingly collaborate in those of his folk, his race. Every extension of his horizon necessarily enlarges the scope of his duties. What actually happens is that the student adds a new body to his finer soul-body. He puts on a second garment. Hitherto he found his way through the world with the coverings enveloping his personality; and what he had to accomplish for his community, his nation, his race, was directed by higher spirits who made use of his personality.

And now, a further revelation made to him by the Guardian of the Threshold is that henceforth these spirits will withdraw their guiding hand from him. He must step out of the circle of his community. Yet as an isolated personality he would become hardened in himself and decline into ruin, did he not, himself, acquire those powers which are vested in the national and racial spirits. Many, no doubt, will say: "Oh, I have entirely freed myself from all lineal and racial connections; I only want to be a human being and nothing but a human being." To these one must reply: "Who, then, brought you to this freedom? Was it not your family who placed you in the world where you now stand? Have you not your lineage, your nation, your race to thank for being what you are? They have brought you up. And if now, exalted above all prejudices, you are one of the light-bringers and benefactors of your stock and even of your race, it is to their up-bringing that you owe it. Yes, even when you say you are 'nothing but a human being,' even the fact that you have become such a personality you owe to the spirits of your communities." Only the esoteric student learns what it means to be entirely cut off from his family, national, or racial spirit. He alone realizes, through personal experience, the insignificance of all such education in respect of the life now confronting him. For everything inculcated by education completely melts away when the threads binding will, thought, and feeling are severed. He looks back on the result of all his previous education as he might on a house crumbling away brick by brick, which he must now rebuild in a new form. And again, it is more than a mere symbolical expression to say that when the Guardian has enunciated his first statement, there arises from the spot where he stands a whirlwind which extinguishes all those spiritual lights that have hitherto illumined the pathway of his life. Utter darkness, relieved only by the rays issuing from the Guardian himself, unfolds before the student. And out of this darkness resounds the Guardian's further admonition: "Step not across my Threshold until thou dost clearly realize that thou wilt thyself illumine the darkness ahead of thee; take not a single step forward until thou art positive that thou hast sufficient oil in thine own lamp. The lamps of the guides whom thou hast hitherto followed will now no longer be available to thee." At these words, the student must turn and glance backward. The Guardian of the Threshold

now draws aside a veil which till now had concealed deep life-mysteries. The family, national, and racial spirits are revealed to the student in their full activity, so that he perceives clearly on the one hand, how he has hitherto been led, and no less clearly on the other hand, that he will henceforward no longer enjoy this guidance. That is the second warning received at the Threshold from its Guardian.

Without preparation, no one could endure the sight of what has here been indicated. But the higher training which makes it possible at all for the student to advance up to the Threshold simultaneously puts him in a position to find the necessary strength at the right moment. Indeed, the training can be so harmonious in its nature that the entry into the higher life is relieved of everything of an agitating or tumultuous character. His experience at the Threshold will then be attended by a premonition of that felicity which is to provide the keynote of his newly awakened life. The feeling of a new freedom will outweigh all other feelings; and attended by this feeling, his new duties and responsibilities will appear as something which man, at a particular stage of life, must needs take upon himself.



## XI

### **Life and Death: The Greater Guardian of the Threshold**

It has been described in the foregoing chapter how significant for the human being is his meeting with the so-called lesser Guardian of the Threshold by virtue of the fact that he becomes aware of confronting a supersensible being whom he has himself brought into existence, and whose body consists of the hitherto invisible results of the student's own actions, feelings, and thoughts. These unseen forces have become the cause of his destiny and his character, and he realizes how he himself founded the present in the past. He can understand why his inner self, now standing to a certain extent revealed before him, includes particular inclinations and habits, and he can also recognize the origin of certain blows of fate that have befallen him. He perceives why he loves one thing and hates another; why one thing makes him happy and another unhappy. Visible life is explained by the invisible causes. The essential facts of life, too — health and illness, birth and death — unveil themselves before his gaze. He observes how before his birth he wove the causes which necessarily led to his return into life. Henceforth he knows that being within himself which is fashioned with all its imperfections in the visible world, and which can only be brought to its final perfection in this same visible world. For in no other world is an opportunity given to build up and complete this being. Moreover, he recognizes that death cannot sever him forever from this world; for he says to himself: "Once I came into this world because, being what I was, I needed the life it provided to acquire qualities unattainable in any other world. And I must remain bound to this world until I have developed within myself everything that can here be gained. I shall some day become a useful collaborator in another world only by acquiring all the requisite faculties in this physical world."

Thanks to his insight into the supersensible world, the initiate gains a better knowledge and appreciation of the true value of visible nature than was possible before his higher training; and this may be counted among his most important experiences. Anyone not possessing this insight and perhaps therefore imagining the supersensible regions to be infinitely more valuable, is likely to underestimate the physical world. Yet the possessor of this insight knows that without experience in visible reality he would be totally powerless in that other invisible reality. Before he can live in the latter he must have the requisite faculties and instruments which can only be acquired in the visible world. Consciousness in the invisible world is not possible without spiritual sight, but this power of vision in the higher world is gradually developed through experience in the lower. No one can be born in the spiritual world with spiritual eyes without having first developed them in the physical world, any more than a child could be

born with physical eyes, had they not already been formed within the mother's womb.

From this standpoint it will also be readily understood why the Threshold to the supersensible world is watched over by a Guardian. In no case may real insight into those regions be permitted to anyone lacking the requisite faculties; therefore, when at the hour of death anyone enters the other world while still incompetent to work in it, the higher experiences are shrouded from him until he is fit to behold them.

When the student enters the supersensible world, life acquires quite a new meaning for him; he discerns in the physical world the seed-ground of a higher world, so that in a certain sense the higher will appear defective without the lower. Two outlooks are opened before him; the first into the past and the second into the future. His vision extends to a past in which this physical world was not yet existent; for he has long since discarded the prejudice that the supersensible world was developed out of the sense-world. He knows that the former existed first, and that out of it everything physical was evolved. He sees that he himself belonged to a supersensible world before coming for the first time into this sense-world. But this pristine supersensible world needed to pass through the sense-world, for without this passage its further evolution would not have been possible. It can only pursue its course when certain things will have developed requisite faculties within the realm of the senses. These beings are none other than human beings. They owe their present life to an imperfect stage of spiritual existence and are being led, even within this stage, to that perfection which will make them fit for further work in the higher world. At this point the outlook is directed into the future. A higher stage of the supersensible world is discerned which will contain the fruits matured in the sense-world. The sense-world as such will be overcome, but its results will be embodied in a higher world.

The existence of disease and death in the sense-world is thus explained. Death merely expresses the fact that the original supersensible world reached a point beyond which it could not progress by itself. Universal death must needs have overtaken it, had it not received a fresh life-impulse. Thus this new life has evolved into a battle with universal death. From the remnants of a dying, rigid world there sprouted the seeds of a new one. That is why we have death and life in the world. The decaying portion of the old world adheres to the new life blossoming from it, and the process of evolution moves slowly. This comes to expression most clearly in man himself. The sheath he bears is gathered from the preserved remnants of the old world, and within this sheath the germ of that being is matured which will live in the future.

Thus man is twofold: mortal and immortal. The mortal is in its last, the immortal in its first stage. But it is only within this twofold world, which finds its expression in the sense-world, that he can acquire the requisite faculties to lead the world to immortality. Indeed, this task is precisely to gather the fruits of the mortal for the immortal. And as he glances at himself as the result of his own work in the past he cannot but say: "I have in me the elements of a decaying world. They are at work in me, and I can only break their power little by little, thanks to the new immortal elements coming to life within me." This is the path leading man from death to life. Could he but speak to himself with full consciousness at the hour of his death, he would say: "The perishing world was my task-master. I am now dying as the result of the entire past in which I am enmeshed. Yet the soil of mortal life has matured the seeds of immortal life. I carry them with me into another world. If it had merely depended on the past, I could never have been born. The life of the past came to an end with birth. Life in the sense-world is wrested from universal death by the newly formed life-germ. The time between birth and death is merely an expression for the sum of values wrested from the dying past by the new life; and illness is nothing but the continued effect of the dying portions of the past."

In the above the answer will be found to the question why man works his way only gradually through error and imperfection to the good and true. His actions, feelings, and thoughts are at first dominated by the perishing and the mortal. The latter gave rise to his sense-organs. For this reason, these organs and all things activating them are doomed to perish. The imperishable will not be found in the instincts, impulses, and passions, or in the organs belonging to them, but only in the work produced by these organs. Man must extract from the perishable everything that can be extracted, and this work alone will enable him to discard the background out of which he has grown, and which finds its expression in the physical sense-world.

Thus the first Guardian confronts man as the counterpart of his two-fold nature in which perishable and imperishable are blended; and it stands clearly proved how far removed he still is from attaining that sublime luminous figure which may again dwell in the pure, spiritual world. The extent to which he is entangled in the physical sense-world is exposed to the student's view. The presence of instincts, impulses, desires, egotistical wishes and all forms of selfishness, and so forth, expresses itself in this entanglement, as it does further in his membership in a race, a nation, and so forth; for peoples and races are but steps leading to pure humanity. A race or a nation stands so much the higher, the more perfectly its members express the pure, ideal human type, the further they have worked their way from the physical and perishable to the supersensible and imperishable. The evolution of man through the incarnations in ever higher national and racial forms is thus a process of liberation. Man must finally appear in

harmonious perfection. In a similar way, the pilgrimage through ever purer forms of morality and religion is a perfecting process; for every moral stage retains the passion for the perishable beside the seeds of an ideal future.

Now in the Guardian of the Threshold as described above, the product of the past is manifest, containing only so many seeds of the future as could be planted in the course of time. Yet everything that can be extracted from the sense-world must be carried into the supersensible world. Were man to bring with him only what had been woven into his counterpart out of the past, his earthly task would remain but partially accomplished. For this reason the lesser Guardian of the Threshold is joined, after a time, by the greater Guardian. The meeting with the second Guardian will again be described in narrative form.

When the student has recognized all the elements from which he must liberate himself, his way is barred by a sublime luminous being whose beauty is difficult to describe in the words of human language. This encounter takes place when the sundering of the organs of thinking, feeling, and willing extends to the physical body, so that their reciprocal connection is no longer regulated by themselves but by the higher consciousness, which has now entirely liberated itself from physical conditions. The organs of thinking, feeling and willing will then be controlled from supersensible regions as instruments in the power of the human soul. The latter, thus liberated from all physical bonds, is now confronted by the second Guardian of the Threshold who speaks as follows:

“Thou hast released thyself from the world of the senses. Thou hast won the right to become a citizen of the supersensible world, whence thine activity can now be directed. For thine own sake, thou dost no longer require thy physical body in its present form. If thine intention were merely to acquire the faculties necessary for life in the supersensible world, thou needest no longer return to the sense-world. But now behold me. See how sublimely I tower above all that thou hast made of thyself thus far. Thou hast attained thy present degree of perfection thanks to the faculties thou wert able to develop in the sense-world as long as thou wert still confined to it. But now a new era is to begin, in which thy liberated powers must be applied to further work in the world of the senses. Hitherto thou hast sought only thine own release, but now, having thyself become free, thou canst go forth as a liberator of thy fellows. Until today thou hast striven as an individual, but now seek to coordinate thyself with the whole, so that thou mayst bring into the supersensible world not thyself alone, but all things else existing in the world of the senses. Thou wilt some day be able to unite with me, but I cannot be blessed so long as others remain unredeemed. As a separate freed being, thou wouldst fain

enter at once the kingdom of the supersensible; yet thou wouldst be forced to look down on the still unredeemed beings in the physical world, having sundered thy destiny from theirs, although thou and they are inseparably united. Ye all did perforce descend into the sense-world to gather powers needed for a higher world. To separate thyself from thy fellows would mean to abuse those very powers which thou couldst not have developed save in their company. Thou couldst not have descended had they not done so; and without them the powers needed for supersensible existence would fail thee. Thou must now share with thy fellows the powers which, together with them, thou didst acquire. I shall therefore bar thine entry into the higher regions of the supersensible world so long as thou hast not applied all the powers thou hast acquired to the liberation of thy companions. With the powers already at thy disposal thou mayst sojourn in the lower regions of the supersensible world; but I stand before the portal of the higher regions as the Cherub with the fiery sword before Paradise, and I bar thine entrance as long as powers unused in the sense-world still remain in thee. And if thou dost refuse to apply thy powers in this world, others will come who will not refuse; and a higher supersensible world will receive all the fruits of the sense-world, while thou wilt lose from under thy feet the very ground in which thou wert rooted. The purified world will develop above and beyond thee, and thou shalt be excluded from it. Thus thou wouldst tread the *black path*, while the others from whom thou didst sever thyself tread the *white path*.”

With these words the greater Guardian makes his presence known soon after the meeting with the first Guardian has taken place. The initiate knows full well what is in store for him if he yields to the temptation of a premature abode in the supersensible world. An indescribable splendor shines forth from the second Guardian of the Threshold; union with him looms as a far distant ideal before the soul's vision. Yet there is also the certitude that this union will not be possible until all the powers afforded by this world are applied to the task of its liberation and redemption. By fulfilling the demands of the higher light-being the initiate will contribute to the liberation of the human race. He lays his gifts on the sacrificial altar of humanity. Should he prefer his own premature elevation into the supersensible world, the stream of human evolution will flow over and past him. After his liberation he can gain no new powers from the world of the senses; and if he places his work at the world's disposal it will entail his renouncement of any further benefit for himself.

It does not follow that, when called upon to decide, anyone will naturally follow the white path. That depends entirely upon whether he is so far purified at the time of his decision that no trace of self-seeking makes this prospect of felicity appear desirable. For the allurements here are the strongest possible; whereas on the other side no special allurements are evident. Here nothing appeals to his egotism. The gift he receives in the

higher regions of the supersensible world is nothing that comes to him, but only something that flows from him, that is, love for the world and for his fellows. Nothing that egotism desires is denied upon the black path, for the latter provides, on the contrary, for the complete gratification of egotism, and will not fail to attract those desiring merely their own felicity, for it is indeed the appropriate path for them. No one therefore should expect the occultists of the white path to give him instruction for the development of his own egotistical self. They do not take the slightest interest in the felicity of the individual man. Each can attain that for himself, and it is not the task of the white occultists to shorten the way; for they are only concerned with the development and liberation of all human beings and all creatures. Their instructions therefore deal only with the development of powers for collaboration in this work. Thus they place selfless devotion and self-sacrifice before all other qualities. They never actually refuse anyone, for even the greatest egotist can purify himself; but no one merely seeking an advantage for himself will ever obtain assistance from the white occultists. Even when they do not refuse their help, he, the seeker, deprives himself of the advantage resulting from their assistance. Anyone, therefore, really following the instructions of the good occultists will, upon crossing the Threshold, understand the demands of the greater Guardian; anyone, however, not following their instructions can never hope to reach the Threshold. Their instructions, if followed, produce good results or no results; for it is no part of their task to lead to egotistical felicity and a mere existence in the supersensible worlds. In fact, it becomes their duty to keep the student away from the supersensible world until he can enter it with the will for selfless collaboration.

## Appendix

The path to supersensible knowledge, as described in this book, leads the soul through experiences concerning the nature of which it is especially important to avoid all illusions and misconceptions. Yet it is but natural that the latter should arise in such questions as are here considered. In this connection one of the most serious mistakes occurs when the whole range of inner experience dealt with in true spiritual science is distorted into appearing in the same category as superstition, visionary dreaming, mediumship (spiritism), and other degenerate practices. This distortion is often due to the fact that persons desirous of following the path described in this book are confused with others who in their search for supersensible reality, and as a result of methods foreign to genuine striving for knowledge, wander into undesirable paths. The experiences through which the human soul lives on the path here described are wholly confined to the realm of psycho-spiritual experience. They are only possible if equal freedom and independence from the bodily life are attained for certain other inner experiences, as is the case during ordinary consciousness, when thoughts are made concerning things outwardly perceived or inwardly felt and willed, thoughts which do not themselves originate in what is perceived, felt, and willed. There are people who deny the existence of such thoughts. They believe that no thought is possible that is not extracted from perceptions or from the inner life dependent on the body. For them, all thoughts are to a certain extent mere reflections of perceptions and of inner experiences. This view, however, can be expressed only by those who have never raised themselves to the faculty of experiencing with their souls a self-sustaining life in pure thought. For others, who have lived through this experience, it is a matter of knowledge that wherever thought dominates the life of the soul to the degree that this thought permeates other soul functions, the human being is involved in an activity in whose origin his body has no share. In the ordinary life of the soul, thought is almost always mixed with other functions: perception, feeling, willing and so forth. These other functions are effectuated by the body; yet thought plays into them, and to the degree that it does this a process takes place, in and through the human being, in which his body has no share. This can only be denied so long as the illusion is not discarded which arises from observing thought only when the latter is united with other functions. Yet an inner exertion is possible which will enable the thinking part of inner life to be experienced as distinct from everything else. Something consisting in pure thought alone can be detached from the encompassing soul-life, that is, thoughts that are self-sustaining and from which everything provided by perception or bodily conditioned inner life is excluded. Such thoughts reveal themselves through themselves, through what they are, as spiritual supersensible substance. Anyone uniting himself with them, while excluding all perception, all memory, and every other token of inner life, knows himself

to be in a supersensible region and experiences himself outside the physical body. For anyone familiar with this whole process, the question can no longer arise: Can the soul live through experiences outside the body in a supersensible world? For it would mean denying what he knows from experience. The only question for him is: What prevents such a positive fact from being recognized? And the answer he finds to this question is that the fact does not reveal itself unless the student first cultivates a condition of soul which allows him to become the recipient of this revelation.

Now, people become at once suspicious when an activity confined entirely to the soul is expected of them, in order that something independent of themselves should reveal itself. They believe that they themselves give the revelation its content because they prepare themselves to receive it. They expect experiences to which they contribute nothing and which allow them to remain quite passive. Should such people, in addition, be ignorant of the simplest scientific requirements for the comprehension of a given fact, they will take for an objective revelation of non-sensible substances contents and productions of the soul in which the soul's conscious participation is reduced below the level maintained in sense-perception and will-impelled action. Such are the soul-contents provided by the experiences and revelations of the visionary and the medium. But what comes to the fore through such revelations is not a *supersensible* but a *sub-sensible world*. Human waking life does not run its course completely within the body; the most conscious part of it runs its course on the boundary between the body and the physical outer world; thus the process of perception with the organs of sense is as much an extra-physical process penetrating into the body as a permeation of this process from out the body; so too, is the life of will, which rests upon the insertion of the human being into the cosmic being, so that what occurs in the human being through his will is simultaneously a link in the chain of cosmic occurrence. In this life of the soul running on the boundary of the physical body, the human being is to a high degree dependent on his physical organization; but the function of thought plays into this activity, and in as much as this is the case, the human being makes himself independent of his bodily organization in the functions of sense perception and willing. In the experiences of the visionary and in mediumistic phenomena the human being becomes completely dependent on his body. He excludes from the life of his soul that function which, in perception and willing, makes him independent of his body. Thus the content and productions of his soul are merely revelations of his bodily life. The experiences of the visionary and the phenomena produced by the medium owe their existence to the fact that a person while thus experiencing and producing is, with his soul, less independent of his body than in ordinary perception and willing. In the experience of the supersensible as indicated in this book, the development of soul-life proceeds in just the opposite direction from that taken by the



visionary and the medium. The soul acquires a progressively greater independence of the body than is the case in perceiving and willing. The same independence realized in the experience of pure thought is attained by the soul for a far wider range of activity.

For the supersensible activity of the soul here meant, it is especially important to grasp and realize in the clearest possible way this experience of life in pure thought. For in the main, this experience is already a supersensible activity of the soul, but one in which nothing supersensible is as yet perceived. With pure thought we live in the supersensible; but we experience only *this* in supersensible fashion; we do not yet experience anything else supersensibly. And supersensible experience must be a continuation of that life already attained by the soul when united with pure thought. For this reason it is so important to gain knowledge of this union in the right way, for it is from its comprehension that light shines forth to bring correct insight into the nature of supersensible knowledge. The moment the life of the soul links below the level of clear consciousness existing in thought, the soul is on the wrong path as far as true knowledge of the supersensible world is concerned: for the soul is seized by the bodily functions, and what is then experienced is not the revelation of a supersensible world, but bodily revelations confined to the supersensible world.

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(2) Having penetrated to the sphere of the supersensible, the soul's experiences are of such a nature that descriptive expressions cannot so easily be found for them as for experiences confined to the world of the senses. Care must often be taken not to overlook the fact that to a certain extent, in descriptions of supersensible experience, the distance separating the actual fact from the language used to describe it is greater than in descriptions of physical experience. The reader must be at pains to realize that many an expression is intended as an illustration, merely indicating in a delicate way the reality to which it refers. Thus it is said on page 19 of this book: "Originally all rules and teachings of spiritual science were expressed in a symbolical sign-language." And on page 82, a "certain writing system" was mentioned. Now, anyone may easily be led to suppose that such a writing system can be learned in the same way we learn the letters of an ordinary physical language, and their combinations. In this connection it must be pointed out that there have been and there still are spiritual scientific signs by means of which supersensible facts are expressed. And anyone initiated into the meaning of these symbols attains thereby the means of directing his inner life toward the supersensible realities in question. But what is of far greater importance for supersensible experiences is that, in the course of that supersensible experience to which the realization of the contents of this book leads, the

soul should, in the contemplation of the supersensible, gain the revelation of such a writing through personal experience. The supersensible says something to the soul which the soul must translate into these illustrative signs, so that it can be surveyed with full consciousness. The statement can be made that what is imparted in this book can be realized by every soul. And in the course of this realization, which the soul can personally determine according to the indications given, the resulting events occur as described. Let the reader take this book as a conversation between the author and himself. The statement that the student needs personal instruction should be understood in the sense that this book itself is personal instruction. In earlier times there were reasons for reserving such personal instruction for oral teaching; today we have reached a stage in the evolution of humanity in which spiritual scientific knowledge must become far more widely disseminated than formerly. It must be placed within the reach of everyone to a quite different extent from what was the case in older times. Hence the book replaces the former oral instruction. It is only to a limited extent correct to say that further personal instruction is necessary beyond that contained in this book. No doubt someone may need assistance, and it may be of importance for him or her; but it would be false to believe that there are any cardinal points not mentioned in this book. These can be found by anyone who reads correctly, and, above all, *completely*.

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(3) The descriptive instructions given in this book appear at first sight to require the complete alteration of the whole human being. Yet when correctly read it will be found that nothing more is intended than a description of the inner soul state required of anyone in those moments of life at which he confronts the supersensible world. He develops this state of soul as a second being within himself; and the healthy other being pursues its course in the old way. The unfolding trainee knows how to hold the two beings apart in full consciousness and how to make them act and react on each other in the right way. This does not make him useless and incompetent for life, nor does he lose his interest and skill in it and become a spiritual researcher the whole day long. It is of course true that the student's manner of experience in the supersensible world will shed its light over his whole being; but far from distracting him from life, it makes him more capable and his life more productive. The necessity of adopting the existing method of description is due to the fact that every cognitive process directed toward the supersensible calls the whole human being into action; so that in the moment of such cognition the whole human being is engaged, while the supersensible cognitive process engages the whole human being. The whole human being becomes an eye or an ear. For this reason, when information is given concerning the construction of supersensible cognitive processes, it appears as though a transformation of

the human being were meant, as if nothing were right in the ordinary human being, and he should become quite different.

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(4) I should like to add to what was said on pp. 131 *et seq.* concerning “some results of initiation,” something which, with a slight alteration, can apply to other parts of the book. It may occur to someone to ask whether such figurative descriptions are necessary, and whether it would not be possible to describe these supersensible experiences in ideas, without such illustrations. In reply it must be pointed out that for the experience of supersensible reality it is essential that the human being knew himself as a supersensible being in a supersensible world. Without this vision of his own supersensible nature, whose reality is fully manifest in the descriptions here given of the lotus flowers and the etheric body, the human being's experience of himself in the supersensible world would be like placing him in the sensible world in such a way that the things and processes around him manifested themselves, while he himself had no knowledge of his own body. His perception of his own supersensible form in soul-body and etheric body enables him to stand, conscious of himself, in the supersensible world, just as he is conscious of himself in the physical world through the perception of his physical body.

THE END

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## **The Ahrimanic Deception**

Lecture by Rudolf Steiner

The lecture presented here was given in Zurich on October 27, 1919. In the collected edition of Rudolf Steiner's works, the volume containing the German texts is entitled, *Der Innere Aspekt des sozialen Rätsels; Luziferische Vergangenheit, Ahrimanische Zukunft* (Vol. 193 in the Bibliographic Survey, 1961). Translated from the German by M. Cotterell and revised by William Riggens. Copyright © 1985

Zurich, October 27, 1919

In addressing a public audience today on the most important question of our time, it makes a great difference if one speaks from a knowledge of the deeper forces of world-historical evolution, that is, from initiation-science, or if one speaks without such knowledge. It is relatively easy to speak about modern questions if one relies upon data of external knowledge which are considered scientific, practical, and so on. It is, however, extraordinarily difficult to speak about these questions from the standpoint of initiation-science - from which indeed everything is derived with which we have to deal at such gatherings as ours today. For he who speaks from that standpoint about problems of the time knows that he is opposed not only by the casual, subjective opinions of those to whom he speaks. He knows too that a great part of mankind today is already under the control, from one side or another, of Ahrimanic forces of a cosmic nature which are growing stronger and stronger. To explain what I mean by this, I must give you a kind of historical survey of a fairly long period of human history.

From various statements which have been made here and which you will also find in some of my lecture-courses, you know that we have to place the beginning of our modern age in the middle of the fifteenth century. We have always called this period - of which we are really only at the beginning - the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch. It has replaced the Greco-Latin Epoch, which we reckon from the middle of the eighth century B.C. to the

middle of the fifteenth century; and further back still, we have the Egyptian-Chaldean epoch. I have merely indicated this so that you may remember where, in human evolution as a whole, we place the epoch in which we feel ourselves standing as modern men.

Now you know that at the close of the first third of the Greco-Latin Epoch, the Mystery of Golgotha took place. And from many different aspects we have characterized what really came about for human evolution through the Mystery of Golgotha, in fact for the whole evolution of the earth. Today, into this broad historical survey, we will place various things concerning mankind which are connected with this Mystery.

With this in view, let us glance back into far earlier times, let us say, into the ages about the beginning of the third millennium B.C. You are aware how little is said in external historical tradition about this early evolution of the human race on earth. You know, too, how external documents point over to Asia, to the Orient. From many anthroposophical sources, you will know that the further we go back in mankind's evolution, the more we find a different constitution of the human soul, and something like an ancient, original wisdom underlying the whole evolution of humanity. You know, further, that certain traditions of an ancient wisdom of mankind were preserved in close, secret circles, right into the nineteenth century. They have even been preserved into our own time - but not, for the most part, at all faithfully.

When a man of today learns to know something of this original wisdom, he is astounded at the depths of the realities to which it points. Yet in the course of the studies we have been pursuing for many years, it has been shown that this widespread wisdom-teaching of ancient times must always be contrasted with the understanding of life and the world that was possessed by the old Hebrew people and bore a completely different character. With a certain justice the widespread original wisdom is described as the heathen, pagan element, and to this is opposed the Hebrew, Jewish element. From external traditions and literature you are aware how the Christian element then arose out of the Jewish.

You can already gather from these external facts something that I beg you to bear in

mind, namely, that it was essential in humanity's evolution to confront the ancient heathen element and its wisdom with the Jewish element out of which Christianity evolved partially, at all events. The primeval heathen or pagan wisdom in its totality was not destined to have the sole influence on the further evolution of mankind. And now the question must arise: Why had the ancient pagan wisdom, which is in many respects so wonderful, to experience a new form, a transformation, through Judaism and Christianity? This question inevitably arises.

The answer is supplied for Initiation-wisdom only through a very, very weighty fact, through an event which took place far over in Asia at the beginning of the third millennium of the pre-Christian era. Clairvoyant vision finds in looking back that an incarnation of a supersensible Being in a human being had taken place there, just as in the Event of Golgotha an incarnation of the supersensible Christ Being had taken place in the man Jesus of Nazareth. The incarnation that took place at the beginning of the third millennium B.C. is extraordinarily difficult to follow up, even with the science of seership, of initiation. It gave humanity something of immense brilliance, having an incisive effect. What it gave to humanity, in fact, was the primeval wisdom. beginning of the third millennium B.C.

Viewed externally, one can say that it was a wisdom penetrating deep into reality; cold, based purely on ideas, permeated little by feeling. The actual inner nature of this wisdom can be judged only by going back to that incarnation which took place over in Asia at the beginning of the third pre-Christian millennium. It is revealed to the retrospective clairvoyant gaze that this was an actual human incarnation of the Luciferic Power. And this incarnation of Lucifer in humanity, which in a certain way has been achieved, was the origin of the widely extended ancient wisdom based on the Third Post-Atlantean civilization.

There was still an after-effect, even in Grecian times, of the widespread cultural impulse that was derived from this Asiatic, Luciferic human being. Luciferic wisdom was of the utmost benefit to man in that epoch of evolution - brilliant in a certain way, graduated

according to the different peoples and races among which it was spread. It was plainly recognizable throughout the whole of Asia, then in the Egyptian civilization, the Babylonian civilization and even in the culture of Greece.

All that was possible to the humanity of that time in thought, in the realm of poetry, in deeds, was in a certain way determined through the entry of this Luciferic impulse into human civilization.

It would, of course, be extraordinarily philistine to wish to say: That was an incarnation of Lucifer, hence we must flee from it! Such philistinism could make one also flee from the beauty and greatness that has come to mankind from this Luciferic stream, for the fruits of Greek culture with all their beauty, proceeded, as already said, from this stream of evolution. The whole of Gnostic thought existing at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, an impressive wisdom shedding light deep into cosmic realities - this whole Gnostic knowledge was inspired by the impulse coming from Luciferic forces. One must not say that Gnostic thought is therefore false; one is merely characterizing it by saying that it is permeated by Luciferic forces.

Then, considerably more than two thousand years after the Luciferic incarnation, came the Mystery of Golgotha. It may be said that the men among whom the impulse of this Mystery spread were still fully imbued in their thinking and feeling with what had come from the impulse of Lucifer. And now there entered into the evolution of civilized humanity an entirely different impulse, the impulse proceeding from the Christ. We have often spoken of what this Christ Impulse signifies within civilized humanity. The Christ-Impulse - I will only touch on this today - was taken up by the hearts and minds that I have just characterized. One might say that it shone into all the best that came to man from Lucifer. And in the first Christian centuries, men understood the Christ through what they had received from Lucifer. These things must be faced without prejudice; otherwise it is not really possible to understand the particular way in which the Christ Impulse was received in the first centuries of our era.

As the Luciferic impulse began to fade more and more, men were also increasingly unable to absorb the Christ Impulse in the right way. Consider how much has become materialistic in the course of modern times. But if you ask yourself what in particular has become materialistic, you must receive the answer: a great part of modern Christian theology. For it is simply the starkest materialism to which a great part of modern Christian theology succumbs when it no longer sees the Christ in the man Jesus of Nazareth. It sees only the human being, the 'simple man of Nazareth,' the man whom one can understand if one will only raise one's self a little to some sort of higher understanding. The more the man Jesus of Nazareth could be regarded as an ordinary human being, one belonging to the ranks of other noted human personalities, the better it pleased a certain materialistic trend of modern theology. Of the supersensible element of the Event of Golgotha, modern theology is willing to recognize little, very little. The impulses entering humanity from a Luciferic source sank down gradually into the soul. On the other hand, however, another impulse, which we call the Ahrimanic, is growing stronger and stronger in modern times. It will become increasingly strong in the near future and on into future ages. The Ahrimanic impulse proceeds from a supersensible Being different from the Being of Christ or of Lucifer. Equally with 'supersensible' one can say 'subsensible' - but that is not the point here. The influence of this Being becomes especially powerful in the Fifth Post-Atlantean Epoch. If we look at the confused conditions of recent years we shall find that men have been brought to such chaotic conditions mainly through the Ahrimanic powers.

Just as there was an incarnation of Lucifer at the beginning of the third pre-Christian millennium, as there was the Christ Incarnation at the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, so there will be a Western incarnation of the Ahriman being some little time after our present earthly existence, in fact, in the third post-Christian millennium. To form a right conception of the historical evolution of mankind during approximately 6000 years, one must grasp that at the one pole stands a Luciferic incarnation, in the center, the incarnation of Christ, and at the other pole the Ahrimanic incarnation. Lucifer is the power that stirs up in man all fanatical, all falsely mystical forces, all that physiologically tends to bring the blood into disorder and so lift man above and outside himself. Ahriman



is the power that makes man dry, prosaic, philistine - that ossifies him and brings him to the superstition of materialism. And the true nature and being of man is essentially the effort to hold the balance between the powers of Lucifer and Ahriman; the Christ Impulse helps present humanity to establish this equilibrium.

Thus these two poles - the Luciferic and the Ahrimanic - are continuously present in man. Viewed historically, we find that the Luciferic preponderated in certain currents of cultural development of the pre-Christian age and continued into the first centuries of our era. On the other hand the Ahrimanic influence has been at work since the middle of the fifteenth century and will increase in strength until an actual incarnation of Ahriman takes place among Western humanity.

Now it is characteristic of such things that they are prepared long in advance. Ahrimanic powers prepare the evolution of mankind in such a way that it can fall a prey to Ahriman when he appears in human form within Western civilization - hardly then to be called 'civilization' in our sense - as once Lucifer appeared in human form in China, as once Christ appeared in human form in Asia Minor. It is of no avail to give oneself illusions today about these things. Ahriman will appear in human form and the only question is, how he will find humanity prepared. Will his preparations have secured for him as followers the whole of mankind that today calls itself civilized, or will he find a humanity that can offer resistance. It does not help at all to give oneself up to illusions. People nowadays flee the truth, and one cannot give it to them in an unvarnished form because they would ridicule it and scoff and jeer. But if one gives it to them through the "Threefold Social Organism" as one now tries to do, then they will not have it either - not the majority, at any rate. The fact that people reject these things is just one of the means which the Ahrimanic powers can use and which will give Ahriman the greatest possible following when he appears in human form on earth. This disregard of the weightiest truths is precisely what will build Ahriman the best bridge to the success of his incarnation. And nothing will help us to find the right position in regard to the part played by Ahriman in human evolution except an unprejudiced study of the forces through which Ahriman's influence works, as well as learning to know the forces through which

mankind can arm itself against being tempted and led astray. For this reason we will cast a brief glance today at various things which would foster support of Ahriman and which Ahrimanic powers, working out of supersensible worlds through human minds down here, will particularly employ in order to make his following as numerous as possible. One of the means is this - that it is not realized what is the actual significance for man of certain kinds of thought and conception which predominate in modern times. You know, indeed, what a great difference there is between the way a man felt himself to be within the whole cosmos in the Egyptian age, let us say, and even in the time of Greece, and how he feels since the beginning of the modern age, since the close of the Middle Ages. Picture to yourselves a well-instructed ancient Egyptian. He knew that his body was constituted not merely of the ingredients which exist here on earth and are embodied in the animal kingdom, plant kingdom, mineral kingdom. He knew that the forces which he saw in the stars above, worked into his being as man; he felt himself a member of the whole cosmos. He felt the whole cosmos not only quick with life, but ensouled and imbued with spirit; in his consciousness there lived something of the spiritual beings of the cosmos, of the soul-nature of the cosmos and its life. All this has been lost in the course of later human history. Today man gazes from his earth up to the star-world and to him it is filled with fixed stars, suns, planets, comets, and so on. But with what means does he examine all that looks down to him out of cosmic space? He examines it with mathematics, with the science of mechanics. What lies around the earth is robbed of spirit, robbed of soul, even of life. It is a great mechanism, in fact, only to be grasped by the aid of mathematical, mechanistic laws. With the help of these mathematical, mechanistic laws we grasp it magnificently! A student of spiritual science is undoubtedly just the one to value the achievements of a [Galileo](#), a [Kepler](#), and others, but what penetrates human understanding and consciousness through the tenets of these great spirits in human evolution merely shows the universe as a great mechanism.

What this means is only revealed to one who is able to grasp man in his *whole* nature. It is all very well for astronomers and astro-physicists to present the universe as a mechanism which can be understood and calculated by mathematical formulae. This indeed is what a man will believe in the time from waking in the morning till going to

sleep again at night. But in those unconscious depths which he does not reach with his waking consciousness but which yet belong to his existence and in which he lives between going to sleep and waking, something quite different concerning the universe flows into his soul. There lives in the human soul a knowledge which, although unknown to the waking consciousness, is yet present in the depths and moulds the soul - a knowledge of the spirit, of the life of the soul, of the life of the cosmos. And although in his waking consciousness man knows nothing of what goes on there in communion with the spirit, soul and life of the universe while he sleeps - in the soul the things are there; they live within it. And much of the great discord felt by modern man is derived from the disharmony between what the soul experiences and what the waking consciousness acknowledges as its world-conception.

And what does the whole spirit and purport of anthroposophical spiritual science say about such things? It says: What the ideas of Galileo, Copernicus, have brought to mankind is grand and mighty, but not an absolute truth, by no means an absolute truth. It is one aspect of the universe, one side from a certain standpoint. It is only through the arrogance of modern man that people say today: "Ptolemaic world-system - childishness; that is what men had when they were still children. We have made such great strides - right 'to the stars' and *that* is what we now take as the absolute." It is just as little an absolute as the Ptolemaic system was an absolute, it is *one* aspect. The only right view - according to spiritual science - is to realize that all that is accepted by way of mere world-mathematics, mere world-schematism of a mechanical order, does not furnish man with absolute truth about the universe, but with illusions. The illusions are necessary because mankind goes through varied forms of education in its different stages of evolution. For modern education we need these illusions of a mathematical nature about the universe, we must acquire them, but we must know that they are illusions. And most of all they are illusions when we transpose them into our daily environment, when, in accordance with the atomic or molecular theories, we even endeavour to create a kind of astronomy for the substances of the earth. A right attitude in regard to the whole of modern science, insofar as it thinks along these lines, will recognize that its knowledge is illusion.

Now, in order that his incarnation may take the most profitable form, it is of the utmost interest to Ahriman that people should perfect themselves in all our illusory modern science, but without knowing that it is illusion. Ahriman has the greatest possible interest in instructing men in mathematics, but not in instructing them that mathematical-mechanistic concepts of the universe are merely illusions. He is intensely interested in bringing men chemistry, physics, biology and so on, as they are presented today in all their remarkable effects, but he is interested in making men believe that these are absolute truths, not that they are only points of view, like photographs from one side. If you photograph a tree from one side, it can be a correct photograph, yet it does not give a picture of the whole tree. If you photograph it from four sides, you can in any case get an idea of it. To conceal from mankind that in modern intellectual, rationalistic science with its supplement of a superstitious empiricism, one is dealing with a great illusion, a deception - that men should not recognize this is of the greatest possible interest to Ahriman. It would be a triumphant experience for him if the scientific superstition which grips all circles today and by which men even want to organize their social science, should prevail into the third millennium. He would have the greatest success if he could then come as a human being into Western civilization and find the scientific superstition. But I ask you not to draw false conclusions from what I have just said. It would be a false conclusion to avoid the science of the day; that is the very falsest conclusion which could be drawn. We must get to know science; we should get an exact knowledge of all that comes from this direction - but with the full consciousness that we are receiving an illusory aspect, an illusion necessary for our education as men. We do not safeguard ourselves against Ahriman by avoiding modern science, but by learning to know its character. For modern science gives us an external illusion of the universe, and we need this illusion. Do not imagine that we do not need it. We must only fill it in from quite another side with actual reality gained through spiritual research, we must rise from the illusory character to the true reality. You will find reference in many of my lecture-courses to what I am telling you today, and you will see how everywhere it has been sought to enter fully into the science of our time, but to lift it all to the sphere where one can see its real value. You cannot wish to get rid of the rainbow because you know it to be an illusion of light and color! You will not understand it if you do not realize its

illusory character. But it is just the same with all that modern science gives you for your imagination of the universe, it gives only illusions and that must be recognized. It is by educating oneself through these illusions that one arrives at the reality.

This, then, represents one of the means used by Ahriman to make his incarnation as effective as possible - this keeping of man back in scientific superstition.

The second means that he employs is to stir up all the emotions that split men up into small groups - groups that mutually attack one another. You need only look at all the conflicting parties that exist today, and if you are unprejudiced you will recognize that the explanation is not to be found merely in human nature. If men honestly try to explain this so-called World War through human dis-harmonies, they will realize that with what they find in physical humanity they cannot explain it. It is precisely here that "supersensible" powers, Ahrimanic powers, have been at work.

These Ahrimanic powers are working, in fact, wherever dis-harmonies arise between groups of men. Now the question arises on what foundation is most of what we are considering based?

Let us proceed from a very characteristic example. - The modern proletariat has had its *Karl Marx*. Observe closely how the doctrines of Karl Marx have been spread among the proletariat, with Marxist literature reaching practically immeasurable proportions. You will find all the methods of our present-day science used in the books; everything is strictly proved, so strictly proved that many people, of whom one would never have supposed it, have fallen victim to Marxism. What was the actual destiny of Marxism? It spread at first, as you know, among the proletariat and was firmly rejected by university science. Today there are already a number of university scientists who have veered round to acknowledging Marxist logic. They adhere to it because its literature has proved that its conclusions are in excellent accord, that from the standpoint of modern science Marxism can be quite neatly proved. Middle-class circles have unfortunately had no Karl Marx who could have proved the opposite for them; for just as one can prove the

ideological character of right, morality, and so forth, the theory of surplus value and materialistic historical research from the Marxist standpoint, so is it possible to prove their exact opposite. A middle-class, bourgeois-Marx would be fully able to prove the exact opposite by the same strict method. There is no sort of swindle or humbug about it; the proof would work out right.

Whence does this come? It comes from the fact that present human thinking, the present intellect, lies in a stratum of being where it does not reach down to realities. One can therefore prove something quite strictly, and also prove its opposite. It is possible today to prove spiritualism on the one hand and materialism on the other. And people may fight against each other from equally good standpoints because present-day intellectualism is in an upper layer of reality and does not go down into the depths of being. And it is the same with party opinions. A man who does not look deeper but simply lets himself be accepted into a certain party-circle - by reason of his education, heredity, circumstances of life and State - quite honestly believes - or so he thinks - in the possibility of proving the tenets of the party into which he has slipped, as he says. And then - then he fights against someone else who has slipped into another party! And the one is just as right as the other. This calls forth chaos and confusion over mankind that will gradually become greater and greater unless men see through it. Ahriman makes use of this confusion in order to prepare the triumph of his incarnation and to drive men with increasing force into what they find so difficult to realize - namely, that by intellectual or modern scientific reasoning today, one can prove anything and equally well prove its opposite. The point is for us to recognize that everything can be proved and for that reason to examine the proofs put forward in science today. It is only in natural science that reality is shown by the facts; in no other field can one consider intellectual proofs valid. The only way to escape the danger that threatens if one accepts the lures of Ahriman and his desire to drive men deeper and deeper into these things, is to realize through anthroposophical spiritual science that human knowledge must be sought for in a stratum deeper than that in which the validity of our proofs arises. And so, in order to create dissensions, Ahriman also makes use of what develops from the old conditions of heredity which man has really outgrown in the Fifth Post-Atlantean Epoch. The

Ahrimanic powers use all that is derived from old circumstances of heredity in order to set men against each other in conflicting groups. All that comes from old differences of family, race, tribe, peoples, is used by Ahriman to create confusion. "Freedom for every nation, even the smallest . . ." These were fine-sounding words. But the powers hostile to man always use fine words in order to bring confusion and in order to attain the things that Ahriman wishes to attain for his incarnation.

If we inquire: Who stirs up nations against each other? Who raises the questions that are directing humanity today? - the answer is: the Ahrimanic deception which plays into human life. And in this field men very easily let themselves be deceived. They are not willing to descend to the lower strata where reality is to be found. For, you see, Ahriman skillfully prepares his goal beforehand; ever since the Reformation and the Renaissance, the economist has been emerging in modern civilization as the representative governing type. That is an actual historical fact. If you go back to ancient times, even to those that I have characterized today as the Luciferic - who were the governing types then? *Initiates*. The Egyptian Pharaohs, the Babylonian rulers, the Asiatic rulers - they were initiates. Then the priest-type emerged as ruler and the priest-type was really the ruler right up to the Reformation and the Renaissance. Since that time the economist has been in command. Rulers are in fact merely the handymen, the understrappers of the economists. One must not imagine that the rulers of modern times are anything but the understrappers of the economists. And all that has resulted by way of law and justice - one should only study it carefully - is simply a consequence of what economically oriented men have thought. In the nineteenth century the "economical" man is replaced for the first time by the man thinking in terms of banking, and in the nineteenth century there is created for the first time the organization of finance which swamps every other relationship. One must only be able to look into these things and follow them up empirically and practically.

All that I stated in the second public lecture here (*The Social Future*, October 25, 1919) is profoundly true. One could only wish that it were followed up in all details; it would then be seen how fundamentally true these things are. But just because this rulership of the

mere 'symbol for solid goods' (that is to say, money - quotation from the lecture) has arisen, Ahriman has been given another essential medium for the deception of mankind. If men do not realize that the rights-state and the organism of the Spirit must be set against the economic order called up through the economists and the banks, then again, through this lack of awareness, Ahriman will find an important instrument for preparing his incarnation. His incarnation is undoubtedly coming, and this lack of insight will enable him to prepare it triumphantly.

Such means can be used by Ahriman for a certain type of man. But there is another type - indeed the two are often mixed in one personality - and this also, from a different direction, provides Ahriman with an easy way to success.

Now it is a fact that in real life, total errors are not so harmful as half- or quarter-truths. Total errors are soon seen through, whereas half- and quarter-truths mislead people. They live with them, these partial truths become a part of life and cause the most horrible devastation.

There are people today who do not realize the one-sidedness of the Galileo-Copernican world-conception, or who at least do not see its illusory character, or are too easygoing to examine it. We have just shown how wrong that is. But there are also people today, numberless people who acknowledge a certain half-truth, a very significant half-truth, and who do not go into the question of the purely hypothetical justification of it. Strange as it may appear to many people, it is just as one-sided to view the world solely through the Gospel and reject any other search into true reality, as it is to view the world from the standpoint of Galileo and Copernicus, or of university materialistic science in general. The Gospel was given to those who lived in the first centuries of Christianity, and to believe that today the Gospel can give the *whole* of Christianity is simply a half-truth. It is therefore also a half-error which befogs people and thus furnishes Ahriman with the best means of attaining the goal and the triumph of his incarnation.

How numerous are those who think they are speaking out of Christian humility, but in



reality out of dreadful arrogance, when they say: "Oh, we need no spiritual science! The homeliness, the simplicity of the Gospels leads us to what men need of the eternal!" A frightful arrogance is expressed, for the most part, in this apparent humility, which can very well be used by Ahriman in the sense I have indicated. For do not forget what I explained at the beginning of today's lecture, how in the time in which the Gospel falls, men were still permeated by the Luciferic impulse in their thought, feeling and general views, and that they could understand the Gospel by a certain Luciferic Gnosis. But the grasp of the Gospel in this *old* sense is not possible today. No real understanding of the Christ can be gained if one relies merely on the Gospel, especially in the form in which it has been handed down. There exists nowhere today a less true understanding of Christ than in the various faiths and confessions.

The Gospel must be deepened by spiritual science if we wish to gain an actual grasp of the Christ. It is then interesting to examine the separate Gospels and arrive at their real content. To accept the Gospel as it is and as numberless people accept it today, and particularly as it is taught today, is not a path to Christ; it is a path away from Christ. Hence the confessions are moving further and further away from Christ. To what sort of Christ-conception does a man come who will accept the Gospel and only the Gospel, without the depth given by spiritual science? He comes ultimately to a Christ - but that is the utmost that he can reach through the Gospel alone. It is not a reality of the Christ, for today only spiritual science can lead to that. What the Gospel leads to is an hallucination of the Christ, a real inner picture or vision, yet *only* a picture. The Gospel today provides the way to come to a vision of the Christ, but not to the reality of Christ. That is just the reason why modern theology has become so materialistic. Theological commentators and expounders of the Gospel have asked themselves: What is to be made of the Gospel? They decide at length that in their view the result is similar to what one gets when one examines the case of Paul before Damascus. And then these theologians, who are supposed to confirm Christianity, but who really undermine it, say: Paul was simply ill, suffering from nerves and he had a vision before Damascus.

The point is that through the Gospel itself one can come only to hallucinations, to visions,

but not to realities; the Gospel does not give us the real Christ, but only an hallucination of the Christ. The real Christ must be sought today through all that can be gained from a spiritual knowledge of the world.

These very people who swear by the Gospel alone and reject every kind of real spiritual knowledge, form the beginning of a flock for Ahriman when he appears in human shape in modern civilization. From these circles, from these members of confessions and sects who repulse the concrete knowledge brought by spiritual endeavor, whole hosts will develop as adherents of Ahriman. Now this is all beginning to come into existence. It is there, it is at work in present humanity and one who speaks to men today with the knowledge of spiritual science speaks into it, no matter whether he is speaking on social or other questions. He knows where the hostile powers lie, that they live supersensibly and that men are their poor misguided victims. This is the call to humanity: "Free yourselves from all these things that form such a great temptation to contribute to Ahriman's triumph!"

Many people have felt something of this sort. But there is not yet courage everywhere to come to an understanding with the historical impulses of the Christ, Lucifer and Ahriman in the urgent way that is necessary and that is emphasized by Anthroposophy. Even those who have an idea of what is necessary will not go far enough. For instance, look at examples where there arises some knowledge that the secular materialistic science with this Ahrimanic character must be permeated with the Christ Impulse, and how, on the other hand, the Gospel must be illuminated through the explanations of spiritual science. Consider how many people struggle to the point of really shedding light in either of these directions by means of spiritual-scientific knowledge! Yet humanity will only acquire the right attitude to the earthly incarnation of Ahriman if it sees through these things and has the courage, will and energy to illumine both secular science and the Gospel by the Spirit. Otherwise the result is always superficialities. Think, for example, of how Cardinal Newman - who, after all, was an enlightened man, one who followed modern religious development - at the time of his investiture as Cardinal in Rome stated openly in his address that if the Christian Catholic teaching was to survive, a new revelation was

necessary. We have no need, however, of a new revelation; the time of revelations in the old sense is over. We need a new science, one that is illumined by the Spirit. But men must have the courage for such a new science.

Think of a literary phenomenon like the Lux Mundi movement that originated with certain eminent theologians, members of the English High Church, at the end of the eighties and beginning of the nineties of the last century. It consisted of a series of studies, imbued throughout with the endeavor to build a bridge from secular science to the contents of dogma. One might call it a floundering hither and thither, never a bold grasping of secular science, never an illumination of it with the spirit. There was no unprejudiced examination of the Gospel with the knowledge that the Gospel of itself is not enough today, that it must be elucidated and illumined. But mankind must be courageous in both directions and say: secular science by itself leads to illusion, the Gospel by itself leads to hallucination. The middle way between illusion and hallucination is found only by grasping reality through the Spirit. That is the point. We must see through such things as these today. Purely mundane science would make men entirely subject to illusion; in fact ultimately they would commit only follies. Quite enough folly is perpetuated today already, for surely the World War catastrophe was a great folly! Yet many people were involved in it who were thoroughly saturated with the official secular science of our time. And if you notice what remarkable psychological phenomena at once crop up when some sect or other places *one* of the four Gospels in the foreground, then you will more easily understand what I have been saying about the Gospels today. See how strongly inclined to all sorts of hallucinations are sects that pay heed solely to the Gospel of St. John, or solely the Gospel of St. Luke! Fortunately there are four Gospels, which outwardly contradict one another, and this has so far prevented the great harm which such one-sidedness would cause. By being faced with four Gospels people do not go too far in the direction of the one, but have the others beside it. One Gospel is read aloud on one Sunday and another on another Sunday and so the illusory power of the one is counterbalanced by that of another. A great wisdom lies in the fact that these four Gospels have come down to the civilized world. In this way man is protected from being caught up by some one stream, which will take possession of him -

as in the case of so many members of sects - if he is influenced by one Gospel alone. When solely *one* Gospel works upon him it is particularly clear how this leads at last to hallucination.

In fact, it is essential today to give up much of one's subjective inclination, much of what one is attached to and thinks pious or clever. Mankind must above all seek universality and the courage to look at things from all sides.

I wished to say this to you today so that you may realize that what one tries now to bring about within humanity has truly deeper grounds than just some sort of subjective prejudice. In fact one can say that it is read from the signs of the times and that *it must be brought about*.

## **Christ in Relation to Lucifer and Ahriman**

### INTRODUCTION

The decision to construct the first Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland was made in May, 1913, when Rudolf Steiner visited the future building site. Construction began within a few weeks and the exterior of the building was completed in April, 1914. Work on the interior proceeded at a slower pace and lasted through World War I (1914-1918). In 1914, Rudolf Steiner had begun a scaled-down model of the Christ sculpture that was later to be installed in the Goetheanum.. As the work on the sculpture itself began, he frequently explained its significance in his lectures.

One of Rudolf Steiner's lecture tours, May 6 through May 18, 1915, took him to Vienna, Prague and Linz. In all three cities he stressed that the Christ figure in the sculptured group would have to be portrayed as a being in equipoise between the polar forces of Lucifer and Ahriman and that this being was symbol of, and model for, man's own existence here on earth. The Linz lecture, which is here translated, presents the group in a world-historical context and relates the significance of the Lucifer-Christ-Ahriman configuration to the events surrounding World War I. Steiner sees a parallel between Christ's central, but equalizing position and Central Europe's mission in World War I. He implies that Germany's and Austria's militarism and political intransigence alone did not lead to war against the world powers in the East (Russia) and the West (France, England and, since 1917, the United States). According to Steiner, World War I was the earthly expression of a struggle between luciferic forces in the East and ahrimanic forces in the West, and it was Central Europe's destiny to mediate between these forces.

The fundamental polarization of East and West that Rudolf Steiner saw emerging

more than six decades ago is now a political reality. While most historians today concede that World War II was in part caused by the circumstances surrounding World War I, few would accept Rudolf Steiner's statement from his Linz lecture that World War I was "destined by the European karma" or, to state it more concretely, that it was unavoidable. If the war could not have been avoided, then the question of who was to blame or who caused it is, as Steiner says, irrelevant. Based on this position, Steiner suggests that only one question has relevancy: "Who could have prevented the war?" This question seems to contradict Steiner's statement that World War I was destined by the European karma. A quick glance at the historical record may help to clarify what Steiner meant.

In suggesting that the Russian government and possibly England, could have prevented the war, Steiner simply deals with possibilities outside the realm of what had to happen according to European karma. Russia's instigation of the two Peace Conferences in the Hague (1899 and 1907) was indeed self-serving and hypocritical, for it was Russia that, in 1914, mobilized its armed forces without considering British proposals for peace negotiations. Under these circumstances and considering the political immaturity of the German leadership, it was not surprising that the German Kaiser and his generals over-reacted to the Russian mobilization and interpreted it as a declaration of war. Kaiser Wilhelm II and Czar Nicholas II, who were cousins, frantically exchanged telegrams in which one beseeched the other to preserve the peace, but to no avail. The war machinery was already overheated by the forces of chauvinism and materialism so that even from this vantage point Steiner was correct in maintaining that war was unavoidable.

Regarding the possibility of preventing the war, a glance at the major Western powers involved in the controversy, and at Germany, reveals the following historical facts. France, for thirty years an ally of Russia, did nothing to prevent the war because she did not attempt to delay the hasty Russian mobilization. Her representatives said later that France regretted the Russian action, but there seems little doubt that France was more interested in presenting herself as the innocent

victim of an attack. On the other hand, England's foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, could have prevented the war if he had taken earlier measures to discourage Germany's militarists from asserting themselves in their country, but in view of the English tradition and the English Constitution, this was probably not possible. Finally, the confusion in Germany itself was caused by a lack of understanding of who had legitimate authority to make decisions. Eventually, the political decisions were made by generals who managed to spread the belief that the fatherland was in peril and that Germany herself was not the attacker, but the attacked. Thus, theoretically, any one of these three powers could have prevented the war but that, as Rudolf Steiner points out in the lecture, is not the real issue.

Furthermore, the war did not emerge out of a French or Russian moral conviction that was responsive to Germany militarism. Rather, the goal of crushing German militarism emerged well after the war had begun. The war could be interpreted, in this sense, to be inevitable because it was not generated from a goal, but exploded and then developed its goals. In this war of attrition, materialism camouflaged itself with nationalistic sentiment and strove for absolute expression and triumph.

It is against such a background of perplexity and misguided fervor that Rudolf Steiner's message to Central Europeans must be read. In rejecting the question of who had caused the war, Steiner dismissed as equally irrelevant the question of who was to blame for materialism. Materialism was there, as was Ahriman. Steiner admonished the Central Europeans to counterbalance materialism by adopting a spiritual perception of life and by striving for an encounter with the Christ.

This profound spiritual responsibility that Steiner put on the Germans in 1915 was disregarded and the challenge passed by. After World War I it was not the Christ, but Adolf Hitler who, under the guise of "savior," emerged as Germany's Nemesis and was thus catapulted into a central position. When Hitler was finally destroyed, Central Europe broke up into two parts, one of which disappeared behind the Iron

Curtain, while the other aligned with the West.

As it stands today, Rudolf Steiner's call to instate the Christ in His central position has yet to be fully received and responded to not only by the people living in what is left of Central Europe, but also in the rest of the world.

- *Peter Mollenhauer*

Linz, May 18, 1915

SOME DAY WHEN THE BUILDING in Dornach that is dedicated to the spiritual sciences is completed, it will contain, in a significant spot, a sculpture dominated by three figures. In the center of this group a figure will tower as if it were the manifestation of what I would call the most sublime human principle ever to unfold on earth. Hence, one will be able to experience this representation of the highest human principle in the evolution of the earth—the Christ, who in the course of this evolution lived three years in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. A special task in the portrayal of this Christ figure will be to make two ideas visible. Firstly, it will be important to show how the being that we are concerned with dwells in a human body. Secondly, it must also become apparent how this human body, in every facial expression and in every gesture reflects a magnificent degree of spiritual refinement, which descended with the Christ from cosmic and spiritual heights into this body in its thirtieth year. Then there will be the remaining two figures of the group, one to the left and the other to the right of the Christ figure, if that is the proper name for the figure that I have just sketched. This Christ figure is placed in such a way that it seems to be standing in front of a rock that towers noticeably at His left side, with its peak extending over His head. On top of the rock there will be another figure, winged but with his wings broken, who for this reason begins to fall into the abyss. One feature in the Christ figure that must be worked out with special artistic care is the manner in which he raises his left arm, for it is precisely this gesture that precipitates the breaking of the wings. It must not appear, however, as if the Christ Himself were breaking the wings of this being. Rather, the interaction of the two figures must be portrayed artistically to show how the Christ, by the very motion of raising his hand, is expressing his infinite compassion for this being. Yet this being cannot bear the



energy flowing upward through arm and hand, an energy that is evidenced by indentations that the fingers of the extended hand seem to leave in the rock itself. When this being comes into proximity with the Christ being, he feels something that may be expressed in the words: I cannot bear the radiation of such purity upon me.

This feeling dominates so essentially as to break this upper beings wings and cause his imminent plunge into the abyss. To make this visible will be a particularly important artistic task and you will see how the meaning of this interaction could easily be misunderstood. Imagine, for example, an artistic portrayal of the Christ suggesting that merely by raising His hand He would radiate such power onto the being that his wings would be broken, forcing the plunge into the abyss. In that case it would be the Christ Himself who irradiated this being, as it were, with hatred, and thereby caused his descent. Such an impression must under no circumstances be conveyed. Rather, the being must be portrayed as having caused his own fall, for what is to be shown plunging downward, with broken wings, is Lucifer.

Now let us consider the other side of the group, toward the right of the Christ figure. There, the rock will have a ledge and, therefore, will be concave underneath. In this depression there will be another winged figure, who with his arm-like organs turns toward the ledge above. You have to visualize this as follows. To the right is the depression in the rock and in it stands this winged figure with wings entirely different from the figure on top of the rock. The wings of the figure on top of the rock resemble those of an eagle, whereas the figure in the depression has bat-like wings. This figure virtually buries himself in the cave, working in shackles, ever busy undermining the earthly realm.

The Christ figure in the middle has his right hand directed downward and the left one upward. Again, it will be an important artistic task not to show the Christ as wanting to shackle this figure; rather, he has infinite compassion for this being, which is Ahriman. Ahriman cannot bear this compassion and he writhes with pain from what the hand of the Christ exudes. This radiance from Christ's hand causes the golden veins down in the rock

depression to wind around Ahriman's body like strong cords and shackle him. What is happening to Lucifer is his own doing; the same is true with Ahriman. This concept is going to take form as a sculpture that will be set up in a significant place in the new building. Above the sculptured group we will attempt to express the same motif through the medium of painting, but then the concept must be expressed differently. To summarize, the group of three figures: Christ, Lucifer and Ahriman will stand at the bottom as a sculpture, and above, the same motif will appear as a painting.

We are injecting this configuration of a relationship between Christ, Lucifer and Ahriman into our Dornach building because the science of the spirit reveals to us in a certain way that the next task regarding the comprehension of the Christ impulse will be to make man finally understand how the three forces of Christ, Lucifer and Ahriman are related in this world. To this day there has been much talk about Christianity and the Christ impulse, but man has not yet gained a clear understanding of what the Christ impulse has brought into the world as the result of the Mystery of Golgotha. Certainly, it is generally admitted that there is a Lucifer or an Ahriman, but in so doing, it is made to appear that from these two one must flee, as if one wished to say, "I want nothing to do with Lucifer and Ahriman!" - In yesterday's public lecture (see Note 1) I described the way in which the divine-spiritual forces can be found. If these forces did not want to have anything to do with Lucifer and Ahriman, either, the world could not exist. One does not gain the proper relationship to Lucifer and Ahriman by saying, "Lucifer, I flee from you! Ahriman, I flee from you!" Rather, everything that man has to strive for as a result of the Christ impulse must be seen as similar to the equilibrious state of a pendulum. In the center, the pendulum is in perfect balance, but it must oscillate to one side or the other. The same applies to man's development here on earth. Man must oscillate to the one side according to the luciferic principle and to the other according to the principle of Ahriman, but he must maintain his equilibrium through the cultivation of Paul's declaration, "Not I, but Christ in me."

To understand the Christ in His quintessential activity we must conceive of Him as a reality, as a working force. That is to say, we must realize that what wove itself into our

evolution here on earth through the Mystery of Golgotha was present as a fact. It is not important how well or how inadequately this fact has been understood by mankind up to this time; what is important is that it has been present, influencing human development on earth. Much could be said to explain exactly what man has not understood about the Christ impulse up to this time; the science of the spirit will have to contribute its share to bring about a full comprehension of how the Christ impulse has come from spiritual heights and influenced man's development on earth through the Mystery of Golgotha. In order to realize how the Christ has become a working force, let us visualize - as has been done elsewhere - two events in the annals of man's evolution that have influenced the development of the entire Western world.

You will remember an important event from history when Constantine, son of Constantius Chlorus, defeated Maxentius and thus introduced Christianity externally into the mainstream of Western civilization. Constantine had to fight that important battle against Maxentius so that he could establish Christianity in his western empire as the official religion. Had this battle not taken place as it did, the entire map of Europe would have been different. But this battle really was not decided by military skill, that is, not by the intellectual prowess available to people in those days, but by something entirely different. Maxentius consulted the so-called Sibylline Books, the prophetic oracles of Rome, which guided him into leading his army out of the assured safety of Rome's walls into the open field, in order to confront Constantine's army. Constantine, on the other hand, had a dream before the battle in which he was told, "If you approach Maxentius under the banner of the Mystery of Golgotha you will reach a great objective!" Indeed, Constantine carried the symbol of the Mystery of Golgotha - the cross - when he led his forces into battle, even though his army was three-fourths smaller than that of Maxentius. Enthused by the power emanating from the Mystery of Golgotha, Constantine won that historical battle resulting in the external introduction of Christianity to Europe. When we realize the extent to which people in those days understood the Christ impulse purely by intellectual means, it is not surprising to find that there ensued an endless theological quarrel. People argued whether or not Christ was consubstantial with the Lord in all eternity, and so on. Let us say this, that the degree of knowledge of the Christ impulse

available to human beings in those days is not important, but rather the fact that the Christ impulse was present and that through his dream it guided Constantine to bring about what had to happen. What is important is the actuality of the Christ and His real and visibly active power. Only in the science of the spirit do we begin to understand *what* the Christ impulse is.

Another historical event was the struggle between France and England. It changed the map of Europe in such a way that we can say that if France had not been victorious over England, all conditions and relationships would have become different. But how did this victory happen? It happened because the Christ impulse has worked itself into the subconscious of the soul up to the present time, when it is increasingly becoming a conscious force. So we can see in the evolution of the Western spirit how the Christ impulse seeks out in the souls of men those conditions by which it can become effective in some individuals. Legends have preserved for us the manner in which the Christ impulse can assert itself within the Western spiritual tradition. In part, these legends refer generally to ancient pagan ages, but they take us back to those heathen times in which an understanding of Christianity was beginning to germinate.

If the soul does not consciously seek initiation as delineated in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment*, but becomes saturated with the Christ impulse as if by way of natural initiation, then the most favorable period for this process is from December 25 to January 6. We can understand this clearly by realizing that for occult knowledge it is evident that the earth is not only what geologists describe. Geologists conceive the earth's components as being similar to the skeleton of man. Yet the spiritual also belongs to our earth whose aura has been permeated by Christ. During the day's twenty-four hours, this earth sleeps and is awake just as we are. We must familiarize ourselves with the fact that the state of wakefulness on earth occurs during the winter, and the state of sleep during the summer. The earth spirit is most awake in these twelve or thirteen days from Christmas to the Epiphany. In ancient ages when, as you know from the various presentations in my lecture series, human beings elevated themselves to a sort of dreamlike clairvoyance to reach a spiritual understanding of the world, in those ages the

most favorable tints for this process was summer. Thus, it is quite natural that whoever wants to elevate himself to spiritual heights by means of a more dreamlike clairvoyance will have an easier time of it during the summer, when the earth is asleep. Therefore, St. John's midsummer-day was in ancient ages the most propitious time to raise the soul to the spiritual level. The old way of spiritual interaction with the earth has been replaced by a more conscious elevation that can best be reached during the earth's wakefulness.

For this reason, legends inform us that unusually endowed people, who are particularly suited by their karmas, pass into an extraordinary state of consciousness that resembles sleep, but only on the surface. Its inner quality is such that it can be inspired by those forces that elevate human beings to the domain we call the spirit world. A beautiful Norwegian legend (see Note 2) tells us that Olaf Åsteson, in church on Christmas Eve, falls into a sleeplike state and when he awakens on January 6 is able to relate the experiences he had in this condition. This Norwegian legend does in fact describe the experiences that one perceives first as the soul world - and then as something that feels like the spirit world, but with everything being expressed as images, as imaginative forms.

This time of year has been most favorable in those epochs when human beings were not as advanced as they are in our time. Now it is no longer possible for the Christ impulse to penetrate the souls of men in this way, as if by natural initiation. Nowadays man must make a conscious effort and climb to initiation in a way similar to that achieved through the instructions given in my book *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds*. We are living in an age when natural initiations are becoming increasingly rare and will eventually disappear. Yet one initiation that could still essentially be called a natural initiation took place when the Christ impulse worked itself into the soul of the simple country girl, The Maid of Orleans. It was she who caused the victory of the French over the English. Again, not the human mind nor the talents of military leaders were decisive factors in changing the map of Europe so magnificently, but rather the Christ impulse working itself into the subconscious of the Maid of Orleans and inspiring her to radiate its presence in all of history.

We would now have to examine whether something similar could have occurred in the Maid of Orleans by way of natural initiation and ask whether her soul was inspired in the nights from the 25th day of December to the 6th of January. From her biography it seems difficult to demonstrate that she was even once in a sleep-like state during the twelve or thirteen special days when the Christ impulse could have entered her soul, inspiring her to act as its human shell on the battle grounds of France. Yet, that is precisely what happened. There is a time when the karma of a particular individual can facilitate such a sleep-like state in a human being. During the last few days prior to a person's birth he lives in the mother's womb in a dreaming, sleep-like state. He has not yet perceived with his senses what is happening in the world outside. If by virtue of his karma a person were especially suited to receive the Christ impulse during these last few days in the womb, then these days could also be days of natural initiation. Strengthened by and saturated with the Christ impulse, such a person would have to be born on the sixth day of January. Joan of Arc was born on that day. It is her special mystery that she was born on the 6th day of January and had spent the time from Christmas to the day of Epiphany in a peculiar sleep-like state in the womb of her mother where she received her natural initiation. Now consider the profound connections beyond the external developments that we are accustomed to call history. As a rule, the external events that are reconstructed from historical documents are of the least significance. What is of decisive historical significance is the plain date in our calendar indicating that Joan of Arc was sent into this world on the 6th day of January. Thus, supernatural forces become active in the sentient world and we must read the occult signs that present this fact to us. They tell us that the Christ impulse had already streamed into the Maid of Orleans before her physical birth, as if by way of natural initiation.

I want to explain these facts in order to instill in your souls a feeling for the fact that the external perception must take into account unknown forces and connections beyond what we ordinarily call history. European history has been guided by the Christ impulse since the Mystery of Golgotha, whereas Asia retained a world view that is not yet fully sensitive to the Christ impulse. To be sure, Europeans have been led into considering the wisdom of India as something especially profound. Not only is it characteristic of Hindu

thought, if not of all Asian religious perception, however, that its entire attention is directed to the time preceding the appearance of the Christ impulse, but also that the state of religious perception is preserved as it was in those days. If something remains behind in the evolutionary process it can be interpreted to have absorbed something luciferic, and for this reason Asian religious evolution is the carrier of a luciferic element. A glance at the religious development of Asia will inform us that it contains much of what mankind as a whole once possessed but was later forced to abandon. We must in pan cleanse Western culture of the luciferic remnants and in part we must elevate them in such a way that the Christ impulse can enter.

Moving from Asia to the East of Europe, we notice how Russian orthodox Christianity has remained stationary at an earlier stage of Christian development, refusing to advance and thereby keeping something of the luciferic element. In short, we can detect a luciferic remnant in the East, which, I would say, a wise guiding force left behind for the evolution of mankind in general.

Looking to the West and especially to American culture, a different characteristic quality stands out. The characteristic feature of American culture is to explain everything from external appearance. This kind of perception can certainly lead to great and significant achievements, but still, externals are usually expected to provide answers to all questions. Suppose we in Europe, and especially in Central Europe, notice a person who earlier in his life did not yet have an opportunity to dedicate himself to Christ and to the spiritual cosmic forces. If some event in this person's life brought about his conversion, we want to know what had gone on in his soul. We are not interested in learning that there was a leap forward in his development because such a phenomenon could certainly be found everywhere. The most incorrect pronouncement made by the empirical sciences is that nature does not make any leaps (see Note 3). Yet there is a tremendous leap from a green plant leaf to the red petal of a flower, and there is another significant leap from petal to the calyx. This pronouncement is therefore patently false; the truth of all development rests precisely on the fact that leaps occur everywhere. Hence, when a person who for some time was leading an external existence is suddenly induced by something to turn to

spiritual things, we are not interested in the fact that it happened. What does interest us is the inner force and power that can bring about such a conversion. We will want to look into the soul of such a person and ascertain *what* has caused such a reversal. The inner workings of the soul will interest us.

How would the American proceed? He would do something quite peculiar. In America, conversions of this sort have been observed frequently. Well, the American would ask the people who have experienced conversions to write letters. He would then gather all these letters into a bundle and say, "I have received these letters from some two hundred people. Fourteen percent of all these souls experienced a conversion out of sudden fear of death or hell: five percent claimed altruistic motives; seventeen percent because they aspired to ethical ideals; fifteen percent had experienced pangs of conscience; ten percent acted in obedience to what they were taught; thirteen percent because they saw that others were converted and imitated them; nineteen percent because they were forced by a good whipping at the appropriate age, and so on." In this fashion the most extreme souls are isolated, sorted and tallied and the result is claimed to be founded on "scientific data." The findings are then compiled in books that are sent out and billed as "soul science." For these people all other evidence is unsound, or as they claim, rests on subjective notions. There you have an example of the externalization of the innermost phenomena, and so it goes with many, many things in America. At a time that cries out for special spiritual deepening, the mat external brand of spiritism is rampant in America! Everything there has to be tangible.

That is a materialistic interpretation of spiritual life. We could mention many other instances from which it would be possible to see how the culture of the West is seized by the ahrimanic principle, and what principle causes the pendulum to swing to the other side. In the East we are confronted by the luciferic and in the West by the ahrimanic principle. In Central Europe we have been assigned the immensely important task of finding the equilibrium between East and West. Therefore, the plastic group in our building in Dornach must represent what we consider the most significant spiritual task of our age, that is, finding the equilibrant relationship between Lucifer and Ahriman.



Only then will it be recognized how the Christ impulse was meant to influence evolution on earth, when the Christ is not simply brought to preeminence, but is known in the proper way as exemplary force in balance with Lucifer and Ahriman.

The following may illustrate that no clear understanding has yet been reached concerning the relationship of man and of Christ to Lucifer and Ahriman. In a period, even the greatest phenomena are not always free from a one-sided attitude that may characterize the age. It is impossible to overestimate the significance of Michelangelo's magnificent painting *The Last Judgment*, which can be found in the Sistine Chapel in Rome. Christ is portrayed in triumph, directing the good people to the one side and the wicked to the other. Let us look at this Christ figure. It does not possess the features we would like to emphasize in the Christ of our building in Dornach. Even though Lucifer towers above, it must be shown that the Christ raises His hand in compassion. Lucifer is not supposed to be toppled by the power of Christ, but plunges down by his own power because he is unable to bear the radiance of the Christ nearby, and the Christ looks up and raises his brow toward Lucifer. Similarly, Ahriman is not conquered by any hatred from Christ, but because he feels he cannot stand the forces emanating from Him. The Christ, however, towers in the middle as the One who is carrying the Parcival principle into the new age and who, not through His power but through His very being, induces others to overcome themselves, rather than being overcome by Him. In Michelangelo's painting, we see a Christ who uses His very power to send some to heaven and others to hell. In future, such an image will no longer be seen as the genuine Christ, but rather as a Christ having luciferic qualities. Of course, this observation does not detract from the greatness of the painting, in fact, we acknowledge it. We simply must admit, however, that Michelangelo was not yet capable of painting the genuine Christ because the development of the world had not yet advanced to such a point when this could be done. There has to be a clear understanding that we cannot turn our attention just to the Christ, but must set our sight on the threefold configuration: Christ, Lucifer, Ahriman. I can only hint at this, but spiritual science will eventually bring to light the full content of the mystery, Christ in relation to Lucifer and Ahriman.

Now consider the following. Looking eastward we can make out luciferic forces even in the eastern regions nearest to us, while in the West we see ahrimanic forces. As a matter of fact, in spiritual scientific consideration we must adopt a mode of perception by which neither objects nor nations, nor the spirit of nations, are observed with sympathy or antipathy, but rather in accordance with their characteristics. What is called the national mentality of a person steeped in the heritage of his people depends to a large degree on the activity of the physical body and the ether body. From the time of our falling asleep to the moment of our awakening we live with our spiritual-intellectual being as astral body and ego, and during this period we also live outside our habitual national identity. Only during the time from our awakening to the time when we fall asleep do we partake in our nationality, because then we are immersed in our physical body. For this reason man overcomes his sense of national identity little by little during his stay in kamaloka. There he strives toward a union with humanity as a whole in order to live most of the time between death and rebirth in the sphere of humanity as such. Among the characteristics discarded in kamaloka is one that specializes us as members of a nationality.

In this connection the various nationalities differ considerably from one another. Let us, for instance, compare a Frenchman with a Russian. It is a Frenchman's particular trait that he is especially persistent in holding onto, and dwelling in, what the collective soul of his people carries into his physical body and ether body during his life between birth and death. This can be seen in his definitive idea - not as an individual but as a Frenchman - of what it is to be French. Above all, he stresses the importance of being French and what that means to him. But this notion held by Frenchmen or by anyone else from a Romance culture about their nationality affects the ether body by clearly imprinting the idea of nationality on it. A few days after the Frenchman has passed through the gate of death he loses his ether body; it is then a closed entity that has a prolonged existence in the etheric world. The ether body is unable to dissolve for a long time because it is impregnated with, and held together by, the Frenchman's idea of nationality. Thus, if we look to the West we see the field of death filled with firmly defined ether bodies.

Now, if we take a closer look to the East, at Russian man, we recognize his peculiar trait;

his soul, upon passing through the gate of death, carries an ether body that dissolves in a relatively short period of time. That is the difference between the West and the East. When the ether bodies of Western Europeans are separated after death, they tend to maintain a certain rigidity. What the Frenchman calls "Gloire" is impregnated in his ether body as a national Gloire. He is condemned for a long time after his death to turn his spiritual sight onto this ether body, and to look at himself (The Russian, however, looks little at himself after his death.) Through all this, Western European man is exposed to the ahrimanic influence because his ether body has been infected by materialistic thinking.

The speedy separation and the diffusion of the ether body is accompanied by a feeling of sensual pleasure, which is also present as a most peculiar ingredient of national sentiment. How is this expressed in the East (Central Europeans do not understand this just as they do not empathize with the East.) Consider Dostoevsky and even Tolstoy or those leading writers who are constantly speaking of "Russian man"; their jargon is an expression of an undefined sensual pleasure surging from their national sentiment. Even in Solowjow's philosophy, we find a vague and stifling quality that the Central European man cannot reconcile with the clarity and purity he seeks. This search for clarity and purity is related to what is active in Europe as spiritual power.

In Central Europe there exists another condition, an intermediate state and something I can now dwell on in greater detail than was possible in yesterday's lecture. I mentioned that something exists in Central Europe that could be called the inner disposition toward striving. As a Central European, Goethe could have written his Faust no differently in the eighteen-forties: he was always striving! This striving is innermost nature. It was in Central Europe where the mystics made their appearance - those mystics who were not satisfied with the mere knowledge of the divine-spiritual principle but wanted to experience it in their own souls. To experience the Christ event internally was their very endeavor. Now take Solowjow who proceeds above all from a historical premise that the Christ died for mankind. That is correct, but Solowjow is a soul who, similar to a cloud, perceives spiritual life as something outside himself. Somehow he thinks that everything

is viewed as a completed event, while Central European man demands that everyone experience the Christ event again in himself. Solowjow stresses time and again that Christ has to die so that man can be human. Meister Eckhart, in contrast, would have responded like this: "You are seeing Christ in the same way in which one looks at something external." The point is that we should not look only at historical events, but that we should experience the Christ within ourselves. We must discover something within ourselves that passes through stages similar to those experienced by Christ, at least spiritually, so that we can rediscover the Christ event within ourselves.

Now it will certainly seem strange and fantastic when mankind nowadays is told that in Central Europe the close association of the "I" with the Christ principle had put a stamp on the entire development of the area, to the effect that even the linguistic spirit of a people took up this association and equated "I" (Ich) and "CH" (Christ): I-CH conjoined became "Ich." In pronouncing "Ich" in Central Europe one utters the name of Jesus Christ. That is how close the "I" wants to be to the Christ, longing for the most intimate closeness with Him. This living together, as one, with the spiritual world, which we in Central Europe must strive to attain in all intellectual fields, is not known in the West or in the East. Therefore, something in the twentieth century is necessary so that the Christ principle can gradually spread over the entire European continent. I have frequently emphasized in several lecture series (see Note 4) that in November 1879 the spiritual being we call the Archangel Michael had reached a special stage of development. Michael had become, so to speak, the leading spirit who is now preparing the event that has to take place in the twentieth century. This is alluded to in my first mystery play (see Note 5) as the appearance of the etheric Christ on earth. It will come to pass that at first a few, and gradually more and more souls will know that the Christ is really here, is again on this earth, but as an ether body and not as a physical body.

Certain preparations are necessary. When some souls in the course of the twentieth century become clairvoyant to life in the etheric world - and that will happen - they would be disturbed by those ether bodies that are residual from Western Europe. The spiritual eye would perceive them first of all and would have a distorted vision of the

Christ figure. For this reason Michael has to fight a battle in Europe. He has to contribute something to the diffusion of these rigid ether bodies from Western Europe. To accomplish this task, he must take the ether bodies from the East, which strive for diffusion, and join with them in a struggle against the West. The result of this is that since 1879 a violent struggle has been in preparation between Russian and Western European ether bodies and is now raging in the entire astral world. This furious battle between Russia and France is indeed going on in the astral world and is led by Michael; it corresponds to the war that is now being waged in Europe. We are often shaken by the knowledge that the events in the physical world take place as exact opposites to those occurring in the spiritual world, and that is precisely what is happening in this case. The alliance between France and Russia (see Note 6) can be blamed on the seductive powers of Ahriman or, if you will, on the ahrimanic element, the twenty billion francs that France gave to Russia. This alliance is the physical expression of a struggle raging between French and Russian souls, a struggle that has an impact on Central Europe as it strives in its innermost soul for an encounter with the Christ. It is the karma of Europe that we in Central Europe must experience in an especially tragic way what the West and East must settle between themselves. The only possible interpretation of the external struggle between German and French elements is that the German element lies in the middle and serves as an anvil for both East and West. Germany, which is hammered by both sides in the conflict, is in reality the subject of their own controversy. That is the spiritual truth and quite different from what is happening in the physical world. Consider how different the spiritual truth is from what is happening in the physical world! This must strike contemporary man as grotesque, but it nevertheless is the truth, which must have a shocking effect on us.

There is yet another extraordinarily important matter worth mentioning. Surely history seems to be contradicted when we see that England, even though she has in the past always been allied with Turkey against Russia, now has to fight with Russia against Turkey. We can understand this contradiction only through occult observation. On the physical plane England and Russia are allies in the fight against the Turkish element, yet occult vision, perceiving this struggle from below through the physical plane and then

onto the astral plane, sees that in the North it is Russia and in the Southeast it is Turkey that appear to be allied with England. This is due to the fact that the alliance between England and Russia is only of significance on the physical plane, but has no corresponding value in the spiritual world since it rests entirely on material interests. From below one sees that England and Russia are allied in the North only on the physical plane. In the Southeast, looking through the physical plane, one perceives on the astral plane a spiritual alliance between the English and the Turks while they are both fighting the Russians. Thus, on the physical plane, England is an ally to Russia and on the astral plane Russia is attacked by England. This is how we must see the events as they unfold in external reality inasmuch as they reveal themselves as external history. What is behind this history is something entirely different.

There will be a time when people will speak about the present events differently than they are doing now. You will have to admit, the entire war literature contains something rather unpleasant. True, some valid statements are made, but there are also many disagreeable ones. Above all, there is one thing that is disagreeable. There is much talk about how it is still too early to discuss the question of who has caused the war and so on. People delude themselves about the facts when they say that at a later date the documents in our archives will surely bring to light who is to blame for the war! In reference to the external events, however, the matter can be resolved fairly easily, provided one judges dispassionately. Chamberlain, in his *War Essays* (see Note 7) is correct (even though he is in error about the details) when he says that it is possible to know the key issues of this war. All that is without a doubt accurate, but it leaves the proper question unasked. For example, there is but *one* question that can be answered unequivocally, if only it is properly posed, and this question is: Who could have prevented the war? - The constantly recurring question: Who is to blame for this war? and many other questions just are not appropriate. Who could have prevented the war? The answer to this question can be no other than that the Russian government could have prevented the war! Only in this fashion will it be possible to find the appropriate definition for the impulses that are at work in each situation. Of course, war had been desired by the East for decades, but had it not been for a certain relationship between England, Russia and France, it could not

have broken out. Therefore, one might ascribe the greater blame to England. Yet all these conjectures do not take into consideration the underlying causes that made this World War a necessity. It is naive to believe that war could have been avoided. People these days talk as if it did not have to come about when it was, of course, destined by the European karma.

I wanted to allude to some of this by sketching the spiritual differences between East and West. It is not important that we look for external causes. All we have to know is that this war was a historic necessity. When that is understood the individual causes do not matter. What is important is the proper attitude toward the various effects, for one effect can impress our souls in an especially significant way. It is remarkable and a characteristic phenomenon that a war like this one produces many unexpended ether bodies. Since this is the biggest war in man's conscious history, this phenomenon is present to a corresponding large degree. Ether bodies are produced that are not worn out. You see, the ether body that man carries with him can support him for a long period of time, until he reaches seventy, eighty or ninety years of age. But in a war human beings are sacrificed in the prime of their lives. You know that man, when he passes through the gate of death loses his ether body after a short period of time. A person dying in a war, however, loses his ether body when normally it could have supported his physical body for a long time, in many cases for decades. Those ether bodies entering the etheric world prematurely are preserved with all their powers. Consider now the countless number of unexpended ether bodies of those going through the gate of death at an early age. There is something distinctive about these ether bodies. I would like to illustrate this fact with an example that concerns our Movement, and after that I wish to explain how the ether bodies of the young soldiers who have gone through the gate of death will emerge in the etheric world in the near future.

This fall we witnessed in Dornach the death of little seven-year-old Theodor Faiss; his family belonged to the Anthroposophical Society and was employed not far from our building project, The father used to live in Stuttgart before moving to Dornach. He worked as a gardener in the vicinity of the building and lived there with his family. He

himself had been drafted soon after the beginning of the war and at the time of the event I would like to relate, he was staying in a military hospital. Little seven-year-old Theodor was really a sunny child - a wonderful, lovely boy. Now, one day the following happened. We just had a lecture that I delivered in Dornach about the work that goes on in the building. After the lecture someone appeared and reported that little Theodor's mother had not seen him since late in the afternoon. It was ten o'clock at night and we could not help thinking that a terrible accident had happened. This afternoon a horse-driven furniture van had been in the vicinity of the so-called canteen; it was seen on a narrow street where it was forced to turn. To my knowledge, no van as huge had reached that spot in decades. Little Theodor had been in the canteen before the van had turned. He had been delayed there, otherwise he would have gone home earlier with the food that he had fetched from the canteen for supper. It so happened that he covered the short distance to his home in such a way that he reached the very spot where at that moment the van turned over and fell on him. Nobody had noticed the accident, not even the coachman because he was tending to his horses when the van turned over and did not know that the child was buried under it. When we were informed that the child was missing we tried to heave the vehicle up again. Friends fetched tools and alerted Swiss soldiers to help us with the task. Naturally the child had been dead since five-thirty in the afternoon. The van had crushed him immediately and he had died of suffocation.

This case can be used as an example of what I have often tried to explain by means of a comparison: causes are mistaken for effects, and *vice versa*. I have frequently used the following example. A person falls into the river and people hurry to the spot where it happened. When they find a rock, they conjecture that the victim had stumbled over it and this caused him to fall into the river and drown. Thus, they are sure that the man had died because he fell into the river. If one were to conduct an autopsy, however, it might turn out that he had suffered a heart attack and as a result, was already dead when he fell into the water, but he fell into the water because he had died. You will frequently encounter a similar confusion of cause and effect when life situations are assessed, and even more frequently in the general sciences.



The situation with little Theodor was that his karma had expired, so that it is actually possible to say, "He himself ordered the van to the place of the accident." I have told you this externally tragic case in detail because we are here concerned with a child's ether body, which could have supported his life for decades. This ether body has passed into the spiritual world with all of its unexpended powers, but where is it? What is it doing? Since that day, anyone attuned to occult perception who is working artistically on the building in Dornach or is there simply to pursue his thoughts will know that the entire ether body of the child, with all its powers, is enlarged in the aura of the Dornach building. We must distinguish that the individuality is elsewhere; it goes its own way, but the ether body was separated after a few days and is now present in the building. I will never hesitate to assert that the powers needed for intuition are those of this ether body that was sacrificed for the building. The relationships behind ordinary life are often quite different from what we are able to suspect. This ether body has become one of the protective forces of the building. Something tremendously stupendous lies in such a relationship.

Now let us consider the vast amount of power that ascends to the spiritual world from the unexpended ether bodies of these who are now walling through the gate of death as a result of military events.

The way in which events are connected is different from what people can imagine; the karma in the world takes its course in a different way. It is the task of spiritual science to replace fantastic notions with spiritually true ideas. For example, we can hardly imagine something more fantastic and untrue, from a spiritual perspective, than what has taken place in the last few decades. Let us ask what has been accomplished by the (Hague) Peace Conference (see Note 8) which aimed at replacing war with law, or international law, as it was called. Since the Peace Conferences were held, wars have never been more terrible. During the last few decades this Peace Movement counted among its special patrons the very monarch who has waged the bloodiest and most cruel wars ever known in history. The launching of the Peace Conferences by the Russian Czar must therefore be considered the biggest farce in world history; it is also the most abominable. This must be

labeled a luciferic seduction of the East; the details can be easily traced. No matter how one may view the situation, the human soul is shocked by the fact that in the beginning, when the war impulses made their way into Central Europe, the people there made few comments about the situation, even in places where they gathered for the purpose of discussion, such as the German Parliament in Berlin. Little was said, but the events spoke for themselves. In contrast, there was much talk in the East and West. The most shocking impressions come from the debates among various political parties in the St. Petersburg Duma. Representatives of these parties uttered, with great fervor, endless variations of absolutely meaningless phrases. It was terrifying to see the luciferic seduction at work. The fires raging in this war, however, are intended to warn and admonish the human race to be on guard.

From what is now happening, a few souls must come to a realization that we cannot go on like this; human evolution must take up the spiritual! Materialism is confronting its karma in this, the most terrible of all wars. In a certain sense, this war is the karma of materialism. The more this fact is realized by human beings, the more they will abandon their arguments about who is to blame for the war, and then they will have to realize that this war has been sent into world history to admonish man to turn to a spiritual perception of human life in its entirety.

Not only does materialism cause human souls to embrace materialism, it also perverts man's logic and dulls his feelings. We in Central Europe are still lacking a full understanding of what I have stated before. We in Central Europe must be most intimately engaged in the continued development of the Christ impulse. To do this we must, among other things, try to understand the minds that have already sown the seeds. Just one example. Goethe wrote a theory of color, which physicists regard as something - well - something that deserves no more than an indulgent smile, as if they wanted to say, "What did the poet know about colors? He was nothing but a dilettante." Since the 1880's I have tried to gain acceptance for Goethe's theory of color in spite of the findings of modern physics (see Note 9). Why does nobody understand that? The answer is that Central Europe has been imbued with the materialistic principle that has come to us from

the British folk soul. Newton, whom Goethe had to oppose, has been victorious over everything emanating from Goethe's spirit. Goethe also established a theory of evolution that demonstrates how human beings, simply by grasping spiritual laws, can progress from the state of greatest imperfection to one of greatest perfection. People found this too difficult to understand. When Darwin published his theory of evolution in a more comprehensible fashion, it was readily accepted. Darwin, a materialistic thinker who was inspired by the British folk soul has conquered Goethe, a man whose perceptions resulted from a most intimate dialogue with the German folk soul.

Ernst Haeckel's experiences were tragic. During his entire life he nourished himself intellectually by leaning on the ideas of Huxley and Darwin; his materialism is basically an English product (see Note 10) Yet when the war broke out, Haeckel was enraged about what emerged from the British Isles. He was one of the first to return British medals, diplomas and honors; instead, he should have returned his brand of Darwinism and physics, which is tinged with English thought. This is what we have to realize if we are to understand how Central Europe can strive for an intimate harmony with the laws of the world.

The greatest damage is done when what is poured into a child's soul induces the child to develop merely materialistically later in life. This trend has been on the increase for several centuries. Ahriman has even inspired one of the great British writers to compose a work that is calculated to impress the child's soul materialistically. The intent is hardly noticeable because ordinarily, one does not see all this as preparatory to a materialistic orientation. The work I am talking about is *Robinson Crusoe*. The description of Robinson is so shrewd that once the mind has accepted the ideas in the Robinson tale, it cannot avoid thinking materialistically thereafter. Mankind has not yet recovered from the ill effects perpetrated by the inventors of Robinson tales; they existed before and exist now. Much more could be said. These statements are not made to say something derogatory about the people of the West who have to be what they are. Rather, I wish to point out how the people in Central Europe must discover the connections to great values that are just now germinating but will grow to determine future developments. In this

regard, the significance of Austria is especially noteworthy. During the past few decades several men there aspired to profound accomplishments, for example, Hamerling in the area of literature, Carneri who set out to deepen Darwinism, by extending it to the moral realm, as well as Bruckner and other artists from a variety of disciplines. What matters here is the concern of a people for these things.

Now let us consider the unexpended ether bodies that are still in existence. They were cast off by human beings who had learned, through a great event, how to sacrifice themselves for their people's spiritual commonalty, a commonalty no longer present for them, at least on the surface. If a spiritual scientist today asserts that there is a collective soul of people and that it exists as archangel and so forth, he will be ridiculed. What is called a people's collective soul by the materialists is nothing but the abstract sum of attributes that the people of a nation possess. The materialist considers the people as nothing but the sum of human beings who co-exist in the same geographic area and share a sense of commonalty with each other. We, on the other hand, speak of a people's spiritual commonalty in such a way that we know that the spirit of a people is present as a real being of the rank of an archangel. Even though somebody who sacrifices his life for his people is not fully conscious of the real spirit of his people, he nevertheless confirms by the manner in which he goes through death that he believes in a continuity of life after this death. He believes that there is more to a people's spiritual commonalty than meets the eye, that is, it is related to, and co-exists with, the supersensible world. All those going through death confirm in a more or less conscious way that there is a supersensible world, and that realization is imprinted on their ether bodies. In a future time of peace, the unexpended ether bodies will be among people living on earth and will continually send the following sounds into the music of the spheres: there is more in the world than what mere physical eyes can perceive! This spiritual truth will ring forth as part of the music of the spheres through ether bodies that the dead have left behind. These are aside from what they are taking along as their individuality, which they retain during their lives between death and rebirth. We must listen to what lives and echoes from these ether bodies, because they were discarded by people who went through death and in so doing, affirmed the truth of the spiritual world. Mankind's greatest sin will be to ignore

what the dead call out to us when their ether bodies speak. One's glance at the spiritual world will be infinitely enriched if one considers that those who have lost loved ones - fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters - may tell themselves that those who were sacrificed continue to live for humanity, as a reminder of what is yet to come!

If one were to rely only on what is taking place in the physical world, there would be little hope for the successful continuation of the spiritual movement through which a spiritual scientific world view is to be cultivated. Recently, a good and faithful colleague aged thirty or so died. My words to this soul that had gone through the gate of death requested that it should continue to work in our spiritual scientific field as faithfully and as courageously as it had done here on earth, utilizing all of its acquired knowledge. This colleague had worked diligently with us here on the physical plane; my message to him for his life between death and rebirth was that he should continue to work with us after death as he had done in life, for we are counting on these so-called dead as we are counting on the living. Our spiritual-scientific world view must be alive to such a degree that the gap between the so-called dead and the living can be overcome: we must feel the dead among us as if they were alive. We want not only theory, but life. Thus we wish to point out that when there is peace, there will be a living tie between those on earth and those who have gone through the gate of death. Man will be able to learn, and must learn, from the dead how they contribute to the great spiritual progress that must take hold on earth.

Sometimes life offers us an opportunity to see how human logic alone does not suffice. I would like to mention an example - not for personal reasons but because I want to characterize the way our Movement is viewed by the public. A few years ago an article was printed in a respected South German journal (see Note 14) by a famous contemporary philosopher about our spiritual science. This treatment of spiritual science was intended to impress the public purely because the essay was authored by a famous philosopher. The editor took great pride in the fact that he was able to present an article about spiritual science by such a famous man. Of course, everything was skewed and the

facts about spiritual science were distorted. But what did it take for the editor to realize that the account about spiritual science that he had sponsored in his monthly journal was distorted? The war broke out and the author of the article sent several letters to the editor. These letters contained some of the most disgusting remarks about Central European culture that one could imagine. The professor had railed and sneered at it. The editor then printed these letters in his journal as examples of the stupidity of this kind of thinking, commenting that anyone who writes this way belongs in an insane asylum. We are confronted by a curious fact. A good editor needed such an experience in order to see that the author, whose article on spiritual science had severely damaged the public image of the Movement, belonged in an insane asylum. If the man belongs in an insane asylum now, however, then the same was true before, when he wrote the article on spiritual science!

So it goes in the world! To be a judge of what is going on, man must garner other supports than those ordinarily available to him. The spiritual scientist who can clearly demonstrate that truth finds its own way, is on firm ground. Spiritual science, however, must be active in the evolution of mankind so that what is necessary, happens. Early in history Emperor Constantine had to accomplish his mission so that the Christ impulse could bear on the subconscious from the spiritual world. Later, the Christ impulse became active in the Maid of Orleans; what had to happen did indeed take place. Today, the Christ impulse must continue to bear on man, but more on his consciousness. In the future, there must be souls who will know that up there in the spiritual world there are those who sacrificed themselves as individuals and who admonish us to emulate their own belief in the active force of the spiritual, which they attained in death. The forces in the unexpended ether bodies beckon to the future, as well: to understand their message is to admit it into one's soul. Below, however, there must be souls who will perceive this truth and prepare for it through the proper and active understanding of our spiritual science. Our spiritual science must cultivate souls on this earth who will be capable of sensing what the ether bodies of the dead up there will say to us in the future. These souls will know that in the beyond there are forces to admonish human beings who had to be left on earth. When spirit-conscious souls down here harken to the hidden sounds of the

spiritual world, then all bloodshed, all sacrifices and all suffering, past and future, will bear fruit. I do hope that quite a few souls come together through spiritual science and perceive the voices from the spiritual world that are resounding especially because of this war. Summarizing the final words of today's reflection, I wish to say a few words to you that are merely an expression of my feeling for what I want to instill in your souls.

From the warrior's valor, From the blood of battles, From the pain of the bereaved. From a people's sacrifice Will the spirit fruit arise - Will the souls embrace the spirit Consciously, with inner eyes.

With such feelings in our hearts we forever want to imbue ourselves with the meaning of the rose cross so that we can perceive it in the proper way as the motto for our doing, weaving and feeling. Not the black cross alone. He who tears the roses from the black cross and has nothing left but the black cross, would fall into the clutches of Ahriman. The black cross in itself represents life when it strives to embrace inanimate matter. Also, if one were to separate the cross from the roses, keeping only the latter, one would not find the proper thing. For the roses, separate from the cross, tend to elevate us to a life of selfish striving toward the spiritual, but not to a life in which we reveal the spirit in a material world. Not the cross alone, not the roses alone, but the roses on the cross, the cross carrying the roses: That is our proper symbol.

## NOTES

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: The footnotes below are translations of the annotations appended to the original publication of this lecture. Titles of books and articles are given in their German form; they are followed by free translations in parentheses which do not necessarily refer to an English translation.

- . "Die übersinnliche Erkenntnis und ihre stärkende Seelenkraft in unserer schicksalstragenden Zeit" ("Supersensible Perception and Its Strengthening Soul-force in Our Time of Destiny"). Corresponding

remarks can be found in the Berlin lectures of April 16 and 23, 1915, published as: "Aus schicksalstragenden Zeit", ("From a Time of Destiny") Bibl.-No. 64 in the *Gesamtausgabe (Complete Works [of Rudolf Steiner])*, Dornach, 1959.

- . "Welten-Neujahr. Das Traumlid von Olaf Åsteson" ("Cosmic New Year. The Legend of Olaf Åsteson's Dream"), Hanover lecture of January 1, 1912. Published as a separate edition in Dornach, 1958; *Gesamtausgabe (Complete works)*, Bibl.-No 158. In this form the pronouncement was first made by Karl von Linné in his *Philosophia Botanica*, Stockholm, 1751, no. 77.
- . Cf. especially "Die spirituellen Hintergründe der äusseren Welt - Der Sturz der Geister der Finsternis" ("The Spiritual Background of the External World - The Fall of the Spirits of Darkness"), 14 lectures, Dornach, September 29 to October 28, 1917. *Gesamtausgabe (Complete works)*, Bibl.-No. 177, Dornach, 1965.
- . "Die Pforte der Einweihung" ("The Portal of Initiation"), first scene. *Gesamtausgabe (Complete works)*, Bibl.-No 14, Dornach, 1962.
- . The alliance was negotiated in 1897 by President Faure of France and Czar Nicolas II of Russia.
- . Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Neue Kriegsaufsätze (New War Essays)*, Munich, 1915, p.36. "The reference is to the Hague Peace Conference of 1899 and 1907, which were both initiated by Czar Nicholas II.
- . Rudolf Steiner was asked in 1882 to edit Goethe's scientific writings in Kürschner's *Deutsche National-Literatur*. Volume I was published in 1883; it contained writings on the formation and transformation of organisms. Rudolf Steiner's introductions and critical commentaries to the four volumes were published as a special edition, entitled: Rudolf Steiner,



*Goethe's Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften (Goethe's Natural-Scientific Writings)*, Dornach, 1926. A German edition was published in Freiburg, 1949. *Gesamtausgabe (Complete Works)*, Bibl.-No. 1. Cf. the correspondence between Kurl Julius Schröer, Joseph Kürschner and Rudolf Steiner in *Blätter für Anthroposophie*,. 13 Jg. No. 2, February 1961.

- . Ernst Haeckel: "I have always readily acknowledged the magnificent contributions of the small insular British empire to the enrichment of human civilization. These were possible because of its advantageous insular position and its geographic alliances. In addition I worked on Darwinism for the past fifty years and had many personal dealings with Darwin, Huxley, Lyell, John Murray and many other famous natural scientists in England and Scotland; these were pleasant and fruitful personal relationships." Haeckel, *Ewigkeit. Weltkriegsgedanken über Leben und Tod, Religion und Entwicklungslehre (Eternity, World War Reflections on Life and Death, Religion, and the Theory of Evolution)*, Berlin, 1915, p.65 and 114.
- . Robert Hamerling, 1830-1889. Cf. Rudolf Steiner, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Literatur 1886-1902 (Collected Essays on Literature, 1886-1902)*, Bibl.No. 20, *Gesamtausgabe (Complete Works)*, Dornach, 1957; *Mein Lebensgang (The Course of My Life)*, Bibl.-No. 28, *Gesamtausgabe (Complete Works)*, Dornach, 1962; "Robert Hamerling, ein Dichter und ein Denker und ein Mensch" ("Robert Hamerling, the Poet, the Thinker and the Man"), Dornach, 1939.
- . Bartholomäus Ritter von Carneri, 1821-1909. Cf. Rudolf Steiner, "Carneri, der Ethiker des Darwinismus" in *Methodische Grundlagen der Anthroposophie 1884-1901* ("Carneri, the Moral Philosopher of Darwinism" in *Methodological Foundations of Anthroposophy*, 1884-

1901), Bibl.-No. 30, *Gesamtausgabe (Complete Works)*, Dornach, 1961: also "Vom Menschenrätsel" ("On the Riddle of Man") and *Mein Lebensgang* (The Course of My Life).

- . Anton Bruckner, 1824-1896.
  
- . Wincenty Lutoslawski, "Rudolf Steiners sogenannte 'Geheimwissenschaft'" in *Hochland*, 8.Jg., 1.Heft Oktober 1910, S.45-58. ("Rudolf Steiner's so-called 'Occult Science'" in *Hochland*, VIII, 1, October 1910, p.45-58). Professor Karl Muth, editor of the journal, writes an editorial comment in No. 7 of the same year, in which he describes Lutoslawski as an "author who is eminent as a man and as a thinker." Later, in *Krisgshefte der Suddeutschen Monatshefte*, Munich, February 1915, p.623-631, Muth refers to his correspondence with Lutoslawski and writes, among other things: "in addition to making several small contributions to *Hochland*, Lutoslawski also published in this journal three lead articles which aroused considerable attention among the readers: one article on the theosophy of Rudolf Steiner, another one on exercises to strengthen the will, and the third one on his conversion to the Catholic faith. His published notes contain peculiar biographical clues . . . Where in Germany - except in an inane asylum - would there be a human being like this lector of philosophy from the University Geneva - a man who seems to be completely disoriented as he confronts the magnitude of our contemporary world-historical situation with complete blindness and a paucity of ideas! The relief which his overwrought brain received through his epistolary outpouring did not satisfy him; he now insists that his latest letter should come to the attention of the public as well."

Christ in Relation to Lucifer and Ahriman

Lecture by Rudolf SteinerLinz, May 18, 1915GA 159

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## **Lucifer and Ahriman**

From *The Imagination of Pentecost* by Richard Leviton

Lucifer's "profound tragedy" is the agony of being caught in Time, of seeing cosmically unbounded Mahat working in an organic, manasic mortal body, of experiencing the constriction of cosmic intelligence by the pressure of materiality. Lucifer's cosmic enthusiasm for cognitive independence, for individualized intelligence, for word-building imaginations, cannot countenance the limitations of materialization that is the human experience of the Fourth Sphere called Earth. Why can't they be like me? Lucifer asks, swooping archangelically over the fields of human life like an exultant lark. (Pages 234)

Steiner's assertion that Lucifer, one of the primordial spiritual beings of the universe, actually incarnated as a human being ("an earthly incarnation of Lucifer in a man of flesh and blood") is one of his odder conceptions, especially if taken literally. (Pages 234-235)

It was as if Lucifer, regent of human manas and hierophant of the Mysteries, momentarily took human biological form as a living fount of inspiration for the primeval, "pagan" wisdom culture. In that capacity he brought the ancient Rishis, the original teachers of a young humanity, the world of "intellectualistic thought," the domain of high reason and pictorial conceptions, and the ideal of a cosmic and unconditioned activity of Intelligence and Will." Intellectually, Lucifer taught the Rishis how to fly. Lucifer, Steiner reminds us is a proud spirit who prefers to "soar away" on the wings of free-ranging intelligence into the empyrean "where lofty visions open out." And he likes human company.

Through the Luciferic influence, humans build imaginative pictures that surpass physical reality. Lucifer is the archangelic leaven that inspires "the airy viewpoint of a bird" in people, an updraft that lofts them high above actual life circumstances. The liability of this aerial ballet is "an excessive interest in our own concoctions," a conceptual self-absorption that regards with disinterest the affairs of our human fellows. In a deep sense, Lucifer cannot accept the consequences of what happened when humanity, through his efforts, was brought into physical substance. (Pages 234-235)

Lucifer prefers ideas in their purity, as if they never found expression, through densification, on Earth. Of course, this is the same manastic world-building principle at play in the living imaginations or thoughts of the gods, but somehow, when translated to Earth and practiced by humans, it becomes inappropriate to the intended goal of the elaboration of the human Ego in a psycho-physical base, Lucifer clearly wants to pull humans away from the material Earth, Steiner observed. He wants to prevent humans from gaining a complete orientation in the physical plane, because, he feels, if they truly came to feel truly at home on the earth, they might altogether forget the supersensible pleasures of intelligence and sever their lifeline with the Light-Bearer. Page 236.

Lucifer's "continual and terrible war" to tear humans away from their proper residence on Earth is played out unilaterally through ever shell of human consciousness, into the deepest physical aspects of our being. Within the physical organism, Lucifer's sovereign domain is the head, the brain, and skull - the perfected, "noblest" organs of human thinking. In our time, the head is already in a retrogressive evolution and in fact "dying." The human head actually developed long before the rest of the physical organism. Steiner said: what brought the human head out of its antecedent animal form into its present human shape was the Luciferic influence. The Luciferic spirits gained residency in the human head when Michael thrust them out of the supersensible world into the mineralized skull of the Human, and they've been there ever since.

But Lucifer is also with us in every breath we take. He enters the human physiology through the breathing, which is the doorway to the blood and circulatory system. The key to the breathing process is the etheric body. An etheric body that is over exuberant, too widely extended, too intensely inclined towards the starry world, produces "an excessively vigorous breathing process," and this provides the Luciferic forces their opportunity to enter the body. With every breath, Lucifer strives to "dissolve and evaporate" the materialized human, to lure it into the Luciferic "sea of colors and flowing light." Meanwhile, this airy etheric expansion and its corresponding soul feeling of "falsely mystical hopes," disorders the human blood and the "warmth process," the

rightful carrier of the Ego. Anything that disorders the unfoldment of the human Ego de facto obstructs the Christ, whose sphere of influence is the Ego.

The Luciferic inflation, however, is only one hand of the assault on the incarnate human, only one pole of the profound cosmic dialectic waged throughout every aspect of our life here in the Time and Long Dominion. Lucifer's maniac dilation out of matter is exquisitely counterpoised by Ahriman's intellectual compression into matter.

#### Ahriman: The Contraction into Time

Every since the bifurcation of Boundless Time into the polarized bings of Lucifer and Ahriman, Lucifer has sought to fly free from the confines of finite time lived in matter with human intelligence secure in his talons. Meanwhile, Ahriman willingly dove head first into the weightiness, the gravity, of materiality, burying cosmic intellectuality deep in the Earth. Generally, Steiner's view of Ahriman is markedly less bleak than the Zoroastrian picture of Angra Mainyu as apocalyptic evil.

Ahriman, said Steiner, entered human evolution as a legitimate co-creator commissioned by the gods to be the rightful Lord of Death and the intellect. The gods appreciated Ahriman, if warily, as "asage of death," a cosmic being necessary to the progressive unfoldment of human evolution. Ahriman's principal domain is the mineral kingdom, a world that is "utterly dead," but his sovereignty properly encompasses all of external nature. In the human sphere, Ahriman takes every opportunity to encourage humans in the exclusive, material use of their intellect.

Yet Ahriman's legitimate commission empowers him to deliver the passing moment and its valuable sensory contents back to eternity. In other words, Ahriman helps humans considerably in physical world activitiere: in this he is our "cherished companion," helping us gather the sense-world fruits that he wishes to return to the atemporal. Ahriman is an assiduous, compulsive saver: he preserves everything, gleaning all the "precious treasures" from each passing moment to lay upon the altar of eternity.

Ahriman's great strongholds are libraries, filled with the "preservation and avoiding change is so extreme, quipped Steiner, that he would stop the snake from shedding its skin.

While Lucifer strives to capture Time by bringing the eternal into the passing moment. Ahriman in contrast struggles to capture Space from Time. Ahriman's basic problem is self-contraction; he suffers from a kind of ontological claustrophilia. From his own "self-love in acting," Ahriman's world has contracted into a frosty, darkened cavern of one being- his own; in this condition he affirms only himself and denies the rest of the world. For Ahriman, freedom means "the proud feeling of manifesting himself in the action, said Steiner, and that's why he needs more space: space for more matter, for more preservation, for more egoistical self-being. Ahriman needs space in which to materialize the spiritual world, to capture intelligence within materiality, and to hold humans spellbound and "fastened permanently" to the Earth. That's the dangerous, "evil" side of an Ahriman working beyond his lawful domain in human life, an insidious influence that acutely overshadowed the materialistic nineteenth century beginning in the 1840's. So the Druj was alive and well in the century of materialism, said Steiner, Even in the supposedly psychic 1990's we cannot unequivocally declare ourselves exempt from the Ahrimanic deception. In fact, our time may present a perfect opportunity for Ahriman to work his craft at seducing human intellect away from Michaelic spirituality.

Ahriman appropriates the human intellect by encouraging us to form material, physical, sense-bound concepts to describe the supersensible world. Ahriman exerts a subtle corruption to the Luciferic pictorial, imaginative faculty; we start off building a concept of supersensible wisdom as being like a library, then without catching the exact moment, fine we've slipped into a very concrete reification of librarians, desks, books, filing cabinets, due dates, and author indexes. We have unwittingly materialized - made it literal, turned it to stone - a supersensible reality. Ahriman tempts the intellect, struggling to form coherent concepts, to picture the subtle worlds according to physical laws and material activities. Through this conceptual gravity Ahriman anchors the human ever more deeply in the sensory world but in such a way that occult the presence

of the spiritual. "In every illusion that matter is the sole reality, we must perceive the whispered prompting of Ahriman, Steiner warns us. (Pages 238-240)

Ahriman is loathe for us to apprehend spiritually the supersensible world, to really approach it with subtle, pictorial, living imaginations, because these would free us from sense-bound gravity which is his proper domain and base of action. The more we materialize our intellect and permeate our thinking only with the concerns of physical existence, the more remote become the supersensible worlds, and the more potently present looms Ahriman, who claims his sovereignty on Earth. Ahriman succeeds when humans gain acquaintance of the physical world in a non-spiritual way: that is, when humanity settles for a false gnosis, for acquaintance with the Lie, as the Zoroastrians would say.

Ahriman fosters the illusion that elemental matter is a reality in itself, that physical-sensory life is the consummation of existence. It is not hard to see how Ahriman's materialism effectively bars all outlook on the spiritual world for many people; an objective survey of the parameters of modern scientific theory and research demonstrates this readily. The arbiters of contemporary scientific and medical thinking almost unilaterally refuse to see through the material world to its true, spiritual foundations. Matter and the body have no causal relation to spirit and mind, They tell us endlessly. It's not just the external world that Ahriman materializes. He permeates human consciousness, too, with the conviction that the human is nothing more than a "completely developed animal," fighting for survival among the fittest, as Darwin, the nineteenth century's protege of Ahrimanic thinking, so concretely expressed. That the human might be the living image of the Godhead is anathema to Ahriman and irritating to the physical scientists. Where Lucifer wants to pull the human soul out of the restrictive physical shell into the illusion of celestial freedom, Ahriman would discard the soul-spiritual core altogether, exalting instead the material sheath and everything that comes to expression through the body, like instincts and impulses, even the subhuman elements. By this, Ahriman aims to make human nature "more and more earthy." (Page 241)



...Ahriman was permitted to exercise his maximum influence on human life before incarnation, employing the forces of heredity, but he could not interfere with humans after death, on their outward arch into the cosmos, Lucifer was allowed to wield his influence on humans after they had passed through the gates of death but not on the inward arch from the cosmos to Earth; Lucifer could employ the forces of climate, education, and modes of behavior as legitimate spheres of influence. These appointments defined their lawful jurisdiction.

A proposition of this scale is inevitably ambivalent. Ahriman buries manas in matter, while Lucifer exalts manas in the ether. Ahriman permeates intellectuality with gravity, while Lucifer imbues imagination with levity. What transforms Lucifer and Ahriman from positive irritants to injurious opponents is why operate outside their rightful domain.

## **The Balance in the World and Man, Lucifer and Ahriman**

Rudolf Steiner (3 lectures: Dornach, Nov. 1914; GA 158)

### Lecture I

THE idea of other worlds lying beneath or behind the physical world is very familiar to us, and as an introduction to what I propose to put before you, I want to speak today of certain characteristics of these worlds. By widening and extending the knowledge we already possess, still other aspects of this subject will become clear to us.

As you know, the world bordering upon that known to our ordinary consciousness is the so-called world of Imagination. The world of Imagination is far more inwardly mobile and flexible than our physical world with its clear-cut lines of demarcation and its sharply defined objects. When the veil formed by the physical world is broken through, we enter an ethereal, fluidic world, and when we experience this first spiritual world, the feeling arises that we are outside the physical body. In this spiritual world we are at once conscious of a new and different relationship to the physical body; it is a relationship such as we otherwise feel to our eyes or ears. The physical body in its totality works as if it were a kind of organ of perception; but we very soon realize that, properly speaking, it is not the physical but the *ether-body* that is the real organ of perception, The physical body merely provides a kind of scaffolding around the ether-body. We begin, gradually, to live consciously in the ether-body, to feel it as a sense-organ which perceives a world of weaving, moving pictures and sounds. And then we are aware of being related to the ether-body within the physical body just as in ordinary life we are related to our ears or eyes.

This feeling of being outside the physical body is an experience similar in some respects to that of sleep. As beings of spirit-and-soul we are outside the physical and etheric bodies during sleep, but our consciousness is dimmed during the experience, and we know nothing of what is really happening to us and around us.

You will see from this that there can be a relationship to the physical body quite different from that to which we are accustomed in ordinary life. This is a fact to which attention

must be called by Spiritual Science and it is an experience which will become more and more common in human beings as evolution leads on into the future.

I have said repeatedly that the cultivation of Spiritual Science today is not the outcome of any arbitrary desire, but is a necessity of evolution at the present time. This feeling of separation from the physical body is an experience that will arise in human beings more and more frequently in the future, without being understood. A time will come when a great many people will find themselves asking: "Why is it that I feel as if my being were divided, as if a second being were standing by my side?" This feeling will arise as naturally as hunger or thirst or other such experiences and it must be understood by men of the present and future. It will become intelligible when, through Spiritual Science, people begin to understand what this experience of division within them really signifies.

In the domain of Education, particularly, attention will have to be paid to it; indeed we shall all have to learn to pay more heed than hitherto to certain experiences which will become increasingly common in children as time goes on. It is true that in later life, when the whole impression made by the physical world is very strong, these feelings and experiences will not be particularly noticeable in the near future, but as time goes on they will become more and more intense. They will occur, to begin with, in children, and grown-up people will hear from children many things which in the ordinary way are pooh-poohed but which will have to be understood because they are connected with deep secrets of evolution.

We shall hear children saying: "I have seen a being who said this or that to me, who told me what to do." - The materialist, of course, will tell such a child that this is all nonsense, that no such being exists. But students of Spiritual Science will have to understand the significance of the phenomenon. If a child says: "I saw someone who came to me, he went away again but he keeps on coming and I cannot get rid of him" - then anyone who understands Spiritual Science will realize that a phenomenon which will appear in greater and greater definition as time goes on, is here revealing itself in the life of the child. What does this really signify?

We shall understand it if we think of two fundamental and typical experiences, the first of

which was particularly significant in the Greco-Latin age, while the other is significant in our own time, when it is beginning, gradually, to take shape. Whereas the first experience reached a kind of culmination in the Greco-Latin epoch, we are slowly moving towards the second.

Experiences deriving from the influences of *Lucifer* and *Ahriman* are all the time playing into human life. In this basic experience of man during the Fourth Post-Atlantean or Greco-Roman epoch, Lucifer's influence was the greater; in our own epoch, Ahriman is the predominant influence. Lucifer is connected with all those experiences which, lacking the definition imparted by the senses, remain undifferentiated and obscure.

Lucifer is connected with the experience of breathing, of the in-breathing and the out-breathing. The relationship between a man's breathing and the functioning of his organism as a whole must be absolutely regular and normal. The moment the breathing process is in any way disturbed, instead of remaining the unconscious operation to which no attention need be paid, it becomes a *conscious* process, of which we are more or less dreamily aware. And when, to put it briefly, the breathing process becomes too forceful, when it makes greater claims on the organism than the organism can meet, then it is possible for Lucifer (not he himself but the hosts belonging to him) to enter with the breath into the organism.

I am speaking here of a familiar experience of dream-life. It may arise in many forms and with growing intensity. A nightmare in which the disturbed breathing process makes a man conscious in dream, so that experiences of the spiritual world intermingle with the dream and give rise to the anxiety and fear which often accompany a nightmare - all such experiences have their origin in the *Luciferic* element. When, instead of the regular breathing, there is a feeling of being choked or strangled, this is connected with the possibility that Lucifer may be mingling with the breathing.

This is the cruder form of the process, where, as the result of a diminution of consciousness, Lucifer intermingles with the breathing and, in the dream, takes the form of a strangler. That is the crude form of the experience. But there is an experience more delicate and more intangible than that of being physically strangled. It does not, as a rule,

occur to people that a certain familiar experience is really a less crude form of that of strangulation. Yet whenever anything becomes a problem in the soul or gives rise to doubt concerning one thing or another in the world, this is a subtler form of the experience of being strangled. It can truly be said that when we feel obliged to *question*, when a riddle, either great or trifling, confronts us, then something seems to be strangling us, but in such a way that we do not heed it. Nevertheless, every doubt, every problem is a subtle form of nightmare.

And so experiences which often take a crude form, become much more subtle and intangible when they arise in the life of soul itself. It is to be presumed that science will be led some day to study how the breathing process is connected with the urge to question, or with the feeling of being assailed by doubt; but whether this happens or not, everything that is associated with questioning and doubt, with feelings of dissatisfaction caused when something in the world demands an answer and we are thrown back entirely upon our own resources - all this is connected with the Luciferic powers.

In the light of Spiritual Science it can be said that whenever we feel a sensation of strangulation in a nightmare, or whenever some doubt or question inwardly oppresses or makes us uneasy, the breathing process becomes stronger, more forceful. There is something in the breathing which must be harmonized, toned down and modified if human nature is to function in the right and normal way.

What happens when the breathing process becomes excessively vigorous and forceful? The ether-body expands, becomes too diffuse; and as this takes effect in the physical body, it tends to break up the physical body. An over-exuberant, too widely extended ether-body gives rise to an excessively vigorous breathing process and this provides the Luciferic forces with opportunity to work.

The Luciferic forces, then, can make their way into the human being when the ether-body has expanded beyond the normal. One can also say that the Luciferic forces tend to express themselves in an ether-body that has expanded beyond the limits of the human form, that is to say, in an ether-body requiring more space than is provided within the boundaries of the human skin.

Of attempts made to find an appropriate form in which to portray this process, the following may be said. - In its normal state, the ether-body moulds and shapes the physical form of man. But as soon as the ether-body expands, as soon as it tries to create for itself greater space and an arena transcending the boundaries of the human skin, it tends to produce other forms. The human form cannot here be retained; the ether-body strives to grow out of and beyond the human form. In olden days men found the solution for this problem. When an extended ether-body - which is not suited to the nature of *man* but to the Luciferic nature - makes itself felt and takes shape before the eye of soul, what kind of form emerges? The *Sphinx*!

Here we have a clue to the nature of the Sphinx. The Sphinx is really the being who has us by the throat, who strangles us. When the ether-body expands as a result of the force of the breathing, a Luciferic being appears in the soul. In such an ether-body there is then not the *human*, but the *Luciferic* form, the form of the Sphinx. The Sphinx is the being who brings doubts, who torments the soul with questions.

And so there is a definite connection between the Sphinx and the breathing process. But we also know that the breathing process is connected in a very special way with the blood. Therefore the Luciferic forces also operate in the blood, permeating and surging through it. By way of the breathing, the Luciferic forces can everywhere make their way into the blood of the human being and when excessive energy is promoted in the blood, the Luciferic nature - the Sphinx - becomes very strong.

Because man is open to the Cosmos in his breathing, he is confronted by the Sphinx. It was paramountly during the Greco-Latin epoch of civilization that, in their breathing, men felt themselves confronting the Sphinx in the Cosmos. The legend of *Oedipus* describes how the human being faces the Sphinx, how the Sphinx torments him with questions. The picture of the human being and the Sphinx, or of the human being and the Luciferic powers in the Cosmos, gives expression to a deeply-rooted experience of men as they were during the Fourth Post-Atlantean epoch, and indicates that when, in however small a degree, a man breaks through the boundaries of his normal life on the physical plane, he comes into contact with the Sphinx-nature. At this moment Lucifer approaches him and he must cope with Lucifer, with the Sphinx.

The basic tendency of our Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch is different. The trend of evolution has been such that the ether-body has contracted and is far less prone to diffusion or expansion. The ether-body, instead of being too large, is too small, and this will become more marked as evolution proceeds. If it can be said that in the man of ancient Greece, the ether-body was too large, it can be said that in the man of modern times the ether-body is compressed and contracted, has become too small. The more human beings are led by materialism to disdain the Spiritual, the more will the ether-body contract and wither. But because the organization and functions of the physical body depend upon the ether-body - inasmuch as the ether-body must permeate the physical in the right way - the physical body too will always tend to dry up, to wither, if the contraction of the ether-body is excessive; and if the physical body became too dry, men would have feet of horn instead of the feet of a normal human being. As a matter of fact, man will not actually find himself with feet of horn, but the tendency is there within him, owing to this proclivity of the ether-body to weaken and dry up. Now into this dried-up ether-body, *Ahriman* can insinuate himself, just as Lucifer can creep into an extended, diffuse ether-body. Ahriman will assume the form which indicates a lack of power in the ether-body. It unfolds insufficient etheric force for properly developed feet and will produce hornlike feet, goat's feet.

*Mephistopheles* is Ahriman. There is good reason, as I have just indicated, for portraying him with the feet of a goat. Myths and legends are full of meaning: Mephistopheles is very often depicted with horses' hoofs; his feet have dried up and become hoofs. If [Goethe](http://wn.elib.com/Bio/Goethe.html) <<http://wn.elib.com/Bio/Goethe.html>> had completely understood the nature of Mephistopheles he would not have made him appear in the guise of a modern cavalier, for by his very nature Mephistopheles-Ahriman lacks the etheric forces necessary to permeate and give shape to the normal physical form of a human being.

Yet another characteristic of Mephistopheles-Ahriman is due to this contraction of the ether-body and its consequent lack of etheric force. The best way to understand this will be to consider the nature of man as a whole. Even physically, the human being is, in a certain respect, a duality. For think of it. - You stand there as a physical human being. But the in-breathed air is inside you, is part of you as a physical being. This air, however,

is sent out again by the very next exhalation, so that the "man of air-and-breath" pervading you, changes all the time. You are not merely a man of flesh, bone and muscle, but you are also a "breath man." This "breath man," however, is constantly changing, passing out and in. And this "breath man" is connected with the circulating blood.

Within you, separate as it were from this "breath man." is the other pole: the "nerve man" with the circulating nerve-fluid. The contact between the "nerve man" and the blood is a purely external one. Just as those etheric forces which tend towards the Luciferic nature can only find easy access to the blood by way of the breath, so the etheric forces which tend towards the Mephistophelean or Ahrimanic nature can only approach the nervous system - *not* the blood.

Ahriman is deprived of the possibility of penetrating into the blood because he cannot come near the warmth of the blood. If he wants to establish a connection with a human being, he will therefore crave for a drop of blood, because access to the blood is so difficult for him. An abyss lies between Mephistopheles and the blood. When he draws near to man as a living being, when he wants to make a connection with man, he realizes that the essentially *human power* lives in the blood. He must therefore endeavor to get hold of the blood.

That Faust's pact with Mephistopheles is signed with blood is a proof of the wisdom contained in the legend. Faust must bind himself to Mephistopheles by way of the blood, because Mephistopheles has no direct access to the blood and craves for it. Just as the Greek confronted the Sphinx whose field of operation is the breathing system, so the man of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch confronts Mephistopheles who operates in the nerve-process, who is cold and scornful because he is bloodless, because he lacks the warmth that belongs to the blood. He is the scoffer, the cold, scornful companion of man.

Just as it was the task of Oedipus to get the better of the Sphinx, so it is the task of man in the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch to get the better of Mephistopheles. Mephistopheles stands there like a second being, confronting him. The Greek was confronted by the Sphinx as the personification of the forces which entered into him together with excessive vigor of the breathing process. The human being of the modern age is confronted by the fruits of



intellect and cold reason, rooted as they are in the nerve-process. Poetic imagination has glimpsed, prophetically, a picture of the human being standing over against the Mephistophelean powers; but the experience will become more and more general, and the phenomenon which, as I have said, will appear in childhood, will be precisely this experience of the Mephistophelean powers.

Whereas the child in Greece was tormented by a flood of questions, the suffering awaiting the human being of our modern time is rather that of being in the grip of preconceptions and prejudices, of having as an incubus at his side a second "body" consisting of all these preconceived judgments and opinions. What is it that is leading to this state of things?

Let us be quite candid about the trend of evolution. During the course of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch, so many problems have lost all inner, vital warmth. The countless questions which confront us when we study Spiritual Science with any depth, simply do not exist for the modern man with his materialistic outlook. The riddle of the Sphinx means nothing to him, whereas the man of ancient Greece was vitally aware of it. A different form of experience will come to the man of modern times. In his own opinion he knows everything so well; he observes the material world, uses his intellect to establish the interconnections between its phenomena and believes that all its riddles are solved in this way, never realizing that he is simply groping in a phantasmagoria. But this way of working coarsens and dries up his ether-body, with the ultimate result that the Mephistophelean powers, like a second nature, will attach themselves to him now and in times to come.

The Mephistophelean nature is strengthened by all the prejudices and limitations of materialism, and a future can already be perceived when everyone will be born with a second being by his side, a being who whispers to him of the foolishness of those who speak of the reality of the spiritual world. Man will, of course, disavow the riddle of Mephistopheles, just as he disavows that of the Sphinx; nevertheless he will chain a second being to his heels. Accompanied by this second being, he will feel the urge to think materialistic thoughts, to think, not through his own being, but through the second being who is his companion.

In an ether-body that has been parched by materialism, Mephistopheles will be able to dwell. Understanding what this implies, we shall realize that it is our duty to educate children in the future - be it by way of Eurythmy or the development of a spiritual-scientific outlook - in such a way that they will be competent to understand the spiritual world. The ether-body must be quickened in order that the human being may be able to take his rightful stand, fully cognizant of the nature of the being who stands at his side. If he does not understand the nature of this second being, he will be spellbound by him, fettered to him. Just as the Greek was obliged to get the better of the Sphinx, so will modern man have to outdo Mephistopheles - with his faunlike, satyrlike form, and his goat's or horse's feet.

Every age, after all, has known how to express its essential characteristic in legend and saga. The Oedipus legends in Greece and the Mephistopheles legends in the modern age are examples, but their basic meanings must be understood.

You see, truths that are otherwise presented merely in the form of poetry - for instance, the relations between Faust and Mephistopheles - can become guiding principles for education as it should be in the future. The prelude to these happenings is that a people or a poet have premonitions of the existence of the being who accompanies man; but finally, every single human being will have this companion who must not remain unintelligible to him and who will operate most powerfully of all during childhood. If adults whose task it is to educate children today do not know how to deal rightly with what comes to expression in the child, human nature itself will be impaired owing to a lack of understanding of the wiles of Mephistopheles.

It is very remarkable that indications of these trends are everywhere to be found in legends and fairy-tales. In their very composition, legends and fairy-tales which seem so unintelligible to modern scholars, point either to the Mephistophelean, the Ahrimanic, or to the Sphinx, the Luciferic. The secret of all legends and fairy-tales is that their content was originally actual *experience*, arising either from man's relation to the Sphinx or from his relation to Mephistopheles.

In legends and fairy-tales we find, sometimes more and sometimes less deeply hidden,

either the motif of the riddle, the motif of the Sphinx, where something has to be solved, some question answered; or else the motif of bewitchment, of being under a spell. This is the Ahriman motif. When Ahriman is beside us, we are perpetually in danger of falling victim to him, of giving ourselves over to him to such an extent that we cannot get free. In face of the *Sphinx*, the human being is aware of something that penetrates into him and as it were tears him to pieces. In face of the Mephistophelean influence he feels that he must yield to it, bind himself to it, succumb to it.

The Greeks had nothing like theology in our modern sense, but were very much closer to the wisdom of Nature and the manifestations of Nature. They approached the wisdom of Nature without theology, and questions and riddles pressed in upon them.

Now the breathing process is much more intimately connected with Nature than is the nerve-process. That is why the Greek had such a living feeling of being led on to wisdom by the Sphinx. It is quite different in the modern age when theology has come upon the scene. Man no longer believes that direct intercourse with Nature brings him near to the Divine Wisdom of the world, but he sets out to *study*, to approach it via the nerve-process, not via the breathing and the blood. The search for wisdom has become a nerve-process; modern theology is a nerve-process. But this means that wisdom is shackled to the nerve-process; man draws near to Mephistopheles, and owing to this imprisonment of wisdom in the nerve-process, the premonition arose at the dawn of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch that Mephistopheles is shackled to the human being, stands at his side.

If the Faust legend is stripped of all the extraneous elements that have been woven around it, there remains the picture of a young theologian striving for wisdom; doubts torment him and because he signs a pledge with the Devil - with Mephistopheles - he is drawn into the Devil's field of operations. But just as it was the task of the Greek, through the development of conscious Egohood, to conquer the Sphinx, so we, in our age, must get the better of Mephistopheles by enriching the Ego with the wisdom that can be born only from knowledge and investigation of the spiritual world, from Spiritual Science.

Oedipus was the mightiest conqueror of the Sphinx; but every Greek who wrestled for manhood was also, at a lower level, victorious over the Sphinx. Oedipus is merely a

personification, in a very typical form, of what every Greek was destined to experience. Oedipus must prove himself master of the forces contained in the processes of the breathing and the blood. He personifies the nerve-process with its impoverished ether-forces, in contrast to those human beings who are altogether under the sway of the breathing and blood processes. Oedipus takes into his own nature those forces which are connected with the nerve-process, that is to say, the Mephistophelean forces; but he takes them into himself in the right and healthy way, so that they do not become a second being by his side, but are actually *within* him, enabling him to confront and master the Sphinx.

This indicates to us that in their rightfully allotted place, Lucifer and Ahriman work beneficially; in their wrongful place - there they are injurious. The task incumbent upon the Greek was to get the better of the Sphinx-nature, to cast it out of himself. When he was able to thrust it into the abyss, when, in other words, he was able to bring the extended ether-body down into the physical body, then he had overcome the Sphinx. The abyss is not outside us; the abyss is man's own physical body, into which the Sphinx must be drawn in the legitimate and healthy way. But the opposite pole - the nerve-process - which works, not from without but from *within* the Ego, must here be strengthened. Thus is the Ahrimanic power taken into the human being and put in its right place.

Oedipus is the son of Laios. Laios had been warned against having a child because It was said that this would bring misfortune to his whole race. He therefore cast out the boy who was born to him. He pierced his feet, and the child was therefore called "Oedipus," i.e., "club foot." That is the reason why, in the drama, Oedipus has deformed feet.

I have said already that when etheric forces are impoverished, the feet cannot develop normally, but will wither. In the case of Oedipus this condition was induced artificially. The legend tells us that he was found and reared by shepherds after an attempt had been made to get rid of him. He goes through life with clubbed feet. Oedipus is Mephistopheles - but in this case Mephistopheles is working in his rightful place, in connection with the task devolving upon the Fourth Post-Atlantean epoch.

The harmony between ether-body and physical body so wonderfully expressed in the creations of Greek Art, everything that constituted the typical greatness of the Greek - of

all this, Oedipus is deprived in order that he may become a *personality* in the real sense. The Ego that has now passed into the head becomes strong, and the feet wither.

The man of the *Fifth* Post-Atlantean epoch has quite a different task. In order to confront and conquer the Sphinx, Oedipus was obliged to receive Ahriman into himself. The man of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch, who confronts Ahriman-Mephistopheles, must take Lucifer into himself. The process is the reverse of that enacted by Oedipus. Everything that the Ego accumulates in the head must be pressed down into the rest of man's nature. The Ego, living in the nerve-process, has accumulated "Philosophy, Law, Medicine, and, alas, Theology too" - all nerve-processes. And now there is the urge to get rid of it all from the *head* - just as Oedipus deprived the *feet* of their normal forces - and to penetrate through the veils of material existence.

And now think of Faust standing there with all that the Ego has accumulated; think of how he wants to throw it all out of his *head*, just as Oedipus deprives his *feet* of their normal forces. Faust says: "I have studied, alas! Philosophy, Jurisprudence and Medicine too, and saddest of all, Theology" . . . he wants to rid his head of it all. And moreover he does so, by surrendering himself to a life that is not bound up with the head. Faust is Oedipus reversed, i.e., the human being who takes the Lucifer-nature into himself.

And now think of all that Faust does, so that having Lucifer within him, he may battle with Ahriman, with Mephistopheles who stands beside him. All this shows us that Faust, in reality, is Oedipus reversed. The Ahriman-nature in Oedipus has to get the better of Lucifer; the Lucifer-nature in Faust has to help him to overcome Ahriman-Mephistopheles. Ahriman-Mephistopheles operates more in the external world, Lucifer more in the inner life. All the misfortunes that befall Oedipus because he must take the Ahriman-nature into himself, are connected with the external world. Doom falls upon his race, not merely upon himself. Even the doom that falls upon him is of an external character; he pierces his eyes and blinds himself; similarly, the pestilence which sweeps his native city - this, too, is an external doom. Faust's experiences, however, are of the soul - they are *inner* tragedies. Again in this respect, Faust reveals himself as the antithesis of Oedipus.

In these two figures, both of them dual - Oedipus and Sphinx, Faust and Mephistopheles - we have typical pictures of the evolution of the Fourth and Fifth Post-Atlantean epochs.

When history, in time to come, is presented less as a narration of external happenings and more as a description of what human beings actually experience, then and only then will the significance of these fundamental experiences be fully understood. For then man will perceive what is really at work in the onflowing evolutionary process, of which ordinary science knows only the external phantasmagoria.

In order that the Ego should be strengthened, it was necessary for Ahriman-Mephistopheles to enter into Oedipus - the typical representative of the Greeks. In the man of the modern age, the Ego has become too strong and he must break free. But this he can only do by deepening his knowledge of spiritual happenings, of the world to which the Ego truly belongs. The Ego must know that it is a citizen of the spiritual world, not merely the inhabitant of a human body. This is the demand of the age in which we ourselves are living. The man of the Fourth Post-Atlantean epoch was called upon to strive with might and main for consciousness in the physical body; the man of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch must strive to become conscious in the spiritual world, so to expand his consciousness that it reaches into the spiritual world.

Spiritual Science is thus a fundamental factor in the evolution of the Fifth Post-Atlantean epoch.

## The Balance in the World and Man, Lucifer and Ahriman

### Lecture II

IN the lecture on the Kalevala (see Note 1), I made a statement which you will probably not have found easy to understand. You will remember, I spoke of a "being" that stretches across Europe from west to east; and I spoke of it as having three limbs that reach out in an easterly direction. I said that for the ancient Finnish folk these three limbs were known as Wainamoinen, Ilmarinen, and Lemminkainen, and that they were what we today, in our more materialistic language, call the gulfs of Riga, Finland and Bothnia. You will probably have wondered how I could say that these gulfs had anything to do with a being, when they are obviously nothing else than extensions of the surface of the sea. There is no body; how then can it be possible to speak of a being?

I can well imagine that this difficulty might arise in your minds, and it is typical. For again and again you will find that truths which come from the spiritual world lay themselves open to the charge of being contradictory. The very fact that they do so is significant and is quite as it should be; and the only way to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the contradiction is in every case to make a still deeper study of the matter in question. And this I want to do today in respect of certain problems in spiritual knowledge. But first let me preface what I have to say with a few introductory words.

We will glance, to begin with, at some of the prejudices concerning the nature of man that are prevalent in the materialistic thought of our time. Let us take one example. Various physical processes are to be found in man, among others processes of the brain and nervous system; and it is common knowledge that when these processes take place, processes take place also in the soul. The conclusion is drawn that the processes in the soul are no more than the *expression* of the physical processes. The materialist studies what goes on in the body of the human being, finds there - or rather pre-supposes hypothetically - delicate nerve-processes, and says: The thinking, feeling and willing processes are in reality only accompanying phenomena of what is going on all the time as physical processes. This view is quite commonly held today and it will undoubtedly strike deeper and deeper root into the materialistic thinking of the near future. From the

point of view of logic it is about as clever as the following would be. - Suppose someone walking along a road discovers tracks on it - here, parallel ruts, and here again, marks like the soles of human feet. He thinks this over and says to himself: "The material of which the road is made has undergone certain changes and influences, with the result that it has in some places become packed together so as to form ruts, whilst at other places it has been sucked downwards and we see on the surface what looks like the impress of a human foot."

Such a conclusion is of course a crudely mistaken one, the truth being that a wagon has passed and made the two ruts with the wheels, and a man has also been walking on the road and made the other impressions with his feet. Not the nature of the soil, but the man and the wagon are responsible for the tracks.

The case is no different with the processes that go on in our nervous system! Whenever we think or feel or will, we are setting up processes that are of the nature of soul-and-spirit. And so long as we live in the physical world, these processes are united with the physical body, they leave their tracks in it - just as the wagon and the man leave their tracks behind in the road. But these tracks in the body have no more to do with the material of which the body is made than have the tracks in the road to do with the materials of which the road is constructed. In reality, the processes that take place in the matter of the brain and in the matter of the nerves have nothing whatever to do with the actual thought-processes. The relation between them is no nearer than the relation between what the man and the wagon are doing and what is going on in the surface of the earth over which they are moving. It is really quite important to take a little trouble to consider the matter in this light. For it reveals to one that the anatomist or physiologist who investigates merely the physical processes in the organism is like a spirit-being who moves about under the earth without ever coming up to the surface, and who has never even seen men or wagons. All he can do is to observe from below that unevennesses occur in the surface of the earth; he never comes close up to them, and he sees them always from the other side. Investigating them in this limited way, he imagines the earth itself has given rise to them by its own activity. The moment such a spirit were to come out on to the surface, he would become acquainted with the true state of affairs. This is



exactly how it is with the anatomist and physiologist who work from the materialistic point of view. They are always under the earth - for to know nothing of Spiritual Science is to be "under the earth!" What they investigate is the material processes, and these have nothing to do with what is happening above in the realm of soul-and-spirit. It will be man's task in the near future to free himself from this anatomical and physiological thinking and work through to a spiritual-scientific thinking. Then he will feel as an underground imp might feel who was suddenly lifted up above the earth and saw for the first time how the tracks he had observed from below had really come about. Imps burrowing under the earth - that is what the scientists are, who take account only of the spiritual that is under the earth - for even the material is spiritual! And mankind will have to experience the great shock that must inevitably come when these underground imps come out into the open - into the realm, that is, of the soul-and-spirit.

These introductory words were necessary in order to prepare you for the subject of today's lecture, which I think you will find helps to solve the contradiction of which we were speaking - that the gulfs of Bothnia, Finland and Riga are obviously mere surfaces, and yet I spoke as though they were a being, or rather limbs of a mighty being stretching from west to east.

We are accustomed to speak of ourselves as beings of space, and we are right; as human beings we are spatial beings. When, however, we come to consider what we are in reality, that is quite another matter. The fact is, man is in reality something altogether different from what we imagine him to be when we look at him only in the outer Maya, in the phantasmagoria of external appearance. There he appears of course as a being of space, spatially enclosed within his skin. But directly we try to carry our thought a little deeper, we are confronted with three great problems or riddles in respect of the human form.

The first of these riddles conceals itself under all manner of puzzling and mystifying illusions. For the external Maya of appearance deceives us again and again in regard to our own existence; and you can find traces of this deception in the science of the present day, particularly at certain points where science is quite at a loss and has been forced to construct all manner of hypotheses. Hypotheses have for example been constantly brought forward to account for the fact that man has two eyes and two ears and yet does

not see or hear double. How is it that these organs are symmetrically disposed? How is it that they are present not singly but in pairs? This simple fact offers science a hard nut to crack, and you have only to glance through the literature on the subject to find what a very great deal has been written on this question of why we see with *two eyes* and hear with *two ears*.

Man is really coarsely organized; we can sometimes find evidence of this in the very way we speak. For in reality we have also two noses! Only they have grown together and are not so obvious as the two eyes and two ears. Hence we do not speak of two noses, but of one nose; crudely organized as we are, we never discover that we have two! It is nevertheless the case that in all human perception a symmetry comes to expression, a right-and-left symmetry. Had he not two ears, two eyes, and two noses, man would not attain to the perception of his own I or Ego.

Correspondingly, man needs also for the Ego experience *two hands*. When we clasp the hands together and feel the one with the other, we immediately get something of an Ego experience. And it is really a similar process, when we unite into one whole the perceptions of two eyes or two ears. Every time we make a sense perception, we perceive the world from two sides, from left and from right. And to the fact that we have these two directions of perception left and right, and bring them together - to this fact we owe our Ego-nature as human beings. Otherwise we would not be I- or Ego-men at all. If, for example, our eyes were situated near our ears and we had no possibility of combining the lines of vision, we would always remain beings who are involved in a Group Soul. To be an Ego-being we must make the right and the left meet. Throughout the whole realm of human perception there is always this crossing of right and left in the middle. Look at this vertical line on the blackboard. Imagine that a plane projects out here from the blackboard along this line. Everything comes, from left and right, up to this line of incision. We, my dear friends, are ourselves actually in this plane. We are not in space, we are only in this surface, this plane. We are not beings extended in space, we are *surface beings*, that come about through the crossing of the impulse from the left with the impulse from the right. And if to the question: Where are you? you want to find an answer, not in accordance with Maya, but in accordance with reality, then you must not

point to the space where your body is standing and say: "I am here," but you will have to say: "I am in the place where my left man and my right man meet." In reality you are there, and only there. Just as we had surfaces in the case of the being of whom I spoke before, surfaces where air and water meet, so in man we have the left half and the right half. In that being the two halves were different, in man they are alike; but man is also a surface being, man is a plane. It is Maya that we see him as having form and figure.

Whence then has man this form and figure? He has it because he stands in the midst of a battle. A being from the left is fighting in man with a being from the right. If we were able to be entirely within our left half we would have a powerful perception of the one being, and if we were in our right half we would have a correspondingly powerful perception of the other being. Our existence as a double being arises from the fact that the Luciferic being is fighting in us from the left and the Ahrimanic being from the right.

Let us try to make a picture of it in our minds. From the left the Luciferic being fights his way through and throws up, as it were, his fortifications, and from the right Ahriman fights his way through and throws up his fortifications. And all that you can do is to stand in the middle between the two. The left part of you - your left man, as it were - is the fortification set up by Lucifer, and your right man is the fortification set up by Ahriman. And the whole art of life consists in finding the true balance between them. We do it unconsciously whenever we perceive with the senses. When we hear with the left ear and with the right ear, and then unite into a single perception the impulses that reach us in this way, or when we feel with the left hand and with the right hand and unite the two perceptions, we are placing ourselves into the surface that lies on the boundary of the conflict between Lucifer and Ahriman. As narrow as - no, narrower than - the blade of a knife is the space that is left to us in the middle, where we have to play our part. Our organism does not really belong to us; we are a battlefield for the Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers - and for other powers too, of like nature with them, but into that subject we cannot enter now.

We men are thus in reality surface beings wedged between two entities that are no concern of ours! Our left man does not concern us, neither does our right man: what concerns us is the process that goes on between the two.

And now we can develop a little further the comparison I made use of before. For, as we all recognize, there are processes perpetually going on under the earth; but it is not these that make the tracks in the road. Similarly, what happens in you in the right and left half of your organism, all the processes that take place between Lucifer and Ahriman, have nothing whatever to do with the experience you have in your soul. What goes on down below the surface of the earth - the worms creeping about, the changes in temperature in accordance with the seasons of the year, and so forth - all this has no connection with the tracks that have come in the road, and it is these tracks that are comparable with what takes place in the organism of man. Our researches in physiology and anatomy reveal to us the fight that is being waged within us between Lucifer and Ahriman, but they do not compel us to give ourselves up to the superstition that the life of the soul owes its origin to these processes going on between Lucifer and Ahriman. That is a complete mistake; the life of the soul takes its course within the soul itself - that is to say, in the surface, in the plane, not in the spatial organism at all.

Now the working of Lucifer and Ahriman is not the same in all parts of the human organism, and it is interesting to observe its gradation. Beginning from the head, we find that there Lucifer and Ahriman have thrown up fairly equal fortifications; the left and right halves of the head are very similar. This means that the forces of left and right have in the head not much possibility of interplay and the surface between them is left comparatively undisturbed. There in the middle is the surface, with Lucifer on the left and Ahriman on the right; and because the left and right halves of the head are so similar in form, Lucifer and Ahriman spring back from one another, and in between them man is able to develop a quiet surface activity. Thinking, pure thought as such, is very little disturbed by Lucifer and Ahriman; because in the head they recoil from one another.

When, however, we follow the form of man further down, we find a change. On one side Lucifer works powerfully and builds up the stomach, on the other side Ahriman does the same and builds up the liver. The stomach is the means with which Lucifer fights from left to right; and no true understanding can come about of the relation between stomach and liver, until we see how Lucifer has built up the stomach as a kind of weapon of defence, and Ahriman the liver. These two - stomach and liver - are perpetually waging

war one against the other, and physiology would do well to study the conflict. And if the heart of man tends to lean a little over towards the left, then that is an expression of the fact that Lucifer from one side and Ahriman from the other are trying each to grasp something for himself, The whole left and right relationship is an expression of the fight that is being waged in man between Lucifer and Ahriman. We said that in the case of man, what lies on either side of the middle surface is, generally speaking, alike. We have, however, already seen that this is true only for the upper part of man; as we follow the form of man downwards, the similarity gradually disappears. In the case of the being of whom I spoke before, with the three outstretched limbs - Lemminkäinen, Ilmarinen and Wainämöinen - the one half is air and the other water; the two halves are totally different in kind. And even in man, when we attain to clairvoyant knowledge it becomes clear to us that there are two distinct halves. For no sooner have we suggested away the physical body and turned our attention to the etheric body, than we find that the left half grows brighter and clearer than the right half. The left half is all shining and gleaming with radiant light, and the right half is wrapped in darkness and gloom. Yes, that is actually how it is with the left-right human being.

There are, however, other directions in accordance with which man takes up his position in the world of space. Expressed in the language of occultism, this means nothing else than that he is placed in still other ways into the midst of the fight between Lucifer and Ahriman. Let us go on, then, to consider how man stands in space with a forward and backward orientation, looking before and behind. Instead of observing him as a being of left and right, we will now direct our thoughts to the front and back of the human form. From this aspect also we find that man is not the being of space he appears to be. For as from left and from right Lucifer and Ahriman do battle with one another across man, and what shows in space is really only the barricades they put up one against the other, so also from behind Ahriman is fighting and from in front Lucifer. From behind Ahriman thrusts forward his activity, and from in front Lucifer thrusts forward his activity in opposition. Man stands in the middle between them. In connection, however, with the forward and backward direction in man we discover that Lucifer and Ahriman do not succeed in coming so close to one another as to leave nothing but a surface between them. We find here a somewhat different state of affairs. Ahriman comes only as far as

the plane which can be drawn through the spinal column, and Lucifer as far as the plane which can be drawn through the breast bone, where the ribs end and meet. In between these two planes lies a space which separates Lucifer and Ahriman one from the other, where the effects of their working are thrown together in confusion. There they stand and fight - not at close quarters, but as though shooting at one another across the intervening space. And there stand we in the midst of the fight. Thus, in respect of the direction before and behind, man is a being that has space.

In the left-right direction the fight between Lucifer and Ahriman is waged principally in the sphere of thought. Thoughts are whirled across from left and from right and meet in the surface in the middle. Cosmic thoughts and cosmic forms of thought impinge upon one another here on the human surface in the middle. In the direction before and behind, Lucifer and Ahriman do battle more in the realm of feeling. And since here the opposing forces do not approach one another so nearly, in the space that is left between them we ourselves have room to be together with our own feelings. When we have thoughts that offer opposition to one another from left and from right, then we have the feeling that these thoughts belong to the world. With our thoughts we think the objects that are in the world outside. When we make our own thoughts, then these thoughts are a mere phantasmagoria; they do not any longer belong to the world. In our feelings, on the other hand, we belong to ourselves; for there Lucifer and Ahriman do not quite meet, there we have room to be active in between them. This is the reason why in our feelings we are so essentially within ourselves.

We human beings are creatures of the beings of the higher hierarchies, and they have created us in accordance with the manner of their working. We are beings of surface between left and right because the higher beings have made us so and placed us so into space. It is they, the Gods, who do not suffer Lucifer and Ahriman to come together in man. We are in this sense creatures of the good Gods. The good Gods, working out of their creative thoughts and purposes, took as it were this resolve. "A conflict is going on," they said, "between Ahriman and Lucifer. We must set up a wall and enclose a region which they will not be able to enter, where they will not be able to carry on their strife at close quarters." We human beings have thus been placed into the struggle between

Lucifer and Ahriman as creatures of the good Gods; and the better we stand our ground in the struggle, the more truly are we creatures of the good Gods.

In respect of the before and behind, there the good Gods do not allow Lucifer to enter right into us; they created a barricade in the place where the ribs meet in the breast bone. And the wonderfully constructed tower that encloses the spine and the brain is a fortification the good Gods have erected against Ahriman. Ahriman cannot pass this line; all he can do is to send his arrows of feeling across to Lucifer. There in the space between stand we ourselves, separating the two from each other.

There is still a third direction in man, the direction from above downwards. Here again we have to make the discovery that the true state of affairs is not as it seems in external appearance. For from below upwards works Ahriman, and from above downwards Lucifer. Again we find that the good Gods have thrown up a barrier against Lucifer; at a certain plane in man his influence is held in check. You will find the plane by taking the skeleton and removing from it the skull. There where the skull rested on the cervical vertebrae, imagine a horizontal surface. This invisible horizontal surface is the barrier, where man can take his stand and hold up the Luciferic influence that comes from above. Lucifer can come no further, he can only shoot his arrows thence down into man. And his arrows are now arrows of will. From left to right fly arrows of thought, from front to back arrows of feeling and from above downwards as well as from below upwards, arrows of will.

Here, too, we have left to us an intermediate field of action. For about in a line with the diaphragm, you have the surface that acts as a barricade against the upward pressure of Ahriman. Ahriman can reach only as far as the diaphragm with his missiles of will, he can come no further with his will, with his essential being; and in between the two planes lies our own field of action.

You see how complicated the human being is! Take any one portion of the human figure - for example, the left Side of the face. As a being of thought, Lucifer can fill entirely this left side of the human countenance; as a being of feeling he can also penetrate it up to a point; and as a being of will he can enter right into and through it from above. And you

can go on to discover for every part of the body how Lucifer and Ahriman work in the human being of space by means of cosmic impulses of thought and feeling and will, remembering always that as beings of thought we are actually only surface beings, whilst as men of feeling we have a space between the before and the behind where we can unfold an activity of our own, and again as men of will we have a field of activity between the above and the below, between the surface we imagined drawn through the top of the cervical vertebrae and the surface of the diaphragm. You see, you have first to abstract all those parts that do not belong to man at all, before you can build up a true idea of the human form. Then, and only then, are you in a position to do this.

The truth is, the whole form of man has been put together by forces working from without. It receives its distinctive character from outside itself, and we do not understand the form of man so long as we consider it merely as it appears at first sight; we only understand it when we know how it is connected with the whole cosmos of space, when we are able to see how from right and left, from above and below, from before and behind, Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces are bearing in upon man, and giving him the character of a being of space.

And now, my dear friends, this is also the way in which you must approach something else that has been shaped and formed in accordance with the true cosmic working in the world. I mean our building here in Dornach. If you look at the Goetheanum (see Note 2) merely in its outward appearance, you might be disposed to think that the actual building itself, the space occupied by the wood, was the most important part. That is, however, by no means the case. The most important part is what, judging by appearances, does not exist! Take any one of the forms; the essential part of that form is not the shaped and sculptured wood, but is where there is nothing - where the air bounds the wood. The way to obtain the true and real Goetheanum would be to take an immense mound of wax and make a model of the inside of the building, and then study this model or impression. What you go into when you enter the building, what you stand within and cannot see but can only feel - that is the thing that matters. I said once on a former occasion that our building is built on the principle of a "Gugelhopf" (see Note 3) cake mould. Imagine you have a tin mould and you bake your cake in it. Which is the more important - the mould



or the cake? Obviously the cake. What matters is that the cake should receive the proper "Gugelhopf" shape. As far as the mould is concerned, all that matters is that the mixture, when it is poured into the mould and baked, should turn into a cake of the desired form.

Similarly, in our building it is not the surrounding walls that are of importance, it is what is enclosed within the surrounding walls. And within the walls will be the feelings and thoughts of the people who are in the building. These will develop aright if those who are in the building turn their eyes to its boundary, feel the forms and then fill these forms with forms of thought. What is inside the building will be like the cake, and what we build is the mould that holds and shapes the cake. And the mould has to be of such a kind that it leads to the development of right thoughts and right feelings. This is the principle underlying the new art in contradistinction to the art of olden times. In the art of olden times the essential thing was what is outside in space; but in the new art something else is of account. What is outside is no more than the mould, and the essential thing cannot really be created by the artist at all, it is what is within.

Nor is this true only of plastic forms. It is equally true of painting. The important thing is, not what is painted, but the experience in feeling to which the painting gives rise. Painting too is no more than a cake mould!

The truth is, my dear friends, we have here touched the very heart and core of the moment in evolution in which we stand. This is the step in evolution that has now to be taken, the step forgive the trivial comparison - from the cake mould to the cake. The cake is in this case the Spiritual; to enter into the world of the Spirit - that is the direction in which all our endeavor must now be set. If we fail to recognize this fact, we shall never be able to appraise correctly what we are trying to do here in art. For if we look at this art from the standpoint of the old, we can very easily exclaim: "But I see nothing beautiful in it!" We mean, I see no beautiful cake mould - never suspecting that the mould is not what matters at all, but the cake that is to be inside it. When we once understand this principle in art, my dear friends, we shall be very near understanding the whole meaning and significance of the step forward in spiritual evolution which is to be made through Spiritual Science. Through Spiritual Science man must learn to work his way out of the "Gugelhopf" mould into the "Gugelhopf" itself. He must, for example, get free of the

superstition that the origin of thought lies in the brain processes, when as a matter of fact in the processes that go on in the brain *cosmic* processes are at work and conflicts are being waged between Lucifer and Ahriman. Man must learn to see that the thoughts and feelings of the human soul are tracks graven into the twistings and turnings of these conflicts and have nothing to do with the material processes - in other words, with the Luciferic and Ahrimanic processes.

Let me draw another comparison. Suppose we were to go into a beautiful garden - beautiful particularly in the whole arrangement and lay-out of the flower beds - and we wanted to pronounce an opinion on this beautiful garden. And suppose we were able to look down a hole in the earth and spied there a little underground imp who said to us: "I will tell you how it is that here are roses and over there are violets, and why you find a bush in one place and flowers in another. For I creep about all the time under the surface, and I can see the earth and the soil which has caused all these flowers - violets, roses and the rest - to spring up." We could answer: "Yes, you describe these processes very nicely; all that you tell me is quite true and must necessarily happen. But for the garden to come into existence as I see it, something else is required - gardeners must have been at work there. They work, however, in a region which you have never seen and about which you have never troubled your head at all."

In like manner, we must learn to say to the anatomist and physiologist: "I find your activity when I look down through a hole in the earth. Down there you are creeping about and discovering processes which certainly have to take place, but which have nothing at all to do with what takes place in the soul and spirit above ground. And you will only be able to interpret correctly what takes place down below, when you study the relationships that hold sway between the Luciferic and Ahrimanic worlds and those other hierarchies who bring Lucifer and Ahriman into balance."

Here we must refer to another fact in human evolution, that has hitherto only had influence in man's conception of the Ego, but that we shall learn to know in a much fuller and wider way through Spiritual Science. A time will come in the future when men will say: "We are told in the Bible of the breath of Jehovah which was breathed into man. But into what part of man was the breath breathed?"

If you recall all that I have said in this lecture, you will be able to see that the region into which the breath was breathed is the intervening region that is in between the onsets from before and behind and from above and below - there, in the middle, where Jehovah created man, as it were in the form of a cube. There it was that he so filled man with His own being, with His own magic breath, that the influence of this magic breath was able to extend into the regions in the rest of man that belong to Lucifer and Ahriman. Here in the midst, bounded above and below and before and behind, is an intervening space where the breath of Jehovah enters directly into the spatial human being.

What I have been giving you in this lecture is spoken in respect of the human being of *physical space*. As you see, even here we can widen our outlook and learn to behold man as he stands within the cosmos. But there are also moral and spiritual aspects of what is apparently external and spatial. And in these aspects too, where the workings of the human *soul* are concerned - if not in so striking a way as in the case of spatial man, yet here too, what meets us at first is found to be no reality, but only a phantasmagoria. In morality, in logic and in all the activity of the soul, Lucifer and Ahriman are working one upon the other, and man stands at the boundary between them. Of this most important and significant chapter in the understanding of the human being we will speak tomorrow.

Note 1: 14th November, 1914. Not yet published in English.

Note 2: The first building, destroyed by fire on New Year's Eve, 1922/23.

Note 3: A shaped cake made in Vienna. Note by Translator.

## The Balance in the World and Man, Lucifer and Ahriman

### Lecture III

FROM the previous lecture you will have been able to see that the very form of man's body is a result of the co-operation of Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers.

It is particularly important in the present age for man to recognize this co-operation between Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers; for only by such recognition can he gradually learn to understand the forces that are at work behind the external phantasmagoria of existence. We know very well that we have no occasion either to *hate* Ahriman or to *fear* Lucifer, since their powers are inimical only when they are working outside the realm where they belong. We spoke on this subject at some length in Munich last year (see Note 1); and we have also given indications in this direction in lectures here in Dornach.

When we saw last time how the physical spatial body of man owes its form to the interaction of Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers, we were dealing with the most external element of human life in which Lucifer and Ahriman play a part. We come a little nearer to the inner nature of man when we pass from the physical to the etheric body. The etheric body may be regarded as the shaper of the physical body. At the foundation of our physical organism - and embedded at the same time in the whole etheric world - lies this etheric organism, in perpetual inner movement. Luciferic and Ahrimanic powers are active here too, as well as in the physical body. Man as etheric being - and it is important to recognize the fact - is also placed into the counterplay of these forces.

In order to give focus to our study of this question, let us now turn our attention to the three fundamental activities of the human being in so far as he is *not physical* human being. I refer to the activities of Willing, Feeling and Thinking.

So long as we regard man in respect of his physical body alone, we do not of course see this willing, feeling and thinking. Only in its physiognomy or in the performance of certain gestures or the like, does the physical body give us any indication of what is in man's inner nature. The etheric body, however, which is in perpetual movement, is continually giving expression to man's thinking, feeling and willing.

A purely external science finds itself in difficulties when it comes to consider these activities of the human soul. If you will study the various philosophies you will find that one gives pre-eminence to the will, another to thought; and there are again others which consider feeling as the most important force in man. But as to how thinking, feeling and willing unite in man to form a whole - to that problem none of the philosophies of modern times can offer a solution. This inability to form a correct idea of the relationship between thinking, feeling and willing in the life of the soul is not unlike the difficulty someone might experience who, in order to relate himself rightly to the world around him, set out to form a clear conception of man as he appears in the external world. We do not know - so say the philosophers - whether the human soul in its essential nature has more the character of willing or feeling or thinking. It is exactly as if someone were to say: "I have no idea what a 'man' really is. One person brings me a five-year-old child and says: There is a man for you! Then another person comes along and points me out a much taller being, who is what is called 'middle-aged.' Finally a third person comes and shows me an entirely different being, with wrinkled countenance and grey hair. And now I am really at a loss to know what the being called 'man' is, for I have been shown three totally different beings with this name." Of course the true answer is that they are all of them "man." The one is very young, the second somewhat older and the third quite old; they are very different in appearance. But by taking all three ages *together* we acquire a knowledge of "man." It is the same with willing, feeling and thinking. The difference there too is one of age. Willing is the same soul-activity as thinking, but willing is still a child. When it grows a little older, it becomes feeling, and when it is quite old it is thinking. The matter is made difficult by the fact that the different ages live together in our soul in these three activities.

We have explained on other occasions (and you may read of it in my book *The Threshold of the Spiritual World*) that when we leave the physical world we come into a world where the law of *change* prevails instead of the law of persistence or fixity. There all is in constant change; what is old can suddenly grow young again and vice versa. Hence in that world the three activities can and actually do appear at one and the same time. Willing shows itself contemporaneously as young willing, as older willing (i.e., feeling) and at the same time also as quite old willing (i.e., thinking). The different ages are in

that world intermingled, everything is mobile. This is how it is with the etheric body of man.

These changes cannot, however, simply come about of themselves. To begin with, a uniform and single action of the soul does not come to consciousness at all in ordinary life, we are quite incapable of bringing such a thing into consciousness. If we think of the etheric body in the likeness of a flowing stream - for it is in the etheric body that we have to make our observations - then we are obliged to say that this stream of soul-activity does not come to consciousness at all in our life; but into this stream, into this perpetual movement of the etheric body that flows in the current of time, Luciferic - and again Ahrimanic - activity enters. Luciferic activity has the result of making the will *young*. When the activity of our soul is streamed through by Luciferic activity the result is will. When the Luciferic influence predominates, when Lucifer makes his forces felt in the soul, then will is active in us. Lucifer has a juvenating influence on the whole stream of our soul-activity.

When, on the other hand, Ahriman brings his influence to bear on our soul-activity, he hardens it, it becomes *old*, and thinking is the result. Thinking, the having and holding of thoughts, is quite impossible in ordinary life unless Ahriman exerts his influence within our etheric body. We cannot get on in our life of soul, in so far as this comes to expression in the etheric body, without Ahriman and Lucifer. If Lucifer were to withdraw entirely from our etheric body, we would have nothing to fire our will. If Ahriman were to withdraw entirely from our etheric body, we would never be able to attain cool thinking. In between stands a region where Lucifer and Ahriman are in conflict. Here they interpenetrate; their activities play into one another. It is the region of feeling. The etheric body has actually this appearance; one can perceive in it Luciferic light and Ahrimanic hardness. If you could look at it, you would not of course see it as we might try to show it in a drawing; you would see it all in movement. But there are places where the etheric body seems to be quite untransparent, as if it had ice tracings in it. Forms and figures show themselves which resemble the patterns made by ice on a window pane. These are hardenings in the etheric body, and they are the result in it of the life of thought. This freezing of the etheric body at certain places is due to Ahriman; his forces

have found entry there by means of thought. There are also places which seem to be full of light. Here the etheric body is transparent and gleams and glows with light. It is Lucifer who sends his rays into the etheric body of man and makes there centers of will. Then there are regions in between, where the etheric body is in perpetual movement and activity. Here you see at one moment hardness - and then suddenly the hardness is caught by a ray of light and melts right away. Hardening and dissolving, in perpetual alternation - such is the expression of the activity of feeling in the etheric body.

Not only, therefore, is the form of the physical body of man called into being by the interplay of Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces - now creating a balance, now disturbing it again - but in the whole etheric body too, Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces are continually active. When the Ahrimanic forces gain the upper hand, we have an expression of thinking; when the Luciferic forces are in ascendance, we have an expression of willing; and when they are in mutual conflict one with the other, we have an expression of feeling. Thus do Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces play into one another in the etheric body of man. We human beings are as it were ourselves the resultant of these forces, we are placed into their midst.

Now we must not imagine that we are present in this interplay with our full Ego. Our earthly Ego, the Ego that we have acquired in the course of earth evolution, can only come to its full consciousness in the physical body. Not until the time of Jupiter will the Ego be able to unfold itself completely within the etheric body. In all that takes place within the etheric body the real Ego of the human being has no immediate part. Had the progress of world evolution gone on without the intervention of Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces, then man would have been an altogether different being. He would, for example, have been able to have perceptions in his physical body, but he would not have been able to have thoughts. The capacity to have thoughts he owes to the fact that Ahriman can acquire influence over his etheric body. And he has impulses of will because Luciferic forces can acquire influence over his etheric body. These forces are therefore necessary for man, they must needs be present.

We have said that with our earthly consciousness we cannot descend fully into the etheric body. Only in the physical body can we experience our full Ego-consciousness. With the

etheric body we enter a world with which we cannot fully identify ourselves. And it is so, that when Ahriman enters into our etheric body, something more enters in with him besides the thoughts he forms there. Nor is it only impulses of will that enter our etheric body with Lucifer. And the same must be said of the feelings, the realm where the two are in conflict. In so far as Ahriman lives in our etheric body we dive down with our etheric body into the sphere of the elementary Nature spirits - the Earth, Water, Air and Fire spirits. We are not cognizant of the fact because we are not able to descend fully into our etheric body with our Ego. Nevertheless it is always so. Within this etheric body not only does there live the power of the thoughts that we ourselves think, but the influences also of the Nature spirits; these enter in and make themselves felt. When a man has met with these Nature spirits he is able afterwards to tell of some experience he has had which he did not have in his ordinary Ego-consciousness. For it is when he, is in an abnormal condition that man meets the Nature spirits, namely, when the etheric body is to some extent loosened from the physical body.

How can such a thing happen? It can happen in the following way. The etheric body of man is in communion with the whole surrounding etheric world, therefore also with the whole sphere of the Nature spirits. Let us imagine, to take a simple case, that a man is walking along a road. When he is walking along a road in the daytime with his ordinary consciousness, his etheric body is properly in his physical body and he perceives with his Ego-consciousness what one is normally able to perceive with the Ego-consciousness. But now suppose that he is walking along a path by night. When we walk along a path by night, it is generally dark, and this fact will of itself produce in many persons a "creepy" feeling. And just because he gets into this condition, then the peculiar sensations that he experiences enable Lucifer to seize hold of him. His etheric body becomes loosened from the physical body, and then this emancipated etheric body can enter into relation with the surrounding etheric world.

Now let us suppose that the man comes into the vicinity of a churchyard where etheric bodies are still present over the graves of recently deceased persons. In the condition in which he is, with his etheric body loosened, he is perhaps able to perceive something of the thoughts which are still remaining in the etheric bodies of the dead persons. Suppose



someone has died only a short time ago leaving debts behind him; he died with the thought that he has incurred debts. Then it can be that this thought is still present in the etheric body of the person after he has died. We do not of course ordinarily perceive the thoughts in the etheric body of a dead human being. But for a man who has come into the condition I have described it might well be possible. He could enter into relation with the etheric body of the other and perceive within it the thought: "I have incurred debts." And then because this experience strengthens the Luciferic power in him, there arises in him the feeling: "I must pay the debt for him." He experiences in this way in his etheric body something he would never experience in the physical body in normal life. Such an experience does not happen to us in ordinary human life, and when it comes it makes an extraordinary impression upon our consciousness. For it arouses the knowledge: "I have had a strange and singular experience. I have not had this experience within the body, nor can I ever have it within the body." We have the feeling quite distinctly that we are *somewhere else* than in our body, and that is a strange, an unaccustomed feeling. We experience at the same time an overpowering desire to return once more into the body, we long for help to return again into the body.

This feeling of longing to return attracts to us certain elementary Nature spirits for whom this very feeling in us is food and nourishment. They come, because they are attracted by the feeling, "I want to be drawn into my physical body," and they help us to find the way back to it. If one is asleep in the ordinary way, one finds the way back quite easily. But when one has undergone an experience such as I have described, it is difficult to find the way back. You must not of course imagine that we see the situation as we perceive things in the physical body; no, we see it imaginatively, in pictures. Someone comes to us - it is really a Nature spirit, appearing perhaps in the guise of a shepherd, and gives us the advice: "Go to a certain castle, I will take you there in my wagon," - or some similar words. The situation may even be still further developed. The body which we have left and outside of which we have had the experience, may assume the appearance of an enchanted castle from which we have to release someone when we return into it. So do we "imagine" in pictures the longing for the physical body and the help that the Nature spirits bring to us. And then we come back into the physical body - that is to say, we wake up.

People who have had such experiences will tell us that they feel they have in actual reality come into contact in this way with the thoughts of a dead man. They say to themselves: "That feeling I had was not something that was merely in myself, it was no mere dream that I dreamed, it was a feeling that communicated to me something that was taking place *in the world outside*. It is of course all expressed in pictures, but it does truly correspond to an event." I will now read to you such a picture, where a man narrates what he has experienced. As you will see, it was an experience somewhat similar to the one of which I have spoken. He describes it as follows. "When I had taken leave of the soldiers I met three men. They wanted to exhume a dead person who owed them three marks. I was filled with compassion and at once absolved the debt, in order that the dead man might rest in peace and not be disturbed in his grave. I walked on a little further. A strange man with pale countenance accosted me, invited me to mount a leaden carriage, and persuaded me to go with him to a castle. In the castle, he said, dwelt a princess, who had declared she would marry only a man who came to her on a carriage of lead. He turned to the driver and said: 'Drive in the direction of the sunrise.' Then came a shepherd who said: 'I am the Count of Ravensburg.' He ordered the driver to drive faster. We came to a door and we could hear a tumult within. The door was opened. The princess asked the man whence he came and how it had been possible for him to drive in company with that old man - and behold, I saw that he who had led me thither was a spirit. Then I entered in at the door and took possession of the castle."

That is to say, he came back into his body. There you have the description of just such an experience as I have been speaking of.

And what is such an event, when it happens to someone who then tells others of it? It is a Märchen (a fairy-tale - see Note 2).

You must not imagine that an experience of this nature is the only way in which man comes into relationship with the external etheric world through his etheric body. There is another. And that is, in an activity which is only *half* conscious, an activity in which the Ego only half participates - namely, the act of *Speech*. Our speaking is not so conscious as our *thinking*. It is not the case that speaking is something which belongs to us and which we have in our power. In speech live etheric Powers, and a good part of our

speaking is unconscious. The Ego does not reach fully down into speech. When we speak we are in communication through our etheric body with the surrounding etheric world. We learn to *think* as individuals, but not to *speak*. We are taught to speak through the fact that our Karma places us into a particular set of circumstances in life. We have already seen how we may come into relation with the Nature spirits in abnormal conditions when the etheric body is loosened, and now we find that inasmuch as we speak and do not merely think silently, we come into relation with the Folk Spirits. The Folk Spirits enter our etheric body and live there - without our being aware of it. This life of the Folk Spirit within the human being really belongs just as little to his fully conscious Ego activity as does the "Märchen" of which I have told you. So much, then, for the activity of Lucifer and Ahriman in man's etheric body.

The Luciferic and Ahrimanic forces enter also into the astral body. When we come to study the astral body of man, we must turn our attention to what is the distinguishing mark of the astral human being as he is on earth - namely, consciousness. In the physical body *form* and *force* are the essentials, in the etheric body, *movement* and *life*: in the astral body, *consciousness*. Now in the body of man we have not only one consciousness, but two; the ordinary waking state and the state of sleep. But, strange to say, neither of these two states is entirely natural to us. Natural would be for us an intermediate state between the two, a state which, as a matter of fact, we never really consciously have.

If we were perpetually awake we would scarcely be able to develop in a proper, orderly manner through the various ages of life. Something is always present in us which is less awake than we are in our day-consciousness, and only by virtue of this are we in a position to evolve and develop. Ask yourselves, how much do you expect to be able to evolve through all that you experience and receive in ordinary life? For the most part, we merely satisfy thereby our desire, our curiosity, or our need of sensation. It is not often we act with deliberate intent to place what we experience in waking day life in the service of our development. The truth is, development takes place through the fact that something is continually sleeping in us, even in the daytime. I am not alluding to the habit of dropping off to sleep in the daytime! But when man is wide awake by day, something still remains fast asleep in him, and this it is which brings it about that he does

not remain for ever a child, but evolves further.

The ordinary waking state is what comes to consciousness through our astral body. In this ordinary waking state we are, however, *too strongly* awake, we are too intensely given up to the external world; we are, in fact, quite lost in it. How does this come about?

The reason is that the waking consciousness lives under the influence of Ahriman. Ahriman has great power over our waking consciousness. It is quite different in the case of the sleep consciousness. In sleep consciousness we are *too little* awake. We are too engrossed in our own evolution; we are so completely and so powerfully within ourselves that all consciousness is obliterated. In sleep consciousness, Lucifer has the upper hand.

This is then how the matter stands with our astral body. When we are awake, Ahriman has the upper hand over Lucifer, and when we are asleep Lucifer has the upper hand over Ahriman. They are in equilibrium only when we dream; there they pull with equal force, they strike a balance between them. The ideas which are called forth by Ahriman in day consciousness and which he causes to harden and crystallize, are dissolved and made to disappear under the influence of Lucifer; everything becomes pictures when Ahriman is no longer busy fixing them in rigid ideas. They melt and become mobile in themselves. A state of equilibrium is induced in a pair of scales by having both scale-pans equally laden; we have, then, not a state of rest but a state of equilibrium. It is the same with the life of man. We have not in man a state of rest, but a state of equilibrium; and the two forces which hold the scales and each of which at certain times brings extra weight to bear, are Lucifer and Ahriman. In waking consciousness Ahriman's side sinks down, in sleep consciousness Lucifer's. Only in the intermediate state, where we dream, are the two scale-pans held in poise, not at rest, but delicately poised in equilibrium.

We can go on to carry our study into still higher regions of human life. Here too we shall find evidence of how Lucifer and Ahriman fill the world with their inter-working. Two ideas play a great part in human life. One is the idea of duty. We might also say, when we consider it from a religious point of view, the idea of commandment or behest. We speak sometimes, do we not, of the "behest of duty." The other idea, which can be placed over against it, is the idea of right (or rights).

If you will reflect a little on the part played in human life by these two ideas of *duty* and of *right* - I mean, the "right" one has to do this or that - you will very soon realize that they are polar opposites, and that men's inclinations are turned now more in the direction of duty, and now again in the direction of right. We live certainly in an age when people are more ready to speak of right than duty. All possible spheres of life claim their rights. We have Workers' Rights, Women's Rights, and so on and so on.

Duty is the opposite idea of right. Our age will be followed by an age when duties will be more regarded than rights, and this will be directly attributable to the influence of the anthroposophical spiritual world-conception. In the future - certainly, in a rather distant future - we shall have movements where less and less emphasis will be laid on the demand for rights and people will inquire more and more as to their duty. The question will rather be: What is our duty as man, as woman, e.g., in this or that situation of life? The present epoch that demands rights will be succeeded by an epoch that asks after duties.

We said that right and duty play into life like two polar opposites. Whenever a man turns his thought and attention to duty, he looks right away from himself. Kant has given great and grand expression to this fact. He pictures duty as a lofty goddess, to whom man looks up: "Duty, thou great and exalted Name, thou has nought to do with fondness nor with favor; all that thou requirest is to submit thyself and serve." Man beholds duty, so to say, raying down upon him from regions of the spiritual world. In a religious sense, he feels duty as an impulse laid upon him by the Beings of the higher Hierarchies. And when man surrenders himself to duty, he goes right out of himself. It is in this going-out-of-himself in the feeling of duty, that man can begin to learn how to get beyond his ordinary self.

There is, however, a danger to man in all such going-out-of his ordinary self, in all such endeavor after spiritualization. If man were to give himself up entirely to this, he would lose the ground from under his feet, he would lose his feeling of gravity. Therefore he must endeavor, when he surrenders himself to duty, to find within himself at the same time something that shall give him weight, so that he may keep his sense of gravity. Schiller expressed it very beautifully when he said that man has the best relation to duty when he learns to love duty.

This is really saying a great deal. When a man speaks of learning to love duty he no longer merely surrenders himself to duty; he rises out of himself, taking with him the love with which otherwise he loves himself. The love that lives in his body, in his egoism - this love he takes out of himself, and loves with it duty. So long as it is self-love, so long is it a Luciferic force. But when man takes this self-love out of himself and loves duty in the way that otherwise he loves only himself, he releases Lucifer. He takes Lucifer into the realm of duty and gives him, so to say, a justified existence in the impulse and feeling of duty.

If, on the other hand, a man cannot do this, if he cannot draw forth the love out of himself and offer it to duty, then he will continue to love only himself; and since he cannot love duty, he is obliged to subject himself to her, he becomes a *slave* to duty, he becomes, as we say, a man who "does his duty," - hard and cold and uninspired. He hardens in an Ahrimanic sense, notwithstanding that he follows duty devotedly.

You see how duty stands, as it were, in a midway position. If we surrender ourselves to her, she annuls our freedom, we become her slaves, because Ahriman draws near on the one hand with his impulses. But if we bring ourselves - if we bring all our power of self-love - as an offering and offer it up to duty, bringing thus to duty the Luciferic warmth of love, then the result is that, through the state of balance induced in this way between Lucifer and Ahriman, we find a right relation to duty.

Thus we are truly, in a certain connection, redeemers of Lucifer. When we begin to be able to love our duty, then the moment has come when we can help towards the redemption and release of the Luciferic powers; we set free the Lucifer forces which are held in us as by a charm, and lead them forth to fight with Ahriman. We release the imprisoned Lucifer (imprisoned in self-love) when we learn to love our duty.

Schiller sets himself this very question in his "Aesthetic Letters": How is it possible to rise above slavery to duty and attain to love of duty? Of course he does not use the expressions "Lucifer" and "Ahriman," because he does not see the problem in its cosmic aspect. Nevertheless these wonderful letters of Schiller on the *Aesthetic Education of Man* are directly translatable into Spiritual Science.

Right, on the other hand, immediately shows that it is united with Lucifer. Man does not need to learn to love his right, he loves it already! It is perfectly natural that he should do so. It is natural for Lucifer to be connected with right in man's feeling - man *feels* that this or that is his right. Everywhere that right asserts itself, Lucifer is speaking there too. It is very often only too evident how Lucifer makes his voice heard in the demand of some right. Here it is a question of calling in something that can be set over against right. We have to call in Ahriman to create a polarity to Lucifer. And this we can do by cultivating the polar opposite of love.

Love is inner fire, its opposite is calmness - the quiet acceptance of what happens in the world. As soon as we approach our right with this quiet and calm interest we call in Ahriman. It is not easy to recognize him here, for we set him free from his merely external existence, we summon him into ourselves and warm him with the love that is already united with right. Calm and peace of mind have the coldness of Ahriman; in the quiet understanding of what is in the world, we unite our warmth and our understanding love with the coldness that is in the world outside. And then we release Ahriman, when we meet what has come about with understanding, when we do not merely demand our rights out of self-love but understand what has come about in the world. This is the eternal battle that is waged between Lucifer and Ahriman. On the one hand man learns in a conservative way to understand the conditions that are in the world, he learns to understand how they have come about from cosmic, karmic necessity. That is one aspect of the matter. The other aspect is that he feels in his heart the urge to make new conditions possible, continually to let the old give place to the new. This is the revolutionary current in human life. In the revolutionary stream lives Lucifer, in the conservative stream Ahriman, and man in his life of right lives in the midst between these two poles.

Thus we see how right and duty show each of them a state of equilibrium between Lucifer and Ahriman. We only learn to understand how the physical body, the etheric body and the astral body manifest in life, or how duty and right come to expression in the life of duty and the life of right, when we learn to recognize the interplay of great spiritual Powers, above all of those spiritual Powers who bring about the state of

equilibrium.

For just as what is in the external world stands under the influence of the spiritual forces that bring about balance, so does our moral life too belong in a world of polar opposites. The whole morale of human conduct, the whole ethical life of man with its poles of right and duty, only become comprehensible when we take into account the instreaming forces of Lucifer and Ahriman. And when we look at the life of man in history, that takes its course in an alternation between, on the one hand, revolutionary and warlike - that is to say, Luciferic - movements, and on the other hand, conservative - that is, Ahrimanic - movements, there too we find a condition of balance between Lucifer and Ahriman. In no other way is the world to be understood than by recognizing in it these opposite forces and influences.

What we behold in the world outside is dualistic, it shows itself to us in opposites. And in this connection Manichaeism, correctly understood, has its complete justification. How Manichaeism is fully justified even within a spiritual monism - of that we shall have more to say in the future. The object I have had in view in these lectures is to show you how the whole world is a result of the working of balance.

Particularly evident is the result of the working of balance in the life of art. With this as our starting-point we will go on in later lectures to consider the arts and their evolution in the world, and the part that has been taken by different spiritual Powers in the evolution of the life of art among mankind.

**Note 1:** See *The Secrets of the Threshold*, by Rudolf Steiner.

**Note 2:** See *Goethe's Standard of the Soul*, by Rudolf Steiner.



**The Deed of Christ and the Opposing Spiritual Powers**  
**Lucifer, Ahriman, Asuras.**

Berlin, 22nd March, 1909

GA0107

TO-DAY WE SHALL concern ourselves with the question: What does modern man really possess in spiritual science? The answer to this question will be based on many things that have come to our knowledge in the course of lectures, especially those given last winter. Spiritual science may appear, at first, to be one conception of the world among the many others now existing. It may be argued: The riddles of existence are there; people endeavor with every possible means at their disposal, religious or scientific, to answer these riddles of existence in an effort to satisfy, as it is said, their eagerness and desire for knowledge. Spiritual science may well be considered just another philosophy of life - whether calling itself materialism, monism, animism, idealism, realism, or what you will. It may be represented as something that endeavors to satisfy the desire for knowledge on a par with other modern world-conceptions. But this is not correct. In what man acquires through spiritual science he has something of positive, continuous value in life, something that not only satisfies his thinking, his thirst for knowledge, but is a real and potent factor in life itself. To understand this we must look far afield and consider the evolutionary course of mankind from a particular point of view.

We have often looked back to the times preceding the great Atlantean flood, to the times when our forefathers, that is to say our own souls in the bodies of those forefathers, lived on the ancient continent of Atlantis between Europe, Africa and America. We have also looked still further back, to the Lemurian epoch, when the souls of men incarnated at the present time were at a much lower stage of existence. We shall now speak again of this epoch, reminding ourselves, to begin with, of the following: Man has attained the present stage of his life of feeling, his life of will, his intelligence, my even his form, because higher spiritual Beings in the cosmos have also been at work in earth-existence. We have spoken of these Beings as the "Thrones", the "Spirits of Wisdom", the "Spirits of

Movement", the "Spirits of Form", the "Spirits of Personality", and so forth.

They are the great builders and architects of existence who have led the human race onward step by step to its present stage. But we must bring dearly before our minds to-day that Spirits and Beings other than those who help human evolution forward have also intervened; there are spiritual Beings who oppose the progressive Powers. And for every epoch - Lemurian, Atlantean, Post-Atlantean - it is possible to indicate which particular spiritual Beings bring the "hindrances", which spiritual Beings are the opponents of those whose only aim is the progress of humanity.

In the Lemurian epoch - the first that concerns us to-day - it was the *Luciferic Beings* who intervened in man's evolution, in opposition to the Powers who at that time were striving to help him forward. In the Atlantean epoch, the Spirits opposing the progressive Powers were the Spirits of "Ahriman" or "Mephistopheles". The Ahrimanic or Mephistophelean Spirits - to give the precise names - are those known in medieval times as the Spirits of "Satan" - who must not be confused with "Lucifer".

In our own epoch, as time goes on, other spiritual Beings of whom we shall speak later, will stand as hindrances in the path of the progressive Spirits. We will ask ourselves now: What did the Luciferic Spirits actually achieve in the ancient Lemurian epoch?

These things will be considered to-day from a particular point of view. Of what domain did the Luciferic Spirits lay hold during the Lemurian epoch? The best way to understand this is to cast our minds back over the course taken by human evolution.

You know that on Old Saturn the Thrones poured out their own substance to lay the first foundation of the human physical body. On Old Sun the Spirits of Wisdom imbued man with the ether- or life-body. And on the Earth the Spirits of Form endowed him with the 'I', the ego, in order that by realizing himself as distinct from his environment he might become an independent being. But even if through the deed of the Spirits of Form he had become independent *vis-a-vis* the external world surrounding him on earth, he would never have become independent of the Spirits of Form themselves; he would have remained dependent on them, he would have been directed by them as on leading-strings. That this did not happen was due to something which had, in a certain sense, a beneficial

effect, namely the fact that in the Lemurian epoch the Luciferic Beings set themselves in opposition to the Spirits of Form. It was these Luciferic Beings who gave man the prospect of freedom - but therewith the possibility of evil-doing, of succumbing to passion and desire in the world of sense. Where did these Luciferic Beings actually take hold? They took hold of what had been instilled into man as his innermost member at that time - the astral body. They established their footing in the human astral body and took possession of it. Had it not been for the coming of the Luciferic Beings this astral body would have remained in the sole possession of the Spirits of Form. They would have instilled into this astral body the forces which give man his human countenance, making him into an image of the Gods, namely, of the Spirits of Form. All this man would have come to be; but in his life through all eternity he would have remained dependent upon the Spirits of Form.

The Luciferic Beings had crept, as it were, into man's astral body, so that Beings of two kinds were now working in it: the Beings who bring man forward and the Beings who, while obstructing this constant impulse, had at the same time established the foundations of his independence. Had the luciferic Beings not approached, man would have remained in a state of innocence and purity in his astral body. No passions inciting him to crave for what is to be found only on earth would have arisen in him. The passions, urges and desires of man were densified, debased, as it were, by the Luciferic Beings. Had they not approached, man would have retained a perpetual longing for his heavenly home, for the realms of spirit whence he has descended. He would have taken no delight in what surrounds him on the earth; earthly impressions would have aroused no interest in him. It was through the Luciferic Spirits that he came to have this interest, to crave for the impressions of the earth. These Spirits impelled him into the earthly sphere by pervading his innermost member, his astral body. Why, then, was it that man did not fall away entirely at that time from the Spirits of Form or from the higher spiritual realms as a whole? Why was it that in his interests and desires he did not succumb wholly to the world of sense?

It was because the Spirits who lead humanity forward took counter measures; they inculcated into the being of man what would otherwise not have been his lot, namely,

illness, suffering and pain. That was the necessary counterweight to the deeds of the Luciferic Spirits.

The Luciferic Spirits gave man material desires; as their countermeasures the higher Beings introduced illness and suffering as the consequences of material desires and interests, to the end that he should not utterly succumb to this world of sense. And so there is exactly as much suffering and pain in the world as there is interest only in the physical and the material. The scales are held in perfect balance; the one does not outweigh the other - so many passions and desires on the one side, so much illness and pain on the other. This was the effect of the mutual activities of the Luciferic Spirits and the Spirits of Form in the Lemurian epoch. Had the Luciferic Spirits not approached, man would not have descended into the earthly realm as soon as he actually did. His passion and craving for the world of sense also brought it about that his eyes were opened and he was able to gaze at the surrounding field of material existence earlier than would otherwise have been the case. If evolution had proceeded uninterrupted along the course intended by the progressive Spirits, man would have had sight of the surrounding world only from the middle of the Atlantean epoch onwards. But then he would have seen it *spiritually*, not as he sees it to-day; he would have seen it as the direct expression of spiritual beings. Because man came prematurely into the earthly sphere, forced downwards by his earthly interests and desires, conditions were different from what they would otherwise have been in the middle of the Atlantean epoch.

The result was that the Ahrimanic Spirits - "Mephistophelean Spirits" as it is equally correct to call them - mingled in what man was able to see and apprehend; thus he fell into error, into what, for the first time, can correctly be called "conscious sin". The host of Ahrimanic Spirits has worked upon man since the middle of the Atlantean epoch onwards. To what did these Ahrimanic Spirits entice him? They enticed him into regarding everything in his environment as material, with the result that he does not see *through* this material world to its true, spiritual foundations. Were man to have perceived the Spiritual in every stone, in every plant, in every animal, he would never have fallen into error and therewith into evil; if the progressive Spirits alone had worked upon him he would have been protected from those illusions to which he must always fall a prey when

he bases himself solely upon the manifestations of the world of sense.

How did those spiritual Beings who desire to further man's progress act in order to combat this corruption, error and illusion arising from the material world? They saw to it - the process was of course slow and very gradual - that man was actually lifted away from the material world as such; this enabled him to shoulder and work out his *karma*. Whereas, therefore, the Beings upon whom it fell to rectify the enticement of the Luciferic Beings brought into the world suffering, pain and what is connected with them, namely death, the Beings whose task it was to rectify the outcome of error concerning the sense-world, made it possible for man, through his karma, eventually to blot out all the error, all the evil he has wrought in the world. For what would have happened if he had become the prey of evil and error? Little by little he would have become one with the evil; no progress would have been possible for him. For with every error, every lie, every illusion, we cast an obstacle in the way of progress. We should fall back in our progress to exactly the same extent to which we had cast obstacles in our path through sin and error, if we were not in a position to rectify them; in other words, we could not reach man's true goal. It would be impossible to attain this goal if the counter-forces, the forces of karma, were not in operation.

Suppose that in some life you commit a wrong. If this wrong were to become firmly fixed in your life it would mean nothing less than that you would lose the step forward which you would have taken had you not committed the wrong; with every wrong, a step would be lost - enough steps to correspond exactly with the wrongs committed. If the possibility of surmounting error had not been given, man must ultimately have been submerged by it. But the blessing of karma was bestowed. What does this blessing mean for man? Is karma something at which to shudder, something to dread? No, indeed! Karma is a power for which man should be thankful. For karma says to us: If you have committed a wrong, remember that "God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap". An error demands that you shall right it; then, having expunged it from your karma you can again take a step forward!

Without karma, no progress would be possible. Karma is a blessing that has been vouchsafed to us, inasmuch as it obliges us to rectify every error, to re-achieve the steps

that thrust us back.

Karma was thus the indirect consequence of the deeds of Ahriman. And now let us go further. In our days we are moving towards the epoch when other Beings will draw near to man - Beings who in the future before us will intrude more and more deeply into human evolution. Just as the Luciferic Spirits intervened in the Lemurian and the Ahrimanic Spirits in the Atlantean epoch, so our epoch too will see the intrusion of Beings. Let us be clear about the nature of these Beings.

Of the Beings who intervened during the Lemurian epoch we must say: They entrenched themselves in the astral body of man, drew his interests, impulses and desires down into the earthly sphere. Where - to speak more precisely - did these Luciferic Beings entrench themselves?

You can only understand this by taking as a basis what is set forth in my book *Theosophy*. There it is shown that the following members of man's being must be distinguished: first, his physical body; then his ether or life-body and his astral body - or as I have called it in that book, the sentient body, or soul-body.

These are the three members with which man was endowed *before* his earthly existence. The foundation of the physical body was laid on Old Saturn, the ether-body on the Old Sun, the soul or sentient body on the Old Moon. On the Earth was added the sentient soul - which is actually a transformation, an elaboration carried out unconsciously, of the sentient body. Lucifer anchored himself in the sentient soul; and there he remains. Through the unconscious transformation of the ether-body, the intellectual soul came into being, a more detailed description of which is contained in the book entitled *The Education of the Child*. It was in this second soul-member, the intellectual soul - the transformed part of the ether-body - that Ahriman established his footing. From there he lures man to false conceptions and judgments of material things, leads him to error, to sin, to lying - to everything that originates in the intellectual or mind soul. In every illusion that matter is the sole reality, we must perceive the whispered promptings of Ahriman, of Mephistopheles. Thirdly, there is the consciousness soul (spiritual soul), arising from an unconscious transformation of the physical body. You will remember

how this transformation came about. Towards the end of the Atlantean epoch, the etheric body corresponding to the head came right into the physical head and gradually brought about selfconsciousness in the physical body. Fundamentally speaking, man is still working at this unconscious transformation of the physical body, at the development of the consciousness soul. *And in the age now, approaching, those spiritual Beings known as the Asuras* (see Note 1) will creep into the consciousness soul and therewith into the human 'I' or ego - for the 'I' lights up in the consciousness soul. The Asuras will generate evil with a far mightier force than was wielded by the Satanic powers in the Atlantean epoch or by the Luciferic Spirits in the Lemurian epoch.

In the course of the Earth-period man will cast away all the evil brought to him by the Luciferic Spirits together with the blessing of freedom. The evil brought by the Ahrimanic Spirits can be shed in the course of karma. But the evil brought by the Asuric powers cannot be expunged in this way. Whereas the good Spirits instituted pain and suffering, illness and death in order that despite the possibility of evil, man's evolution may still advance, whereas the good Spirits made possible the working of karma to the end that the Ahrimanic powers might be resisted and the evil made good, it will not be so easy to counter the Asuric powers as earth-existence takes its course. For these Asuric Spirits will prompt what has been seized hold of by them, namely the very core of man's being, the consciousness soul together with the 'I', to unite with earthly materiality. Fragment after fragment will be torn out of the 'I', and in the same measure in which the Asuric Spirits establish themselves in the consciousness soul, man must leave parts of his existence behind on the earth. What thus becomes the prey of the Asuric powers will be irretrievably lost. Not that the whole man need become their victim - but parts of his spirit will be torn away by the Asuric powers. These Asuric powers are heralded to-day by the prevailing tendency to live wholly in the material world and to be oblivious of the reality of spiritual beings and spiritual worlds. True, the Asuric powers corrupt man to-day in a way that is more theoretical than actual. To-day they deceive him by various means into thinking that his 'I' is a product of the physical world only; they hue him to a kind of theoretic materialism. But as time goes on - and the premonitory signs of this are the dissolute, sensuous passions that are becoming increasingly prevalent on earth - they will blind man's vision of the spiritual Beings and spiritual Powers. Man will know

nothing nor desire to know anything of a spiritual world. More and more he will not only teach that the highest moral ideals of humanity are merely sublimations of animal impulses, that human thinking is but a transformation of a faculty also possessed by the animals, that man is akin to the animal in respect of his form and moreover in his whole being descends from the animal - but he will take this view in all earnestness and order his life in accordance with it.

Man does not as yet entirely base his life on the principle that his true being descends from the animal. But this view of existence will inevitably arise, with the result that men will also live like animals, will sink into animal impulses, animal passions. And in many things that need not be further characterized here, many things that in the great cities come to expression in orgies of dissolute sensuality, we can already perceive the lurid, hellish glare of the Spirits we call the Asuras.

Once again let us look back. We have said that suffering and pain, nay even death, were brought by the Spirits who are intent upon man's progress. The words of the Bible are unambiguous: "In travail shalt thou bear thy children!" Death has come into the world. Death was decreed for man by the Powers opposing the Luciferic Spirits. From whom came the gift of karma itself, who made karma possible for man? - To understand what is here being said you must discard all earthly, pedantic notions of time. Earthly notions of time give rise to the belief that what has once happened here or there will have an effect only upon what comes afterwards. But in the spiritual world it is the case that what comes to pass reveals itself in its effect, *beforehand*; in its effect it is already there, in advance. Whence comes the blessing of karma? Whence has there arisen in our earth-evolution this blessing of karma? From a Power none other than *Christ*.

Although Christ appeared only later, He was always present in the spiritual sphere of the earth. Already in the ancient Oracles of Atlantis, the priests of those Oracles spoke of the "Spirit of the Sun", of Christ. In the old Indian epoch of civilization the Holy Rishis spoke of "Vishva Karman"; Zarathustra in ancient Persia spoke of "Ahura Mazdao", Hermes of "Osiris"; and Moses spoke of the Power which, being eternal, brings about the harmonization of the temporal and natural, the Power living in the "Ehjah asher Ehjah" (I am the I AM) as the harbinger of Christ. All spoke of the Christ; but where was He to be



found in those ancient times? In the realm to which the eye of spirit alone can penetrate, in the spiritual world. In the spiritual world He was always to be found, working in and from the spiritual world. It is He Who even before man appeared on earth, sent down the possibility of karma. Then He came Himself to the earth, and we know what this has meant for man. We have described what was wrought by Him in the earthly sphere, we have spoken of the significance of the Event of Golgotha and of its effect also upon those who at that time were in the spiritual world, not incarnate in earthly bodies. We know that at the moment on Golgotha when the Blood flowed from the wounds, the Christ-Spirit appeared in the underworld, flooding the whole world of spirit with radiance and light; we have said that the appearance of Christ on the earth is the event of supreme importance also for the world through which man passes between death and a new birth (see Note 2).

The impulse going forth from Christ is in the fullest sense *reality*. We need but ask ourselves what would have become of the earth had Christ not appeared. Precisely from the opposite picture - an earth without Christ - you can apprehend the significance of Christ's coming. Let us suppose that Christ had not come, that the Mystery of Golgotha had not taken place.

Before Christ's Coming, the condition in the spiritual world of human souls who were the most progressed, who had acquired the deepest interest for earthly life, was truly expressed by the saying of the Greeks: Better it is to be a beggar in the upper world than a king in the realm of the Shades. For before the Event of Golgotha the souls in the spiritual world felt completely isolated, enveloped in darkness. The spiritual world in all its gleaming clarity was not transparent to those who entered it through the portal of death. Each one felt isolated, thrust back into himself as though a wall were between himself and every other soul. And this feeling of isolation would have become more and more intense. Man would have hardened within the ego, would have been thrown back into himself, nor could he have found any bridge to the others. And egoism, already intense, would have increased beyond all telling with every new incarnation.

Earth-existence would more and more have made men into utter egoists. There would have been no prospect of brotherhood on the earth or of inner harmony among souls; for

with every journey through the spiritual world, stronger influence would have penetrated the ego. That is what would have happened to an earth without Christ. That the way from soul to soul will be found again, that it has been made possible for the mighty force of brotherhood to pour over all humanity - this is due to Christ's Coming, to the Event of Golgotha. Therefore Christ is the Power who has enabled man to turn earth-existence ultimately to good account, in other words to give karma its true configuration - for karma must be worked out on the *earth*. That man finds in himself the force to profit by his karma in physical existence, that advancing evolution is possible for him - all this he owes to the working of the Christ Event, to the presence of Christ in the earthly realm.

And so we see many diverse forces and beings working together in the evolution of humanity. Had Christ not come upon the earth, man would have been engulfed in error, because having hardened within himself he would have become as it were a globe on its own, knowing nothing of other beings, entirely self-enclosed, driven into that condition by error and sin.

Christ is verily the Light which leads out of error and sin, the Light which enables man to find the way upwards. And now let us ask ourselves: What was it that was lost to man in that he descended from the spiritual world, was ensnared in desires and passions under the influence of Lucifer, and then, under Ahriman's influence, in error, illusion and lying in the earthly world? - He lost direct vision of the spiritual world, he lost understanding of the spiritual world.

What, then, must he regain? He must regain full understanding of the spiritual world. As a self-conscious being, man can grasp the import of Christ's Deed only by realizing with full clarity of understanding, the significance of Christ. The Christ-Power is there in very truth - not brought by man, for the Christ-Power was brought to the earth by none other than Christ Himself. Karma has come into humanity through Christ. But now, with self-consciousness, man must learn to know Christ in His real nature and His connection with the whole universe. Only so can man work in the true sense as an 'I'. What then, does he actually achieve when, after Christ's appearance, he does not merely rest satisfied with

letting Christ's power work upon him unconsciously, with saying: I am content with the knowledge that Christ came to the earth; He will redeem me and ensure my progress! - but when he says: I am resolved to know what Christ is in all reality, how He descended; I am resolved to participate through my own spirit in Christ's Deed! - what does man achieve thereby?

Recall to your minds that because the Luciferic Spirits slipped into his astral body, man has come down into the world of sense, thereby falling prey to the evil but also acquiring the possibility of self-conscious freedom. Lucifer is in very truth present in the being of man, has drawn him down to the earth, has ensnared him in earthly existence; inasmuch as the passions and desires contained in the astral body had first been led by Lucifer into the earthly realm, Ahriman too was able to invade the astral body - in the intellectual soul. Christ appeared, and with Him the force which can bear man upwards again into the spiritual world. But now, if he so wills, man can come to know Christ, he can gather all wisdom to this end. What does he achieve thereby? Something of untold moment! When a man knows Christ, when he absorbs the wisdom which begets insight into what Christ truly is, then he redeems himself *and* the Luciferic Beings through this knowledge of Christ. Were man merely to say: I am content with the fact that Christ appeared and to allow myself to be redeemed by Him unconsciously - then he would contribute nothing to the redemption of the Luciferic Beings. These Luciferic Beings who have brought man freedom, also make it possible for him, if he so wills, to turn it to account in order to understand Christ. Then the Luciferic Spirits are cleansed and purified in the fire of Christianity and the wrong done to the earth by them is changed into blessing. Freedom has been attained; but it will also be carried into the spiritual sphere as a blessing. That man is capable of this, that he is capable of understanding Christ, that Lucifer, resurrected in a new form, can unite with Christ as the good Spirit - this, as prophecy still, was told by Christ Himself to those around Him, when He said: "Ye shall be illumined by the new Spirit, by the Holy Spirit!" This "Holy Spirit" is none other than the Spirit through whom man can apprehend what Christ has wrought. Christ desired not merely to work, but also to be apprehended, to be understood. Therefore the sending of the Spirit by whom men are inspired, the sending of the "Holy spirit", is implicit in Christianity.

In the spiritual sense, Whitsuntide belongs inseparably to Easter. This "Holy Spirit" is none other than the Lucifer-Spirit, resurrected now in higher, purer glory - the Spirit of independent understanding, wisdom-inwoven. Christ Himself foretold that this Spirit would come to men after Him, and in the light of this Spirit their labors must proceed. What is it that works onward in the light of this Spirit? The world-stream of spiritual science, if rightly conceived! What is this spiritual science? It is the wisdom of the Spirit, the wisdom that lifts into the full light of consciousness that in Christianity which would otherwise remain in the unconscious. The torch of the resurrected Lucifer, of the Lucifer now *transformed into the good*, blazons the way for Christ. Lucifer is the *bearer* of the Light - Christ *is* the Light! As the word itself denotes, Lucifer is the "Bearer of the Light". That is what the spiritual scientific movement should be, that is implicit in it. Those who know that the progress of mankind depends upon living apprehension of the mighty Event of Golgotha are they who as the "Masters of Wisdom and of the Harmony of Feelings" are united in the great Guiding Lodge of mankind. And as once the "tongues of fire" hovered down as a living symbol upon the company of the apostles, so does the "Holy Spirit" announced by Christ Himself reign as the Light over the Lodge of the Twelve. The Thirteenth is the Leader of the Lodge of the Twelve. The "Holy Spirit" is the mighty Teacher of those we name the "Masters of Wisdom and of the Harmony of Feelings". It is through them that his voice and his wisdom flow down to mankind in this or that stream upon the earth. The treasures of wisdom gathered together by the spiritual scientific movement in order to understand the universe and the Spirits therein, how through the "Holy Spirit" into the Lodge of the Twelve; and that is what will ultimately lead mankind step by step to free, self-conscious understanding of Christ and of the Event of Golgotha Thus to 'cultivate' spiritual science means to understand that the Spirit has been sent into the world by Christ; the pursuit of spiritual science is implicit in true Christianity. This will become more and more evident to men; and then they will realize that in spiritual science they have a potent asset in their lives. Men owe to spiritual science the consciousness which dawns in them by degrees, that Christ is the Spirit Who fills the world with light. And the consequence will be that here on this earthly globe, in the physical world itself, men will make progress in their moral life, in their life of will, in their intellectual life. Through physical life itself the world will be spiritualized in

ever-increasing measure. Men will grow in goodness, strength and wisdom and will gaze with ever deepening vision into the foundations and origins of existence. They will bear with them into the supersensible life the fruits acquired in this physical life, and ever and again bring these fruits back from the supersensible life into a new incarnation.

Thus the earth will more and more become the expression of its Spirit, of the Christ-Spirit. Spiritual science will be understood in the light of the world's foundations, apprehended as a real and active power. In various respects to-day mankind is near to losing the Spirit altogether. In the recent public lecture (see Note 3) it was said that men suffer to-day under the fear of heredity. The fear of the burden of heredity is the direct offspring of our materialistic age. But is it enough if a man simply says to himself that he need not have this fear? - By no means does that suffice. A man who does not concern himself with the spiritual world, who does not instill into his soul what can flow from spiritual science, *is* subject to the forces of physical heredity. Only by steeping his whole being in what spiritual science can communicate to him does he gain mastery over the forces of heredity, regards it as a factor of no essential significance and becomes the victor of everything that the powers of hindrance place in his way in the external world. It is not by arguing or philosophizing it away, or by contending: Spirit exists! - that man brings the life of the senses under his command, but by permeating himself with the Spirit, by absorbing the Spirit, by having the will to acquire intimate knowledge of the Spirit. Then spiritual science will make men healthier even in the physical world; for spiritual science is itself a therapy that brings vigor and health. And the essential power of spiritual science will become still more evident to us when we consider what becomes of the human being when he passes through the gate of death. The modern mind finds great difficulty here.

Man thinks to himself: Why need I trouble about what happens in the spiritual world? When I die I go into the spiritual world in any case and then I shall see and hear what goes on there! In endless variations one hears this easy-going way of talking: Why should I trouble about the spiritual before I die? When the time comes I shall see what there is to see. My relationship to the spiritual world will not be altered in the slightest, no matter whether I do or do not concern myself with it. - But indeed this is not so! A man who

thinks in such a way will enter a world of darkness and gloom, unable to make very much of what is said in my book *Theosophy* about the spiritual worlds. For it is only by allying himself in spirit and soul with the spiritual world during life in the physical world that man can acquire the faculty of perception in the spiritual world; the preparation must be made in his life here on earth. The spiritual world is there in very truth - the faculty of being able to see in that world must be acquired on the earth; otherwise there is blindness in the spiritual world.

Spiritual science is therefore the power which alone makes it possible for man to enter the spiritual world with consciousness. Had Christ not appeared in the physical world, man would have gone under in that world, could not have found entry to the spiritual world. But Christ lifts him into the spiritual world in such a way that he can see and be conscious there. This depends upon his knowledge of how to unite his being with the Spirit sent by Christ; failing that knowledge, he remains unconscious. Man has to win his immortality through his own efforts, for an unconscious immortality is no immortality. A beautiful saying of Meister Eckhardt is: "What does it profit a man to be a king if he knows it not," - What he meant was: Of what use is the spiritual world to a man if he does not know what the spiritual worlds are in reality? The capacity for seeing the spiritual world can be acquired only in the physical world. Those who ask: Why was it necessary for man to descend at all into the physical world? do well to take this to heart. - Man descended in order to acquire vision of the spiritual world. He would have remained blind to the spiritual world had he not descended and attained the self-conscious manhood which enables him to return to the spiritual world now lying in radiance and light before his soul.

Spiritual science is therefore not merely a "conception of the world" in the accepted sense but something without which - even in the immortal part of his being - man can know nothing about the worlds of immortality. Spiritual science is an active power, permeating the soul as reality. And in that you are present here in the pursuit of spiritual science, you are not only gathering knowledge but you are growing into something you would otherwise not have become. That is the difference between spiritual science and other world-conceptions. The latter are rooted in *knowledge*; spiritual science is rooted in

*being.*

Rightly conceived, these things will make us say to ourselves: With this illumination, an inner, fundamental connection is revealed between Christ, the Spirit, and spiritual science. In face of this connection all the superficial statements made to-day to the effect that a Western trend is being set up in opposition to an Eastern trend of occultism fall to the ground. There can be no question of any such opposition. There are not two occultisms, there is only one occultism; and there is no opposition between eastern and western Theosophy. There is only *one* truth. And what is our reply to be when we are asked: If eastern occultism is the same as western occultism, why is it that in eastern occultism, Christ is not acknowledged? The right reply is that it is not for us to give the answer; that obligation does not rest upon us, for we fully acknowledge eastern occultism. If asked whether we acknowledge what eastern occultism says about Brahma, about the Buddha, we shall answer: Most certainly we acknowledge it. We understand what is meant when we are told that the Buddha attained his exalted rank in this or that way. We deny no single one of the eastern truths; in so far as they are positive truths we acknowledge them all. But shall this prevent us from acknowledging *as well*, what goes yet further? No indeed! We acknowledge what is said by eastern occultism, but that does not prevent us from acknowledging, too, the western truths.

When people allege that it is an inferior way of thinking on the part of orientalist to say that the Buddha died from eating too much pork - as these learned gentlemen assert - and it is explained that this actually has a deep meaning, namely that the Buddha imparted to those immediately around him too much of the esoteric wisdom, so that this overabundance caused the onset of a kind of karma - then we agree that it is so; we say: certainly there lie behind it the deeper esoteric truths as stated by you who are eastern esotericists! - But when the statement that the Apocalypse was revealed to St. John on Patmos amid thunder and lightning is held to be unintelligible (see Note 4), then our answer will be: everyone who is aware of what is really meant, knows that it is a truth! We do not refute what is said about the Buddha but we cannot agree when the validity of the other statement (concerning the Apocalypse) is denied. We do not contest the assertion that the astral body of the Buddha was preserved and was later incorporated in

Shankaracharya. But that does not prevent us from teaching that the astral body of Jesus of Nazareth was preserved and in multiple replicas was incorporated in various individuals dedicated to Christianity, like St. Francis of Assisi or St. Elizabeth of Thüringen. We deny no single truth of oriental esotericism. Therefore when we are asked: Why is anything refuted? Why is there opposition? - it is not incumbent upon us to answer. It would be incumbent upon us to answer if the opposition came from our side. But it does not! The duty to answer rests upon one who denies, not upon one who agrees. That is obvious enough.

In the coming weeks (see Note 5) you will be able to hear of the connection between spiritual science and the Event of Golgotha and you will realize that the whole vocation, the whole mission of the spiritual scientific movement in the world is raised to a higher sphere inasmuch as spiritual science puts into effect the inspiration, the power proclaimed as the Spirit by Christ Himself.

So we see how Powers work together in the world, how everything that appears to oppose the progress of mankind subsequently turns out to be a blessing. We realize, too, that in the Post-Atlantean epoch - from age to age - the Spirit who has brought man freedom will appear again in a new form; *Luciferus*, the sovereign Bearer of Light, will be redeemed. For everything in the great World Plan is good and the evil endures only for a season. Therefore he alone believes in eternity of the evil who confounds the temporal with the eternal; he who does not rise from the temporal to the eternal can never understand the evil.

Note 1: The Asuras are retarded Beings of the Hierarchy of the Archai (Spirits of Personality). They are Beings who instead of furthering man's progress to independence, lure him into gross egoism. In the negative sense they now bear the name originally pertaining to the entire Hierarchy. C.S.P.

Note 2: Cp. Lecture 13, Cycle VIII: *The Gospel of St. John in relation to the other three Gospels, especially to the Gospel of St. Luke.* "At the moment when the Blood flowed from the wounds on Golgotha, the earth - which in the course of evolution had grown ever darker - began to send rays out into cosmic space, began to be



radiant."

Note 3: Berlin, 18th February, 1909.

Note 4: The reference is to a passage in *The Secret Doctrine*, by H. P. Blavatsky. A later volume, compiled by Annie Besant from manuscripts left by Blavatsky includes a statement indicating that the author was not unaware of the significance of thunder and lightening as an accompaniment of spiritual revelations. (C.S.P.)

Note 5: Lecture-Course on the "Spiritual Hierarchies".

**The Deed of Christ and the Opposing Spiritual Powers**  
**Mephistopheles and Earthquakes**

Berlin, 01 January 1909

The theme of the lecture to-day is of a profoundly occult character, the title - strange as it may seem to begin with - being: "Mephistopheles and Earthquakes". We shall see that not only does the problem of the figure of Mephistopheles lead us into a deep realm of occultism but that the same applies to the problem of earthquakes if explained from the spiritual point of view. I have already spoken here and in several other places about the interior of the earth and have also referred to the question of earthquakes. We shall now approach the subject of these most tragic happenings on the earth's surface, from yet another side.

The figure of Mephistopheles which will be our starting-point to-day, is familiar to you all from Goethe's *Faust*. You know that Mephistopheles is a Being - we shall not enter to-day into the question of how far the poetic presentation tallies with the occult facts - a figure who appears in the drama as the seducer and tempter of Faust who, in a certain respect, may be thought of as the representative of man aspiring to reach the heights of existence. In lectures on [Goethe](#) I have also indicated what spiritual vistas are revealed in the scene of the "Passage to the Mothers", where Mephistopheles holds in his hand the key giving access to the dark, nether region where the Mothers dwell. Mephistopheles himself may not enter this region. He merely indicates that in this mysterious realm there is no difference between "below" and "above":

"Sink then! I might as well say, Mount!"Tis quite the same."

We know too that in characterizing this region, Mephistopheles uses the word "Naught", "Nothingness". In a certain sense, therefore, he represents the spirit who in this "Naught" would be seeking something that is valueless to him. Faust answers as any true seeker to-day might answer a materialistic thinker: "In thy Naught I hope to find the All".

Goethean research has made many attempts to find the clue to the figure of Mephistopheles. In other lectures I have said that the explanation of the name Mephistopheles is to be found in the Hebrew language, where "Mephiz" is the word used for one who obstructs, who corrupts, and "topel" for one who lies. We have therefore to think of this name as belonging to a being who brings corruption and hindrances to man and is a spirit of untruth, deception and illusion.

It may occur to those who read the introduction to *Faust*, the "Prologue in Heaven", thoughtfully, that it contains words which resound as it were across thousands of years. Goethe has let words spoken between the Lord and Job in the Book of Job re-echo at the beginning of *Faust*. In the Book of Job we read that Job is a good, upright and pious man and of how the sons of the Lord of Light present themselves before Him. Among them is a certain enemy of the Light. In a conversation between the enemy of the Light and the supreme Lord, this enemy of the Light says that he has "gone to and fro in the earth", seeking and trying out many things. The Lord asks: "Knowest thou my servant Job?" and the enemy of the Light - for so we will call him - answers the Lord that Job is known to him and that he would assuredly be able to divert him from the Good and bring him to perdition. This spirit has to make two attempts to approach Job and he then lays hold of him through injuring his physical body. He indicates this expressly when he says to the Lord: "Seize his possessions and he will not fall; but touch his bone and his flesh and he will fall!" Who can fail to hear an echo of this in *Faust* when the Lord calls to Mephistopheles in the "Prologue in Heaven": "Knowest thou Faust, my servant!" And then, in similar terms, we hear the retort of the spirit who in the Book of Job comes before the Lord, when Mephistopheles asserts that he can lead Faust gently on the way, that he can win him from the paths which lead to the Good. Here, then, we are listening to sounds striking together in unison across the ages.

When you are thinking about the figure of Mephistopheles, you may often have asked yourselves: Who is Mephistopheles, in reality? Grave mistakes are made here, mistakes which admittedly can be corrected only by deeper, occult insight. The name itself

suggests that Mephistopheles is associated with the devil, or the idea of the devil, for the word "topel" is the same as "*Teufel*" - devil. But the other question - and here we come into a realm of serious fallacies which frequently occur in explanations of the figure of Mephistopheles - the other question is: Whether Mephistopheles can be identified with the spirit we know as Lucifer, who during and after the Lemurian epoch approached mankind together with his hosts and entrenched himself as it were in the evolutionary process? The prevailing tendency in Europe is to identify the figure of Mephistopheles as he appears in Goethe's *Faust* but also in earlier folk-literature (Folk Plays, Puppet Plays and so forth), with Lucifer. Mephistopheles is a familiar character everywhere, and the question is: Are he and his hosts identical with Lucifer and his hosts? In other words: Are the effects of the Mephistophelean influence upon man the same as those of Lucifer? - That is the question before us to-day.

We know when Lucifer approached man. We have studied the course of human evolution on earth through the epoch when the sun with its beings, and subsequently the moon, separated from the earth together with the forces that would have made further development for man impossible. And we have learned that at a time when man was still not ready for his astral body to become independent, Lucifer and his hosts approached him. The effect upon man was twofold. It was towards the end of the Lemurian epoch when, in his astral body, man was actually exposed to the influences issuing from Lucifer. If Lucifer had not approached, man would, it is true, have been protected from certain evils but he would not have attained what must be accounted one of his greatest blessings.

The significance of Lucifer's influence becomes evident when we ask ourselves what would have transpired if since the Lemurian epoch there had been no Luciferic influence, if Lucifer and his hosts had remained separate and apart from man's evolution! Until the middle of the Atlantean epoch man would have evolved as a being who in every impulse of his astral body would have obeyed the influences of certain spiritual Beings of a higher rank than himself; these Beings would have retained their sway over him until the middle of the Atlantean epoch. If that had happened, man's faculties of perception and cognition

would not have been directed to the material world until a much later period. During the Lemurian and early Atlantean epochs, no passions, no desires would have arisen from his sense-perceptions; he would have confronted the world of sense as it were in a state of innocence, obedient in his every action to the impulses instilled into him by higher spiritual Beings. The instincts prompting him to action would not have been of exactly the same nature as those of the higher animals to-day, but more spiritual. His every deed on earth would have been prompted, not by mere impulses, but by a kind of spiritual instinct. As things were, under the influence of Lucifer man came earlier to the stage where he said: This delights and attracts me, that is repellent to me! He reached the stage of following his own impulses earlier than would otherwise have been the case; he became an independent being, with a measure of inner freedom. The consequence was that he was detached in a certain way from the spiritual world. To put it concisely, one might say: Without this influence of Lucifer, man would have remained a spiritualized animal - an animal who would gradually have developed a form nobler and more beautiful than could have been developed by man under the influence of Lucifer. Man would have remained far more of an angelic being if Lucifer's influence had not taken effect in the Lemurian epoch; but on the other hand, the higher Beings would have guided him as it were on leading-strings. In the middle of the Atlantean epoch something would have befallen him suddenly: his eyes would have been fully opened, the tapestry of the whole material world of sense would have lain around him - but gazing upon it he would simultaneously have perceived the Divine-Spiritual, a Divine-Spiritual world behind every physical object. If, therefore, in his former state of dependence man had looked back into the bosom of the Divine whence he had proceeded, beholding the Gods of Light sending their radiance into his soul, guiding and leading him, something would have come about for him - this is not a mere picture but corresponds in a high degree with the reality - namely, that the world of sense in its entirety would have been outspread in transparency before him, revealing behind it those other Divine-Spiritual Beings who had taken the place of what had now been lost. One spiritual world would have closed behind him and a new spiritual world opened before him. Man would have remained a child in the hands of higher, Divine-Spiritual Beings; independence would not have been established in the human soul.

It did not happen so, because Lucifer had approached man and made part of the underlying spiritual world invisible to him. The personal instincts, passions and desires which arose in the human astral body spread a cloud of darkness over the spiritual Beings of the world out of which man is born and who would otherwise have remained perpetually visible to him.

Hence in those great centers of the Oracles in ancient Atlantis the Initiates had expressly trained themselves to behold that part of the spiritual world which had been concealed as the result of Lucifer's influence. The aim of all the preparation undergone by the guardians and pupils of the ancient Oracles in the Atlantean Mysteries was to enable them to perceive that part of the spiritual world of light which in consequence of Lucifer's influence upon the astral body of man had withdrawn from his field of vision. And visible too, were those figures seen by man in the various conditions of soul running parallel with initiation, figures which from a world of Light penetrate into our world decked in the raiment provided by the astral world. In the ancient Oracle centers the Atlantean Initiate beheld in the spirit those figures who were in truth spiritual Beings of a higher rank than he - Beings who had not descended into the physical world and who had therefore remained invisible to ordinary sight when man's eyes were opened prematurely. But since Lucifer himself was an opponent of these worlds of Light, it was inevitable that he too should be visible to the initiates; and the hosts of Lucifer *were* visible to the Atlanteans who in their shadowy, clairvoyant consciousness, in the sleeping state and in conditions midway between sleeping and waking, could be transported into the spiritual world. When part of the world of Light was accessible to these Atlantean men, part of the world opposing the world of Light was also visible; the Luciferic hosts were visible - not Lucifer himself. These noble figures belonging to the world of light were as fascinating and splendid in their astral raiment as those of the opposing world of deception were fearsome and terrible.

Thus it was the influence of Lucifer in the evolution of humanity that made it possible for man to fall into error and evil but also to attain freedom. Had there been no Luciferic

influence, the conditions I have been describing to you would have come about in the middle of the Atlantean epoch: the tapestry of the sense-world would have been outspread before man; the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms would have been materially visible to him; also the phenomena of nature and of the heavens, thunder, lightning, clouds, air - all would have been visible to external sight. But behind it all would have been the unmistakable presence of Divine-Spiritual Beings. Because Lucifer's influence had already taken effect in man's astral body, his physical body - at that time still transmutable - had been so prepared ever since the Lemurian epoch and on into the Atlantean, that it could not become the direct instrument for the physical world of sense with the spiritual world visibly behind it. And so man could not immediately behold the physical sense-world in the form in which it would simultaneously have revealed itself to him as a spiritual world. The three lower kingdoms of nature lay around him; the physical world became a veil over the spiritual world. Man could not, nor can he to this day, see directly into the spiritual world.

But because man had passed through this evolution, a different influence was able to assert itself in the middle of the Atlantean epoch - an influence from quite another side and not to be confused with that of Lucifer and his hosts. Although it was Lucifer who first made it possible for man to come under the sway of this other influence, although it was Lucifer who caused the human physical body to become denser than it would otherwise have become, nevertheless it was necessary for yet another influence to approach man in order to bring him completely into the material world of sense, in order to shut him off entirely from the spiritual world so that he was led to the illusion: There is no other world than the world of material existence outspread before me!

From the middle of the Atlantean epoch an opponent quite different in character from Lucifer approached man, namely the Being who casts such mist and darkness around his faculties of perception that he makes no effort nor unfolds any urge to fathom the secrets of the world of sense. If you picture to yourselves that under Lucifer's influence the sense-world became like a veil, through the influence of this second Being the physical world in its totality became like a dense rind, closing off the spiritual world. It was only

the Atlantean Initiates who were able, through the preparation they had undergone, to pierce this dense covering of the material, physical world.

The Powers who approached man in order to obscure his vision of the other side of divine existence are brought to our notice for the first time in the teachings given to his followers and pupils by Zarathustra, the great leader of the ancient Persians. The mission of Zarathustra was to instill culture into a people who, unlike the ancient Indians, did not by nature yearn perpetually for the spiritual world. Zarathustra's mission was to impart to his people a culture directed to the world of sense, aiming at mastery of the material world through means dependent upon the efforts and labors of physical man. In the civilization of ancient Persia, therefore, man was less subject to the influence of Lucifer than to the influence of that Being who since the middle of the Atlantean epoch had approached mankind, with the result that many of the Initiates at that time had lapsed into the practice of a form of black magic; having been led astray by this tempter, they misused for the purposes of the physical-material world what was accessible to them from the spiritual world. The mighty influence of the forces of black magic which finally led to the destruction of Atlantis had its origin in the temptations of that Being whom Zarathustra taught his people to know as Ahriman ("Angra Mainyu"), the Being who opposed the God of Light proclaimed by Zarathustra as "Ahura Mazdao", the "Great Aura".

These two figures - Lucifer and Ahriman - must be clearly distinguished from each other. For Lucifer is a Being who detached himself from the spiritual hosts of heaven *after* the separation of the sun, whereas Ahriman had already broken away *before* the separation of the sun and is an embodiment of quite different powers. The result of Lucifer's influence in the Lemurian epoch was merely the corruption of the faculty, still possessed by man in the Atlantean epoch, to manipulate the forces of air and water. In the book entitled *From the Akasha Chronicle* you will have read that in Atlantean times the seminal forces in plant and animal were still at man's command and could be drawn forth just as the forces used in the form of steam for propelling machines can be extracted from mineral coal today. I have told you that when these forces are drawn forth they are connected in a



mysterious way with the nature-forces in wind, weather and the like; and if applied by man for purposes running counter to the divine purposes, these nature-forces are called into action against him.

Here lies the cause of the Atlantean flood and of the devastation wrought by the powers of nature which led to the disappearance of the whole continent of Atlantis. But even before that time, man had lost command over the forces of fire and the power to ally them with certain mysterious forces of the earth. Power over the forces of fire and earth in a certain combination had already been withdrawn from man. But now - through the influence of Ahriman and his accomplices - he again acquired a certain mastery over the forces of fire and earth, with dire consequences. And much that is to be heard about the use of fire in ancient Persia is connected with what I am now telling you. Many forces that are applied in black magic and are connected with it, lead to the result that man lays hold of forces of an entirely different nature and thus gains an influence over fire and earth, with terrible and devastating results. The practice of black magic by the descendants of the Atlanteans in ancient Persia would still have been effective had not the teachings of Zarathustra revealed how Ahriman, as an opposing power, ensnares man and clouds his vision of the spiritual reality behind the world of sense. Thus through Zarathustra and his followers, influence was brought to bear upon a large part of Post-Atlantean civilization; on the one hand men were taught of the workings of the sublime God of Light to whom they may turn, and, on the other, of the malefic power of Ahriman and his hosts.

Ahriman works upon man in countless, infinitely diverse ways. - I have told you that the Event of the Mystery of Golgotha was a moment of supreme importance for the evolution of the world. The Christ appeared in the realm into which man enters after death, where Ahriman's influence was even mightier than in the world around man here on earth between birth and death. In the realm of existence between death and rebirth, Ahriman's influences worked upon man with terrible, overwhelming power. And if nothing else had taken place, utter darkness would gradually have closed in upon man in the 'realm of Shades' - as it was correctly designated by the ancient Greeks. A condition of complete

isolation, leading to the intensification of egoism would have set in between death and rebirth; man would have been born into his new life as a gross and overweening egotist. Hence it is more than a figure of speech to say that after the Event of Golgotha, at the moment when the Blood flowed from the wounds, the Christ appeared in yonder world, in the realm of the Shades, and cast Ahriman into fetters. Although Ahriman's influence remained and is really the origin of all materialistic thinking on the part of man, although this influence can be paralyzed only if men receive into themselves the power emanating from the Mystery of Golgotha, nevertheless they can draw from that Event a power which enables them to find their way once again into the Divine-Spiritual world. Thus it was to Ahriman that the faculty of human cognition was primarily directed. Ahriman was a Being whose existence was divined by men, a Being of whom they had some knowledge through the culture inaugurated by Zarathustra; and from there the knowledge of Ahriman spread among the other peoples and into their world of ideas. Ahriman with his hosts appears as a figure with the most diverse names among the civilized peoples. And owing to the peculiar conditions obtaining in the souls of the European peoples who had remained farthest in the rear of the migrations from West to East, who had been less affected than the others by what had transpired in the ancient Indian, ancient Persian, Egyptian and even in the Greco-Latin civilizations - owing to these circumstances there prevailed among the European peoples from whom the Fifth Epoch of culture was to be born, an attitude of soul which regarded Ahriman alone as a figure of dread. And while many different names were adopted - as for example, "Mephistopheles" among the Hebrew people - in Europe the figure of Ahriman became the "Devil" in his various forms.

Obviously, therefore, we are gazing here into a concatenation of happenings in the spiritual worlds and many a man who claims to be above medieval superstitions will do well to remember the words in *Faust*:

"The little folk ne'er scent the Devil'en though he have them by the collar".

It is precisely because man closes his spiritual eyes to this influence that he succumbs to

it so completely. Goethe's "Mephistopheles" is none other than the figure of Ahriman and must not be confused with Lucifer. All the errors cropping up here and there in commentaries on *Faust* originate from this confusion - although it was indeed Lucifer who first paved the way for Ahriman's influence. In studying Ahriman one is therefore led back to an original influence of Lucifer, the nature of which can only become clear after long preparatory efforts have been made to understand this intimate connection. The subtle difference between the two Beings must not be overlooked. The essential point is that, fundamentally speaking, Lucifer had brought man under the influence of the powers connected with air and water *only*; whereas it was Ahriman-Mephistopheles who has subjected him to the influence of far more deadly powers and the civilizations immediately to come will see the appearance of many things connected with Ahriman's influence. Through this influence the seeker for the spirit who does not stand upon firm and sure foundations can readily fall prey to the most terrible illusion and deception. For Ahriman is a spirit who sets out to spread deception as to the true nature of the sense-world, especially as an expression of the spiritual world. When a man has a tendency to abnormal, somnambulistic states or through certain wrongful training awakens occult forces whereby egoism is intensified, then Ahriman or Mephistopheles has a ready influence precisely upon these occult forces, an influence that can soon become overwhelmingly powerful. Whereas Lucifer's influence can only bring it about that what confronts a man from the spiritual world (and this applies also to one who is receiving wrongful training) appears to him as an *astral* form visible to the astral body, the manifestations due to the influence of Ahriman are brought to light in that the evil influences on the physical body press through into the etheric body and then become visible as *phantoms*.

In the influences of Ahriman, therefore, we have to do with powers of a much lower nature than the influences of Lucifer. Lucifer's influences can never become as evil as the influences of Ahriman and of those Beings who are connected with the powers of fire. The influence of Ahriman or Mephistopheles can bring it about that in order to attain occult knowledge a man is induced, for example, to undertake certain measures with his physical body. The method that consists in the use and misuse of the physical body is the

most evil that can possibly be applied for the purpose of acquiring occult powers. It is a fact that in certain school of black magic such practices are taught in abundance. One of the most terrible perversions to which man may be subject occurs when the forces of the physical body are taken as the starting-point for occult training.

It is not possible here to enter into closer detail than the indication that all machinations consisting in any way of a misuse of the forces of the physical body emanate from the influences of Ahriman; and because the effect of this penetrates into man's etheric body, it works as a world of phantoms that is nothing else than the garment of powers which drag man down to a level below that of true manhood. Nearly every ancient civilization - the Indian, the Persian, the Egyptian, the Greco-Latin - had its period of decadence; so too the Mysteries, when the Mystery-traditions were no longer preserved in their purity. During these periods many of those who were either pupils of the Initiates but unable to remain at their level or men to whom the secrets of the Mysteries had been unlawfully betrayed, had fallen into perverse and evil paths. Centers of black magic and its forces originated from these influences and have persisted to this day.

Ahriman is a spirit of lies, a spirit who conjures illusions before men, working together with his confederates in a spiritual world. Ahriman himself is no mirage - far from it! But what is conjured before men's eyes of spirit under his influence - that is mirage, illusion. When a man's desires and passions flow along evil paths and at the same time he lends himself in any way to occult practices, then the occult forces which are awakened penetrate into the etheric body and the most evil powers of corruption appear among the illusory images which may themselves often be majestic, awe-inspiring. Such is the terrible influence of Ahriman upon man.

From what has been said you can gather that through Christ's Coming, Ahriman has been cast into fetters - if this expression may be used - but only, of course, for those who endeavor unceasingly to fathom the Christ-Mystery. And outside the forces streaming from the Christ-Mystery, protection in the world against the influence of Ahriman will steadily diminish. In a certain sense - and many signs proclaim it - our epoch courts these

influences of Ahriman. In certain occult teachings the hosts of Ahriman are also called the *Asuras*. These are of course, the evil Asuras who at a certain time fell away from the evolutionary path of the Asuras who endowed man with personality. It has already been indicated that these are spiritual Beings who detached themselves from the evolution of the earth *before* the separation of the sun.

Up to now we have been describing merely the terrible influence that Ahriman can exercise upon a certain abnormal process of development, one that proceeds along occult paths. But in a certain respect the whole of mankind came under the influence of Ahriman during the second half of the Atlantean epoch. The whole Post-Atlantean epoch has within it, in a certain sense, the aftermath of Ahriman's influence - in one region of the earth more, in another less. But Ahriman's influence has asserted itself everywhere and all the teachings given to the peoples by the ancient Initiates concerning the Spirits of Light who are the opponents of Ahriman were given primarily in order to draw these peoples away from Ahriman's influence. It was a good, wisely led education of mankind. But let us not forget that since that time the destiny of Ahriman has been interwoven in a certain sense with the destiny of humanity, and manifold happenings, of which the uninitiated can know nothing, keep the whole karma of humanity in perpetual connection with the karma of Ahriman. To understand what will now be said, we must realize that over and above the karma which belongs to every individual human being, there is at every stage of existence a universal karmic law. All the categories of beings have their karma - the karma of the one differing from that of the other. But karma operates through every realm of existence and there are things in the karma of mankind, in the karma of a people, of a community or other group of human beings, which must be regarded as collective karma, so that in certain circumstances the individual can be drawn into the sway of the collective karma. It will not always be easy for one who cannot penetrate to the root of the matter to discern exactly where the influences of the powers concerned lie in the case of human beings overtaken by such a destiny. An individual within some community may well be entirely guiltless as far as his own karma is concerned; but because he stands within a field of collective karma, calamity may befall him. If, however, he is entirely guiltless, compensation will be made in later incarnations.

In the wider connection we must look not only at the karma of the past but also think of the karma of the future. A terrible fate may befall a whole group of human beings; the reason why just this group should suffer such a destiny is not to be discovered. Someone who might be capable of investigating the karma of an individual will in certain circumstances be unable to find anything at all that could have led to this tragic fate, for the threads of karma are extremely complicated. The cause of such karmic happenings may lie far, far away - but it is connected with these people nevertheless. And it may be that the whole group, while guiltless, has been overtaken by some collective karma which could not overtake those immediately guilty, because circumstances did not make this possible. In such cases the only thing that can be said is this: In the total karma of an individual, everything is ultimately balanced out, including what befalls him without guilt on his part; it is all inscribed in his karma and compensation in the fullest sense will be made in future time. - Therefore in considering the law of karma we must also take into account the karma of the future. Nor must it be forgotten that man is not an isolated being but that every individual has to share jointly in the collective karma of humanity. We must remember, too, that man, together with humanity, is connected with those hierarchies of Beings who have not entered into the physical world and that he is also drawn into the karma of the hierarchies. In the destinies of mankind in the spiritual world a great deal appears the connections of which are not to be sought in the immediate circumstances, but the karmic consequences come to pass inevitably. Since the second half of the Atlantean epoch, Ahriman's karma has been linked with the karma of mankind. Where, then, are the deeds of Ahriman, over and above what is wrought by him in the bodies of men in order to spread phantoms and illusion over the world of sense? Where are these other deeds?

Everything in the world has, as it were, two sides, one pertaining more to man as a spiritual being, the other to what has developed as the kingdoms of nature around him. The earth is the arena of man's existence. To the eye of spirit this earth is revealed as a combination of different layers or strata. The outermost stratum is called the "Mineral Earth" or "Mineral Stratum" because it contains only such substances as are to be found in the ground under our feet. This is the shallowest stratum, relatively speaking. Then

begins the "Fluidic Earth", the material constitution of which is entirely different from that of the "mineral" stratum above it. This second stratum is, as it were, endowed with inner life; and only because the solid, mineral stratum is spread over it are the inner forces of this second stratum held together. If they were released they would instantaneously disperse into cosmic space. This stratum, therefore, lies under tremendous pressure. A third stratum is the "Vapor Earth". It is not a material vapor such as arises on the earth's surface but in this third stratum the substance itself is imbued with inner forces, comparable only with the passions, the inner urges and impulses of man. Whereas on the earth it is only beings like animals and men who can unfold passions, this third stratum - just as the substances of the earth are permeated by forces of magnetism and warmth - is permeated in a material sense with forces similar to those we know as human and animal passions and impulses. The fourth or "Form Stratum" is so designated because it contains the material and the forces of what are encountered in the mineral part of the earth as entities cast into form. And the characteristic of the fifth stratum, or "Fertility Earth" is that even as material it teems with infinite fertility. If you were to get hold of part of this stratum it would perpetually be sending forth new impulses, new sproutings; rampant fertility is the intrinsic quality of this stratum. Then we come to the sixth stratum, the "Fire Earth", containing as "substances" within it, forces that can bring about terrible havoc and destruction. It is actually into these forces that the primordial Fire has been banished.

In and from this stratum the realm of Ahriman operates - in a material sense. What manifests in the phenomena of outer nature, in air and water, in cloud formations, in lightning and thunder - all this is, so to speak, a last vestige on the earth's surface, of forces that were already connected with ancient Saturn and separated from the earth together with the sun. By what is working in these forces, the inner fire-forces of the earth are placed in the service of Ahriman. There he has the center of his activity; and whereas his spiritual influences make their way to the souls of men and lead them to error, we see how Ahriman - in a certain respect shackled - has certain foci for his activity in the interior of the earth. Were we to understand the mysterious connections of what has come to pass on the earth under Ahriman's influence and what Ahriman's own

karma has become in consequence of this, we should recognize in the quakes and tremors of the earth the connection between such grievous, tragic happenings in nature and the power that holds sway on the earth. These manifestations are something that has remained since ancient times as a reaction on the earth against the good Beings of Light. Thus forces allied with the Beings who were thrust away from their connection with the earth at the time when the good Beings of light established the beneficent phenomena around the earth-globe, are active, and in a certain sense we can recognize the echoings of these fire-forces which in earlier times were withdrawn from man's control, in what is wrought by fire in such terrible manifestations of nature. Although the karma of Ahriman has been linked with that of humanity since the time of Atlantis, the suggestion should not arise that any guilt is to be attributed to those who are victims of what Ahriman's karma has evoked. Such happenings are connected with the collective karma of humanity in which the individual has also to share. The *causes* which produce their effects in particular localities as the workings of Ahriman's karma often lie somewhere else entirely. It is however these particular places which afford the necessary opportunity. There we see a connection which seems to be like a relic of catastrophes undergone by humanity in the far distant past. The power to work upon fire which man had formerly possessed, was withdrawn from him. Hence ancient Lemuria was brought to its destruction by the fire of the passions of men. The same fire that is now below was then above; it receded from the earth's surface and the same fire that issued as a kind of extract from the primordial fire is the inorganic, mineral fire of to-day. So too it was with the forces working through air and water which, again by way of the passions of men, led to the Atlantean catastrophes. These catastrophes were evoked by the collective karma of humanity but a relic has remained and this relic awakens the echoes of those earlier catastrophes. Our volcanic eruptions and earthquakes are nothing else than the echoes of these catastrophes. But it should never so much as occur to anyone to attach an iota of guilt to the victim of such a calamity or to withhold compassion in the fullest measure. It must be absolutely clear to an anthroposophist that the karma of these individuals has nothing to do with the guilt to which the catastrophes are due and it should never occur to him to withhold help from anyone because - to put it trivially - he believes in karma and therefore assumes that this destiny was brought on by the man himself. Karma demands



of us that we help human beings because we may be sure that our help means something that is written in their karma and will turn that karma in a more favorable direction. Understanding that is based upon the recognition of karma must necessarily lead to compassion; our compassion for the victims of such catastrophes will be all the greater, for our knowledge tells us that there is a collective karma of humanity from which the individual members have to suffer, that just as such happenings are brought about by humanity as one whole, so too must humanity be answerable for them; we must regard such a destiny as our own and help not only out of a spontaneous impulse but because we know that we are involved in the karma of humanity and share the guilt incurred!

A question was handed to me this morning about earthquake catastrophes. The question runs as follows: "What is the occult explanation of earthquakes? Can they be foreseen? If particular catastrophes can be foreseen, why should it not be possible to give some warning beforehand? Such a warning might possibly be ineffective the first time but certainly not on another occasion."

You may remember something of what was said at the end of the lecture on the interior of the earth about the possibility of earthquakes. We will not consider that now but enter directly into this question. In reality it has two sides. The one is: Whether from the occult connections which can be discerned, earthquakes can be foreseen? The answer to this is that the knowledge of such matters belongs to the deepest realm of occult science. In respect of a particular event on the earth, an event with roots as deeply laid as those described to-day, and connected with causes extending widely over the earth - in respect of such an event it is absolutely correct to say that even in a particular case an indication of time can be given. It would certainly be possible for the occultist to give such an indication. But the other side of the question is: whether it is *permissible* for such indications to be given? - For one who confronts the occult secrets from outside it will seem almost a matter of course that the answer will be "Yes!" And yet the truth is that in regard to such events it is actually only twice or three times in any one century - at the very most, twice or three times - that any prediction can be announced from the centers of Initiation. For you must remember that these things are connected with the karma of humanity as a whole and if, for example, they were avoided in one instance they would

inevitably occur in some other place and in a different form. The prediction itself would alter nothing. And just think what a terrible encroachment it would be into the karma of the earth as a whole if human measures were adopted to prevent such happenings. The reaction would be so fearful, so violent, that only in very rare and exceptional cases would a high Initiate, foreseeing an earthquake, be able to make use of his knowledge to help himself or those near him. *With full knowledge* he would have to face his end, as a matter of course! For these things that have been implicit in the karma of humanity for thousands and millions of years cannot be paralyzed by measures adopted during one brief period of evolution. - But there is still more to add.

It has been said already that this very subject is one of the most difficult of all in occult investigation. It is far easier to know something about the astral world, the devachanic world, even about the farthest planets, than about the interior of the earth. Most things one hears are the purest trash, because, as I say, it is one of the most difficult subjects in occultism. The same is true of matters that are connected with these elemental catastrophes. And above all you must realize that clairvoyance is not a matter of just sitting down, inducing a particular condition, and then being able to say what is going on in the whole universe, up to the highest spheres. It is by no means so. To believe any such thing would be as "clever" as to say: "You have the faculty of perception in the physical world; but why was it that when 12 o'clock came and you were sitting in your room, you were neither astonished by nor did you see what happened outside by the River Spree at that hour?" There are hindrances to seership. If the seer in question had gone for a walk at 12 o'clock he would probably have seen what happened. It is *not* the case that all worlds are immediately disclosed through the mere resolve to induce in oneself the requisite condition. The seer has to find his way to the events and investigate them, and these investigations are of the most difficult kind because the hindrances are greatest. - And perhaps at this point something may be said about these hindrances.

If a man is able to walk about on his two legs, you can deprive him of this faculty not only by amputating his legs but also by shutting him up in a cell; then he can no longer walk about. In the same way there are hindrances to occult investigation and in the

domain of which we are speaking they are immensely powerful. I will tell you one of the main hindrances and in doing so introduce you to a mysterious relationship. The greatest hindrance to occult investigation in this domain is constituted by the methods and trend of modern materialistic science. The countless illusions and fallacies accumulating in materialistic science to-day, all the research that is not only futile but is prompted by the vanities of men - these are things which in their effects in the higher worlds make investigation into these manifestations and free vision in the higher world impossible or to say the least, extremely difficult. Free vision is clouded as a result of the materialistic research pursued here on earth. It is by no means easy to get to the root of these things. But only wait for the time when spiritual science has become more widespread and when through its influence the materialistic superstitions prevailing in our world will be swept away! Once the nonsensical analogies and hypotheses leading to all kinds of conjectures about the interior of the earth are cast aside, you will see that when spiritual science has itself been integrated into the karma of humanity, when it finds the way to men's souls and is able from there to overcome the opposing powers and materialistic superstitions, when further research can be made into all that is connected with the bitterest foe of mankind, that Being who fetters man's vision within the world of sense - you will see that it will then be possible, even externally, to influence the karma of humanity in the sense that the dire results of such happenings may be alleviated. The reason why the Initiates must be silent about happenings connected with the great karma of humanity is to be found in the materialistic superstitions of men. Many scientific pursuits are in no way imbued with the Faustian striving for truth but prompted entirely by vanity and ambition. How much scientific research is promoted in the world simply because an individual is seeking for something that will be to his personal advantage! If you sum up all these things you will realize the strength of the force that obstructs vision into the world behind the external phenomena of the material world. Not until this fog has been cleared away will the time come when, in respect of certain mysterious manifestations of nature emanating from the foes of mankind and trespassing deeply into human life, it will be possible for help - and then in no small measure - to be given to mankind. Until that time comes there is no such possibility.

I am well aware that these questions have been given a turn not always in the mind of the one who asks them. But it is often the fate of occult science to be obliged to formulate the questions in the right way before they can be correctly answered. Again do not take this to mean that the mysterious connection between earthquakes and the karma of humanity is a secret that cannot be investigated. It *can* be investigated but there are reasons why only the most commonplace aspects of such questions can be presented to the world today. Let the knowledge reach mankind through spiritual science that there is a connection between the deeds of men and happenings in nature and then the time will come when these things can be answered in the way the question demands. Spiritual science may pass through many destinies; its influence may even be crippled, remaining within narrow and restricted circles. Nevertheless it will make its way through mankind, will be integrated into the karma of humanity, and then the possibility will be created for individuals themselves to have an effect upon the karma of humanity as a whole.

## **Search for the New Isis, the Divine Sophia: The Quest for the Isis-Sophia**

A lecture by Rudolf Steiner Dornach, December 24, 1920 GA 202

IN THE FESTIVAL of Christmas something is given to Christendom that directs the thoughts of all circles of Christian people straight to the very deepest questions presented by the evolution of humankind upon earth. Regard the evolution of history from whatever point of view you will, take into consideration historical events in order to understand human evolution, to penetrate the meaning of human evolution on earth - in all history you will find no thought as widely understandable or having as much power to lift the soul to this mystery of human evolution as the thought of the Mystery of Golgotha, as the thought that is contained in the festival of Christmas.

When we look back upon the beginning of human evolution on earth, and follow it through the thousands of years that preceded the Mystery of Golgotha, we find that, although the achievements of the peoples in all the various nations were so great, nevertheless, in reality all these achievements constituted only a kind of preparation - they were a preparatory step toward what took place for the sake of humankind at the Mystery of Golgotha. Furthermore, we find we can only understand what has happened since the Mystery of Golgotha when we remember that the Christ who went through the Mystery of Golgotha has played an active role in the evolution of humanity ever since. Many things in human evolution may at first appear incomprehensible. However, if we investigate them without narrow-minded superstition, for example the kind of superstition that believes that unknown gods should come to the aid of human beings without their active involvement, and that such aid should come just where human beings consider it necessary - if we leave aside such views, we find that even the most painful events in the course of world history can show us the significance and meaning that the evolution of the earth has acquired through the fact that Christ went through the Mystery of Golgotha. It is appropriate for us to study this Mystery of Golgotha - and the mystery of Christmas belongs to it - from a point of view which can reveal, as it were, the meaning of all of earthly humanity. We know how intimate the connection is between

what takes place in the moral-spiritual sphere of human evolution and what takes place in nature. And with a certain understanding of this link between nature and the world's moral order we can approach also another relationship with which we have been concerned for many years - namely, the relationship of Christ Jesus to that being whose outer reflection appears in the sun. The followers and representatives of the Christian impulse were not always so hostile toward the recognition of this connection between the mystery of the sun and the mystery of Christ as the decadent present-day representatives of Christianity so often are. Dionysius the Areopagite, whom we have often mentioned, calls the sun God's monument, and in Augustine we continually find such allusions. Even in Scholasticism we find such references to the fact that the outwardly visible stars and their movements are images of the divine-spiritual existence of the world.

However, we must understand the mystery of Christmas in a far wider context, if we wish to understand what should concern us most of all in view of the important tasks of the present age. I would like to remind you of something which I have repeatedly brought forward in various ways in the course of many years. I have told you: We look back into the first post-Atlantean age, which was filled with the deeds and experiences of the ancient Indian people; we look back into the ancient Persian epoch of post-Atlantean humanity, into the Egypto-Chaldean, and into the Greco-Latin. We come then to the fifth epoch of the post-Atlantean humanity, our own. Our epoch will be followed by the sixth and by the seventh. And I have drawn your attention to the fact that the Greco-Latin, the fourth epoch of post-Atlantean humanity, stands, as it were, in the middle, and that there are certain connections (you can read of this in my little book *The Spiritual Guidance of the Individual and Humanity*) between the third and the fifth epochs, that is, between the Egypto-Chaldean epoch and our own. Furthermore there is also a certain connection between the ancient Persian epoch and the sixth, and between the ancient Indian and the seventh epoch of post-Atlantean humanity. Specific things repeat themselves in a certain way in each of these epochs of life.

I once pointed out that the great Kepler, the successor of Copernicus, had a feeling that his solar and planetary system was repeating, of course in a way appropriate to the fifth

post-Atlantean age, what had lived as the world picture behind the Egyptian priest mysteries. Kepler himself expressed this in a certain sense very radically when he said that he had borrowed the vessels of the ancient Egyptian teachers of wisdom in order to carry them over into the new age.

Today, however, we will consider something which stood, in a sense, at the center of the view found in the cultic rituals performed by the priests in the Egyptian mystery religion; we will consider the mysteries of Isis. In order to call up before our minds the spiritual connection between the mystery of Isis and that which also lives in Christianity, we need only look with the eyes of the soul upon Raphael's famous picture of the Sistine Madonna. The Virgin is holding the child Jesus, and behind her are the clouds, representing a multitude of children. We can imagine the Virgin receiving the child Jesus descending through the clouds, through a condensation, as it were, of the thin cloud substance. Created out of an entirely Christian spirit, this picture is, after all, nothing more than a kind of repetition of what the Egyptian mysteries of Isis revered when they portrayed Isis holding the child Horus. The motif of that earlier picture is in complete harmony with that of Raphael's picture. Of course, this fact must not tempt us to a superficial interpretation, common among many people since the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century right up to our own days - namely, to see the story of Christ Jesus and all that belongs to it as a mere metamorphosis, a transformation, of ancient pagan mysteries. From my book [Christianity as Mystical Fact](#) you already know how these things are to be understood. However, in the sense explained in that book we are permitted to point out a spiritual congruence between what appears in Christianity and the old pagan mysteries.

The main content of the mystery of Isis is the death of Osiris and Isis's search for the dead Osiris. We know that Osiris, the representative of the being of the sun, the representative of the spiritual sun, is killed by Typhon, who, expressed in Egyptian terms, is none other than Ahriman. Ahriman kills Osiris, throws him into the Nile, and the Nile carries the body away. Isis, the spouse of Osiris, sets out on her search and finds him over in Asia. She brings him back to Egypt, where Ahriman, the enemy, cuts the body into

fourteen parts. Isis buries these fourteen parts in various locations, so that they belong to the earth for ever after.

We can see from this story how Egyptian wisdom conceived of the connection between the powers of heaven and the powers of earth in a deeply meaningful way. On the one hand, Osiris is the representative of the powers of the sun. After having passed through death he is, in various places and simultaneously, the force that ripens everything that grows out of the earth. The ancient Egyptian sage imagines in a spirit-filled way how the powers which shine down from the sun, enter the earth and then become part of the earth, and how, as powers of the sun buried in the earth, they then hand over to the human being what matures out of the earth. The Egyptian myth is founded upon the story of Osiris - how he was killed, how his spouse Isis had to set out on her search for him, how she first brought him back to Egypt and how he then became active in another form, namely, from out of the earth.

One of the Egyptian pyramids depicts the whole event in a particularly meaningful way. The Egyptians not only recorded what they knew as the solution to the great secrets of the universe in their own particular writing, they also expressed it in their architectural constructions. They built one of these pyramids with such mathematical precision that the shadow of the sun disappeared into the base of the pyramid at the spring equinox and only reappeared at the autumn equinox. The Egyptians wanted to express in this pyramid that the forces which shine down from the sun are buried from spring to fall in the earth where they develop the forces of the earth, so that the earth may produce the fruit which humankind needs.

This, then, is the idea we find present in the minds and hearts of the ancient Egyptians, On the one hand, they look up to the sun, they look up to the lofty being of the sun and they worship him. At the same time, however, they relate how this being of the sun was lost in Osiris, and was sought by Isis, and how he was found again so that he is then able to continue working in a changed way.



Many things which appeared in the Egyptian wisdom must be repeated in a different form during our fifth post-Atlantean age. Humankind must increasingly come to understand from a spiritual-scientific point of view the mysteries of the Egyptian priests in a form appropriate to our own age, in a Christian sense. For the Egyptians, Osiris was a kind of representative of the Christ who had not yet arrived on earth. In their own way they looked upon Osiris as the being of the sun, but they imagined this sun being had been lost in a sense, and must be found again. We cannot imagine that our being of the sun, the Christ, who has passed through the Mystery of Golgotha could be lost to humankind, for he came down from spiritual heights, united himself with the man Jesus of Nazareth, and from then onwards remains with the earth. He is present, he exists, as the Christmas carol proclaims each year anew: "Unto us a Saviour is born." It thereby expresses the eternal, not the transitory nature of this event. Jesus was not only born once at Bethlehem, but is born continuously; in other words, he remains with the life of the earth. What Christ is, and what he means for us, cannot be lost.

But the Isis legend must show itself as being fulfilled in another way in our time. We cannot lose the Christ and what he, in a higher form than Osiris, gives us; but we can lose, and we have lost, what is portrayed for our Christian understanding standing at the side of Osiris - Isis - the mother of the saviour, the divine wisdom, Sophia. If the Isis legend is to be renewed, then it must not simply follow the old form - Osiris, killed by Typhon-Ahriman and carried away by the waters of the Nile, must be found again by Isis in order that his body, cut into pieces by Typhon-Ahriman, may be sunk into the earth. No, in a sense, we must find the Isis legend again, the content of the mystery of Isis, but we must create it out of imagination, suited to our own times. An understanding must arise again of the eternal cosmic truths, and it will when we learn to think and compose imaginatively, as the Egyptians did. But we must find the right Isis legend.

The Egyptian was permeated by Luciferic powers, as were all human beings who lived before the Mystery of Golgotha. If Luciferic powers are within the human being and stir the inner life, moving and weaving through it, the result will then be that Ahrimanic powers will appear as an active force outside the human being. Thus the Egyptians, who

were themselves permeated by Lucifer, rightly see a picture of the world in which Ahriman-Typhon is active.

Now, we must realize that modern humanity is permeated by Ahriman. Ahriman moves and surges within human beings, just as Lucifer moved and surged within the Egyptian world. However, when Ahriman works through Lucifer, then human beings see their picture of the world in a Luciferic form. How does the human being see this picture of the world? This Luciferic picture of the world has been created, it is here. It has become increasingly popular for modern times and has taken hold of all circles of people who want to consider themselves progressive and enlightened.

If the mystery of Christmas is to be understood, we must bear in mind that Lucifer is the power wanting to retain the world-picture of an earlier stage. Lucifer is the power trying to bring into the modern world-conception that which existed in earlier stages of human development. He wants to give permanence to what existed in earlier periods. All that was moral in earlier stages also exists of course today. (The significance of morality always lies in the present, where, like seeds for the future, it provides the basis for the creation of worlds yet to come.) But Lucifer strives to separate morality as such, all moral forces, from our world picture. He allows the laws of natural necessity alone to appear in our picture of the external world. Thus the impoverished human being of modern times is presented with a wisdom of the world in which the stars move according to purely mechanical necessity, in which the stars are devoid of morality, so that the moral meaning of the world's order cannot be found in their movements. This, my dear friends, is a purely Luciferic world picture.

Just as the Egyptians looked out into the world and saw Ahriman-Typhon as the one who takes Osiris away from them, so too, we must look at our Luciferic world picture, at the mathematical-mechanical world picture of modern-day astronomy and other branches of natural science, and realize that the Luciferic element holds sway in this world picture, just as the typhonic-Ahrimanic element held sway in the Egyptian world picture. Just as the ancient Egyptians saw their outer world picture in an Ahrimanic-typhonic light, so

modern human beings, because they are Ahrimanic, see it with Luciferic characteristics. Lucifer is present, he is working there. Just as the Egyptians imagined Ahriman-Typhon working in wind and weather, in the storms of winter, so modern human beings, if they wish to truly understand the world, must imagine that Lucifer appears to them in the sunshine and in the light of the stars, in the movements of the planets and of the moon. The world picture of Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler is a Luciferic construction. Precisely because it arose from and corresponds to our Ahrimanic forces of knowledge, its content - please distinguish here between method and content - is a Luciferic one. When the Mystery of Golgotha took place, the divine Sophia, the wisdom that enables us to see into the world with understanding, worked in a twofold way. Divine wisdom, heavenly wisdom, worked in the revelation to the poor shepherds in the fields, and in the revelation to them because of our new knowledge. We do not lack Christ; but the knowledge of Christ, the Sophia of Christ, the Isis of Christ is lacking.

This is what we should engrave in our souls as a content of the mystery of Christmas. We must realize that since the nineteenth century even theology has come to look upon Christ merely as the man from Nazareth. That means that theology is completely permeated by Lucifer. It no longer sees into the spiritual background of existence. External natural science is Luciferic; theology is Luciferic. Of course if we are speaking of the inner aspect of the human being as you can see from my previous words we could just as well say that in this theology the human being is Ahrimanic. Then in the same way we must say of the Egyptians that they were Luciferic, just as we say of them that their perception of the external world was Ahrimanic. Modern human beings must understand the mystery of Christmas in a new way. They must realize that they must first of all seek Isis, in order that Christ may appear to them. The cause of our misfortunes and the problems of modern civilization is not that we have lost Christ, who stands before us in a far greater glory than Osiris did in the eyes of the Egyptians. It is not that we have lost him and need to set out in search of him, armed with the force of Isis. No, what we have lost is the knowledge of Christ Jesus, insight into his being. This is what we must find again with the power of the Jesus Christ who is in us.

This is how we must look upon the content of the Christmas festival. For many modern people Christmas is nothing more than a festival for giving and receiving presents, something which they celebrate every year through habit. Like so many other things in modern life the Christmas festival has become an empty phrase, And it is just because so many things have become nothing more than a phrase that modern life is so full of calamities and chaos.

This is in truth the deeper reason for the chaos in our modern life.

If in this our community, we could acquire the right feelings for everything which has become mere phrases in the present age, and if these feelings could enable us to find the impulses needed for the renewals that are so necessary, then this community, which calls itself the anthroposophical community, would be worthy of its existence. This community should understand the terrible significance for our age that such things as the Christmas festival are carried forward as a mere phrase. We should be able to understand that in the future this must not be allowed, and that these things must be given a new content. Old habits must be left behind and new insights must take their place. If we cannot find the inner courage needed to do this, then we share in the lie which keeps up the yearly Christmas festival merely as a phrase, celebrating it without our souls feeling and sensing the true significance of the event. Are we really lifted up to the highest concerns of humanity when we give and receive presents every year out of habit at this festival of Christ? Do we lift ourselves up to the highest concerns of humanity when we listen to the words - which have also become a phrase - spoken by the representatives of the various religious communities! We should forbid ourselves to continue in this inner hollowness of our Christmas celebrations. We should make the inner decision to give such a festival a content which allows the highest, worthiest feelings to pass through our souls. Such a festival celebration would raise humankind to the comprehension of the meaning of its existence.

Ask yourselves whether the feelings in your hearts and souls when you stand before the Christmas tree and open the presents which are given out of habit, and the Christmas

cards containing the usual phrases - ask yourselves whether feelings are living in you that can raise humankind to an understanding of the meaning of its evolution on earth! All the problems and misfortune of our time are due to this - we cannot find the courage to lift ourselves above the empty phrases of our age. But it must happen, a new content must [be]come content which can give us entirely new feelings that stir us powerfully, just as those people were stirred who were true Christians in the first Christian centuries, and who felt the Mystery of Golgotha and the appearance of Christ as the highest which humankind could experience upon the earth. Our souls must again acquire something of this spirit.

Oh, the soul will attain to altogether new feelings if it feels committed to experience the new Isis legend within modern humanity. Lucifer kills Isis and then places her body into the infinity of space, which has become the grave of Isis, a mathematical abstraction. Then comes the search for Isis, and her discovery, made possible through the inner force of spiritual knowledge. In place of the heavens that have become dead, this knowledge places what stars and planets reveal through an inner life, so that they then appear as monuments to the spiritual powers that weave with power through space. We are able to look at the manger today in the right way only if we experience in a unique way what is weaving with spiritual power through space, and then look at that being who came into the world through the child. We know that we bear this being within us, but we must also understand him. Just as the Egyptians looked from Osiris to Isis, so we must learn to look again to the new Isis, the holy Sophia. Christ will appear again in his spiritual form during the course of the twentieth century, not through the arrival of external events alone, but because human beings find the power represented by the holy Sophia. The modern age has had the tendency to lose this power of Isis, this power of Mary. It has been killed by all that arose with the modern consciousness of humankind. And the confessions have in part exterminated just this view of Mary.

This is the mystery of modern humanity: Fundamentally speaking, Mary-Isis has been killed, and she must be sought, just as Osiris was sought by Isis in Asia. But she must be sought in the infinite spaces of the universe with the power that Christ can awaken in us,

if we devote ourselves to him in the right way.

Let us picture this rightly, let us immerse ourselves in this new Isis legend which must be experienced, and let us fill our souls with it. Then we will experience in a true sense what humankind in many of its representatives believes, that this new legend fills the holy eve of Christmas, in order to bring us into Christmas day, the day of Christ. This anthroposophical community could become a community of human beings united in love because they feel the need, common to them all, to search. Let us become conscious of this most intimate task! Let us go in spirit to the manger and bring to the Child our sacrifice and our gift, which lie in the knowledge that something altogether new must fill our souls, in order that we may fulfill the tasks which can lead humankind out of barbarism into a truly new civilization.

To achieve this, of course, it is absolutely necessary that in our circles we are prepared to help one another in love, so that a real community of souls arises in which all forms of envy and the like disappear, and in which we do not look merely each at the other, but together face the great goal we have in common. The mystery brought into the world by the Christmas child also contains this - that we can look at a common goal without discord because the common goal signifies union in harmony. The light of Christmas should actually shine as a light of peace, as a light that brings external peace, only because first of all it brings an inner peace into the hearts of human beings. We should learn to say to ourselves: If we can manage to work together in love on the great tasks, then, and only then, do we understand Christmas. If we cannot manage this, we do not understand Christmas.

Let us remember that when we do sow discord, this discord hinders us in understanding the one who appeared among human beings on the first Christmas on earth. Can we not pour this mystery of Christmas into our souls, as something which unites our hearts in love and harmony? If we do not properly understand what spiritual science is, then we will not be able to do this. Nothing will come of this community if we merely bring into it ideas and impulses we have picked up here and there from all corners of the world,

where clichés and routine hold sway. Let us remember that our community is facing a difficult year, that all our forces must be gathered together, and let us celebrate Christmas in this spirit. Oh, I would like to find words that could speak deeply into the heart of each one of you on this evening. Then each one of you would feel that my words contain a greeting which is at the same time an appeal to kindle spiritual science within your hearts, so that it may become a power that can help humanity which is living under such terrible oppression.

Beginning with such points of view, I have gathered the thoughts which I wished to speak to you. Be assured that they are intended as a warm Christmas greeting for each one of you, as something which can lead you into the new year in the very best way. In this spirit, accept my words today as they were intended, as an affectionate Christmas greeting.

Isis-Sophia Des Gottes Weisheit Sie hat Luzifer getötet Und auf der  
Weltenkränze Schwingen In Raumesweitenfortgetragen. Christus-Wollen In  
Menschen wendend, - Es wird Luzzfer entreissen Und auf des Geisteswissens  
Booten In Menschenseeten auferwecken Isis-Sophia Des Gottes Weisheit.  
Isis-Sophia, Wisdom of God, she has slain Lucifer, And on the wings of the  
powers of the world Carried her hence into the infinite space of the universe. The  
willing of Christ Working in man Shall wrest from Lucifer And on the boats of  
Spirit-knowledge Awaken in human souls Isis-Sophia Wisdom of God. This  
translation edited for clarity

Search for the New Isis, the Divine Sophia: The Quest for the Isis-Sophia

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## **The Etherisation of the Blood**

The following lecture was given by Rudolf Steiner to an audience familiar with the general background of his anthroposophical teachings. He constantly emphasised the distinction between his written works and reports of lectures which were given as oral communications and were not originally intended for print. It should also be remembered that certain premises were taken for granted when the words were spoken. "These premises," Rudolf Steiner writes in his autobiography, "include at the very least the anthroposophical knowledge of Man and of the Cosmos in its spiritual essence; also of what may be called 'anthroposophical history', told as an outcome of research into the spiritual world."

### The Etherisation of the Blood

A Lecture By Rudolf Steiner Basle, October 1, 1911 GA 13

WHEREVER we, as human beings, have striven for knowledge, whether as mystics or realists or in any way at all, the acquisition of *self-knowledge* has been demanded of us. But as has been repeatedly emphasised on other occasions, self-knowledge is by no means as easy to achieve as many people believe - anthroposophists sometimes among them. The anthroposophist should be constantly aware of the hindrances he will encounter in his efforts. But the acquisition of self-knowledge is absolutely essential if we are to reach a worthy goal in world-existence and if our actions are to be worthy of us as members of humanity.

Let us ask ourselves the question: Why is the achievement of self-knowledge so difficult? Man is very a complicated being. If we mean to speak truly of his inner life, his life of soul, we shall not begin by regarding it as something simple and elementary. We shall rather have the patience and perseverance, the will, to penetrate more deeply into the marvellous creation of the Divine-Spiritual Powers known to us as Man.

Before we investigate the nature of self-knowledge, two aspects of the life of the human soul may present themselves to us. Just as the magnet has North and South poles, just as light and darkness are present in the world, so there are two poles in man's life of soul. These two poles become evident when we observe a person placed in two contrasting situations. Suppose we are watching someone who is entirely absorbed in the contemplation of some strikingly beautiful and impressive natural phenomenon. We see how still he is standing, moving neither hand nor foot, never turning his eyes away from the spectacle presented to him, and we are aware that inwardly he is picturing his environment. That is one situation. Another is the following: a man is walking along the street and feels that someone has insulted him. Without thinking, he is roused to anger and gives vent to it by striking the person who insulted him. We are there witnessing a manifestation of forces springing from anger, a manifestation of impulses of will, and it is easy to imagine that if the action had been preceded by thought no blow need have been struck. We have now pictured two contrasting situations: in the one there is only ideation, a process in the life of thought from which all conscious will is absent; in the other there is no thought, no ideation, and immediate expression is given to an impulse of will. Here we have examples of the two extremes of human behaviour. The first pole is complete surrender to contemplation, to thought, in which the will has no part; the second pole is the impelling force of will without thought. These facts are revealed simply by observation of external life.

We can go into these things more deeply and we come then into spheres in which we can find our bearings only by summoning the findings of occult investigation to our aid. Here another polarity confronts us - that of sleeping and waking. From the elementary concepts of Anthroposophy we know that in waking life the four members of a man's being - physical body, etheric body, astral body and ego - are organically and actively interwoven, but that in sleep the physical and etheric bodies remain in bed, while the astral body and ego are outpoured into the great world bordering on physical existence. These facts could also be approached from a different point of view. We might ask: what is there to be said about ideation, contemplation, thinking - and about the will and its

impulses on the one hand during waking life and during sleep on the other?

When we penetrate more deeply into this question it becomes evident that in his present physical existence man is, in a certain sense, always asleep, Only there is a difference between sleep during the night and sleep during the day. Of this we can be convinced in a purely external way, for we know that we can wake in the occult sense during the day, that is to say, one can become clairvoyant and see into the spiritual world. The physical body in its ordinary state is asleep to what is then and there happening and we can rightly speak of an awakening of our spiritual senses. In the night, of course, we are asleep in the normal way. It can therefore be said: ordinary sleep is sleep as regards the outer physical world; daytime consciousness at the present time is sleep as regards the spiritual world.

These facts can be considered in yet another light. On deeper scrutiny we realise that in the ordinary waking condition of physical life, man has, as a rule, very little power or control over his will and its impulses. The will is very detached from daily life. Only consider how little of all you do from morning to evening is really the outcome of your own thinking, of your personal resolutions. When someone knocks at the door and you say "Come in!", that cannot be called a decision of your own thinking and will. If you are hungry and seat yourself at a table, that cannot be called a decision made by the will, because it is occasioned by your circumstances, by the needs of your organism. Try to picture your daily life and you will find how little the will is directly influenced from the centre of your being. Why is this the case? Occultism shows us that in respect of his will man actually sleeps by day, that is to say he is not in the real sense present in his will-impulses at all. We may evolve better and better concepts and ideas; or we may become more highly moral, more cultured individuals, but we can do nothing as regards the will. By cultivating better thoughts we can work *indirectly* upon the will but as far as life is concerned we can do nothing *directly* to it, for in the waking life of day, our will is influenced only in an indirect way, namely through *sleep*. When we are asleep we do not think; ideation passes over into a state of sleep. The will, however, awakes, permeates our organism from outside, and invigorates it. We feel strengthened in the morning because what has penetrated into our organism is of the nature of will. That we are not aware of

this activity of the will becomes comprehensible when we remember that all conceptual activity ceases when we ourselves are asleep. To begin with, therefore, this stimulus shall be given for further contemplation, further meditation. The more progress you make in self-knowledge, the more you will find confirmation of the truth of the words that man sleeps in respect of his will when he is awake and sleeps in respect of his conceptual life when he is asleep. The life of will sleeps by day; the life of thought sleeps by night.

Man is unaware that the will does not sleep during the night because he only knows how to be awake in his life of thought. The will does not sleep during the night but it then works as it were in a fiery element, works upon his body in order to restore what has been used up by day.

Thus there are two poles in man, the life of observation and ideation, and the impulses of will; and man is related in entirely opposite ways to these two poles. The whole life of soul moves in various nuances between these two poles, and we shall come nearer to understanding it by bringing this microcosmic life of soul into relation with the higher worlds.

From what has been said we have learnt that the life of thought and ideation is one of the poles of man's life of soul. This life of thought is something which seems unreal to materialistically minded people. Do we not often hear it said: "Oh, ideas and thoughts are *only* ideas and thoughts!" This is intended to imply that if someone has [a piece] of bread or meat in his hand it is a reality because it can be eaten, but a thought is *only* a thought, it is not a reality. Why is this said? It is because what man calls his thoughts are related to what thoughts really are as a shadow-image is to the actual thing. The shadow-image of a flower points you to the flower itself, to the reality. So it is with thoughts. Human thinking is the shadowing forth of ideas and beings belonging to a higher world, the world we call the Astral plane. And you represent thinking rightly to yourself when you picture the human head thus - it is not absolutely correct but simply diagrammatic. In the head are thoughts but these thoughts must be pictured as living beings on the Astral plane. Beings of the most varied kinds are at work there in the form of teeming concepts

and activities which cast their shadow-images into men, and these processes are reflected in the human head as thinking.

#### Diagram 1

As well as the life of thought in the human soul, there is also the life of feeling. Feelings fall into two categories: those of pleasure and sympathy and those of displeasure and antipathy. The former are aroused by good deeds, benevolent deeds; antipathy is aroused by evil, malevolent deeds. Here there is something more than and different from, the mere forming of concepts. We form concepts of things irrespectively of any other factor. But our soul experiences sympathy or antipathy only in respect of what is beautiful and good, or what is ugly and evil. Just as everything that takes place in man in the form of thoughts points to the Astral plane, so everything connected with sympathy or antipathy points to the realm we call Lower Devachan. Processes in the Heavenly World, or Devachan, are projected, mainly into our breast, as feelings of sympathy or antipathy for what is beautiful or ugly, for what is good or evil. So that in our feelings for the moral-aesthetic element, we bear within our souls shadow-reflections of the Heavenly World or Lower Devachan.

There is still a third province in the life of the human soul which must be strictly distinguished from the mere preference for good deeds. There is a difference between standing by and taking pleasure in witnessing some kindly deed and setting the will in action and actually performing some such deed. I will call pleasure in good deeds or displeasure in evil deeds the *aesthetic* element as against the *moral* element that impels a man to perform some good deed. The moral element is at a higher level than the purely aesthetic; mere pleasure or displeasure is at a lower level than the will to do something good or bad. In so far as our soul feels constrained to give expression to moral impulses, these impulses are the shadow-images of Higher Devachan, of the Higher Heavenly World.

It is easy to picture these three stages of activity of the human soul - the purely

intellectual (thoughts, concepts), the aesthetic (pleasure or displeasure), and the moral (revealed in impulses to good or bad deeds) - as *microcosmic* images of the three realms which in the Macrocosm, the great Universe, lie one above the other. The Astral world is reflected in the world of thought; the Devachanic world is reflected in the aesthetic sphere of pleasure and displeasure; and the Higher Devachanic world is reflected as morality.

Thoughts:	Shadow-images of Beings of the Astral Plane (Waking)
Sympathy and Antipathy:	Shadow-images of Beings of Lower Devachan (Dreaming)
Moral Impulses:	Shadow-images of Beings of Higher Devachan (Sleeping)

If we connect this with what was said previously concerning the two poles of the soul-life, we shall take the pole of intellect to be that which dominates the waking life, the life in which man is mentally awake. During the day he is awake in respect of his intellect; during sleep he is awake in respect of his will. It is because at night he is asleep in respect of intellect that he is unaware of what he is happening with his will. The truth is that what we call *moral principles*, *moral impulses*, are working indirectly into the will. And in point of fact man needs the life of sleep in order that the moral impulses he takes into himself through the life of thought can become active and effective. In his ordinary life today man is capable of accomplishing what is right only on the plane of intellect; he is less able to accomplish anything on the moral plane for there he is dependent upon help coming from the Macrocosm.

What is already within us can bring about the further development of intellectuality, but the Gods must come to our aid if we are to acquire greater moral strength. We go to sleep in order that we may plunge into the Divine Will where the intellect does not intervene and where Divine Forces transform into the power of will the moral principles we accept, where they instill into our will that which we could otherwise receive only into our thoughts.

Between these two poles, that of the will which wakes by night and of the intellect which is awake by day, lies the sphere of aesthetic appreciation which is continuously present in man. During the day man is not fully awake - at least only the most prosaic, pedantic individuals are always fully awake in waking life. We must always be able to dream a little even by day when we are awake; we must be able to give ourselves up to the enjoyment art, of poetry, or of some other activity that is not concerned wholly with crass reality. Those who can give themselves up in this way form a connection with something that can enliven and invigorate the whole of existence. To give oneself up to such imaginings is like a dream making its way into waking life. Into the life of sleep you know well that dreams enter; these dreams in the usual sense, dreams which permeate sleep-consciousness. Human beings need also to dream by day if they do not wish to lead an arid, empty, unhealthy waking life. Dreaming takes place during sleep at night in any case and no proof of this is required. Midway between the two poles of night dreaming and day dreaming is the condition that can come to expression in fantasy.

So here again there is a threefold life of soul. The intellectual element in which we are really awake brings us shadow-images of the Astral Plane when by day we give ourselves up to a thought - wherein the most fruitful ideas for daily life and great inventions originate. Then during sleep, when we dream, these dreams play into our life of sleep and shadow-images from Lower Devachan are reflected into us. And when we work actively during sleep, impressing morality into our will - we cannot be aware of this actual process but certainly we can of its effects - when we are able to imbue our life of thoughts during the night with the influence of Divine Spiritual Powers, then the impulses we receive are reflections from Higher Devachan, the Higher Heavenly World. These reflections are the moral impulses and feelings which are active within us and lead to the recognition that human life vindicated only when we place our thoughts at the service of the good and the beautiful, when we allow the very heart's blood of Divine Spiritual life to stream through our intellectual activities, permeating them with moral impulses.

The life of the human soul as presented here, first from external, exoteric observation and then from observation of a more mystical character is revealed by deeper (occult)

investigation. The processes that have been described in their more external aspect can also be perceived in man through clairvoyance. When a man stands in front of us today in his waking state and we observe him with the eye of clairvoyance, certain rays of light are seen streaming continually from the heart towards the head. Within the head these rays play around the organ known in anatomy as the pineal gland. These streamings arise because human blood, which is a physical substance, is perpetually resolving itself into etheric substance. In the region of the heart there is a continual transformation of the blood into this delicate etheric substance which streams upwards towards the head and glimmers around the pineal gland. This process - the etherisation of the blood - can be perceived in the human being all the time during his waking life.

## Diagram 2

The occult observer is able to see a continual streaming from outside into the brain, and also in the reverse direction, from the brain to the heart. Now these streams, which in sleeping man come from outside, from cosmic space, from the Macrocosm, and flow into the inner constitution of the physical body and etheric bodies lying in the bed, reveal something remarkable when they are investigated. These rays vary greatly in different individuals. Sleeping human beings differ very drastically from one another, and if those who are a little vain only knew how badly they betray themselves to occult observation when they go to sleep during public gatherings, they would try their level best not to let this happen!

Moral qualities are revealed distinctly in the particular colouring of the streams which flow into human beings during sleep; in an individual of lower moral principles, the streams are quite different from what is observable in an individual of noble principles. Endeavours to dissemble are useless. In the face of the higher Cosmic Powers, no dissembling is possible. In the case of a man who has only a slight inclination towards moral principles the rays streaming into him are a brownish red in colour - various shades tending toward brownish red. In a man of high moral ideals the rays are lilac-violet in colour. At the moment of waking or of going off to sleep a kind of struggle takes place in



the region of the pineal gland between what streams down from above and what streams upward from below. When a man is awake the intellectual element streams upwards from below in the form of currents of light, and what is of moral-aesthetic nature streams downwards from above. At the moment of waking or of going off to sleep, these two currents meet, and in the man of low morality a violent struggle between the two streams takes place in the region of the pineal gland. In the man of high morality there is around the pineal gland as it were a little sea of light. Moral nobility is revealed when a calm glow surrounds the pineal gland at these moments. In this way a man's moral disposition is reflected in him, and this calm glow of light often extends as far as the heart. Two streams can therefore be perceived in man - the one Macrocosmic, the other, Microcosmic.

To estimate the significance of how these two streams meet in man is possible only by considering on the one hand what was said previously in a more external way about the life of the soul and how this life reveals the threefold polarity of the intellectual, the aesthetic and the moral elements that stream downwards from above, from the brain toward the heart; and if, on the other hand, we grasp the significance of what was said about turning our attention to the corresponding phenomenon in the Macrocosm. This corresponding phenomenon can be described today as the result of the most scrupulously careful occult investigation of recent years, undertaken by individuals among genuine Rosicrucians. These investigations have shown that something similar to what has been described in connection with the Microcosm also takes place in the Macrocosm. You will understand this more fully as time goes on.

Just as in the region of the human heart the blood is continually being transformed into etheric substance, a similar process takes place in the Macrocosm. We understand this when we turn our minds to the Mystery of Golgotha - to the moment when the blood flowed from the wounds of Jesus Christ.

This blood must not be regarded simply as chemical substance, but by reason of all that has been said concerning the nature of Jesus of Nazareth it must be recognised as

something altogether unique. When it flowed from His wounds, a substance was imparted to our Earth, which in uniting with it, constituted an Event of the greatest possible significance for all future ages of the Earth's evolution - and it could take place only once. What came of this blood in the ages that followed? Nothing different from what otherwise takes place in the heart of man. In the course of Earth evolution this blood passes through a process of "etherisation." And just as our human blood streams upwards from the heart as ether, so since the Mystery of Golgotha the etherised blood of Christ Jesus has been present in the ether of the earth. The etheric body of the Earth is permeated by the blood - now transformed - which flowed on Golgotha. This is supremely important. If what has thus come to pass through Christ Jesus had not taken place, man's condition on the Earth could only have been as previously described. But since the Mystery of Golgotha it has always been possible for the etheric blood of Christ to flow together with the streamings from below upward, from heart to head.

Because the etherised blood of Jesus of Nazareth is present in the etheric body of the Earth, it accompanies the etherised human blood streaming upwards from the heart to the brain, so that not only those streams of which I spoke earlier meet in man, but the human blood-stream unites with the blood-stream of Christ Jesus. A union of these two streams can, however, come about only if a person is able to unfold true understanding of what is contained in the Christ Impulse. Otherwise there can be no union; the two streams then mutually repel each other, thrust each other away. In every epoch of Earth evolution understanding must be acquired *in the form suitable for that epoch*. At the time when Christ Jesus lived on Earth, preceding events were rightly understood by those who came to His forerunner, John, and were baptised by him according to the rite described in the Gospels. They received baptism in order that their sin, that is to say, the karma of their previous lives - karma which had come to an end - might be changed; and in order that they might realise that the most powerful Impulse in Earth evolution was about to descend into a physical body. But the evolution of humanity progresses and in our present age what matters is that people should recognise the need for the knowledge contained in Spiritual Science and be able so to fire the streams flowing from heart to brain that this knowledge can be understood.

If this comes to pass, individuals will be able to receive and comprehend the event that has its beginning in the Twentieth Century: this event is *the appearance of the Christ as an Etheric Being in contradistinction to the Physical Christ of Palestine*. For we have now reached the point of time when the Etheric Christ enters into the life of the Earth and will become visible - at first to a small number of individuals through a form of natural clairvoyance. Then in the course of the next three thousand years, He will become visible to greater and greater numbers of people. This will inevitably come to pass in the natural course of development. That it will come to pass is as true as were the achievements of electricity in the nineteenth century. A number of individuals will see the Etheric Christ and will themselves experience the event that took place at Damascus. But this will depend upon such men learning to be alert to the moment when Christ draws near to them. In only a few decades from now it will happen, particularly to those who are young - already preparation is being made for this - that some individual here or there has certain experiences. If he has sharpened his vision through having assimilated Anthroposophy, he may become aware that suddenly someone has come near to help him, to make him alert to this or that. The truth is that Christ has come to him, although he believes that what he saw is a physical man. He will come to realise that what he saw was a supersensible being, because it immediately vanishes. Many a human being will have this experience when sitting silent in his room, heavy-hearted and oppressed, not knowing which way to turn. The door will open, and the etheric Christ will appear and speak words of consolation to him. The Christ will become a living Comforter to men. However strange it may as yet seem, it is true nevertheless that many a time when people - even in considerable numbers - are sitting together, not knowing what to do, and waiting, they will see the Etheric Christ. He will Himself be there, will confer with them, will make His voice heard in such gatherings. These times are approaching, and the positive, constructive element now described will take real effect in the evolution of mankind.

No word shall be said here against the great advances made by culture in our day; these achievements are essential for the welfare and the freedom of men. But whatever can be gained in the way of outer progress in mastering the forces of nature, is something small

and insignificant compared with the blessing bestowed upon the individual who experiences the awakening soul through Christ, the Christ who will now be operative in human culture and its concerns. Men will thereby acquire forces that make for unification. In very truth Christ brings constructive forces into human culture and civilisation.

If we were to look into early post-Atlantean times, we would find that men built their dwelling places by methods very different from those used in modern life. In those days they made use of all kinds of growing things. Even when building palaces they summoned nature to their aid by utilizing plants interlaced with branches of trees and so on, Whereas today men must build with broken fragments. All the culture of the external world is contrived with the aid of products of fragmentation. And in the course of the coming years you will realise even more clearly how much in our civilised life is the outcome of destruction.

Light itself is being destroyed in this post-Atlantean age of the Earth's existence, which until the time of Atlantis was a progressive process. Since then it has been a process of decay.\* What is light? Light decays and the decaying light is *electricity*. What we know as electricity is light that is being destroyed in matter. And the chemical force that undergoes a transformation in the process of Earth evolution is *magnetism*. Yet a third force will become active and if electricity seems to work wonders today, this third force will affect civilisation in a still more miraculous way. The more of this force we employ, the faster the earth will tend to become a corpse and its spiritual part prepare for the Jupiter embodiment. Forces have to be applied for the purpose of destruction, in order that man may become free of the Earth and that the Earth's body may fall away. As long as the earth was involved in progressive evolution, no such destruction took place, for the great achievements of electricity can only serve a decaying Earth. Strange as this sounds, it must gradually become known. By understanding the process of evolution we shall learn to assess our culture at its true value. We shall also learn that it is necessary for the Earth to be destroyed, for otherwise the spiritual could not become free. We shall also learn to value what is positive, namely the penetration of spiritual forces into our

existence on Earth.

\* See also the section at the end of the text, containing answers given by Dr. Steiner to questions.

Thus we realise what a tremendous advance was signified by the fact that Christ lived for three years on the Earth in a human body specially prepared in order that He might be visible to physical eyes. Through what came to pass during those three years men have been made ready to behold the Christ who will move among them in an etheric body, who will participate in earthly life as truly and effectively as did the Physical Christ in Palestine. If men observe such happenings with undimmed senses they will know that there is an etheric body that will move about in the physical world, but is the *only* etheric body able to work in the physical world as a human physical body works. It will differ from a physical body in this respect only, that it can be in two, three, nay even in a hundred, a thousand places at the same time. This is possible only for an etheric, not for a physical form. What will be accomplished in humanity through this further advance is that the two poles of which I have spoken, the intellectual and the moral, will more and more become one; they will merge into unity. This will come about because in the course of the next millennia men will become aware of the presence of the Etheric Christ in the world; more and more they will be influenced in waking life too by the direct working of the Good from the spiritual world. Whereas at the present time, the will is asleep by day, and man is only able to influence it indirectly through thought, in the course of the next millennia, through the power which from our time onwards is working in us under the aegis of Christ, it will come about that the deeds of men in waking consciousness too can be directly productive of Good.

The dream of Socrates, that virtue can be taught, will come true; more and more it will be possible on Earth not only for the intellect to be stimulated and energized by this teaching but for moral impulses to be spread abroad. Schopenhauer said, "To preach morality is easy; to establish it is very difficult." Why is this? Because no morality has yet been spread by preaching. It is quite possible to recognise moral principles and yet not abide

by them. For most people the Pauline saying holds good, that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. This will change, because the moral fire streaming from the figure of Christ will intensify recognition of the need for moral impulses. Man will transform the earth by feeling with ever-increasing strength that morality is an essential part of it. In the future, to be immoral will be possible only for individuals who are goaded in this direction, who are possessed by evil demons, by Ahrimanic, Asuric Powers and moreover aspire to be so.

In time to come there will be on Earth a sufficient number of individuals who teach morality and at the same time sustain its principles; but there will also be those who by their own free decision surrender themselves to the evil Powers and thus enable an excess of evil to be pitted against a good humanity. Nobody will be forced to do this; it will lie in the free will of each individual.

Then will come the epoch when the Earth passes into conditions of which, as in so much else, Oriental Occultism and Mysticism alone give some idea. The moral atmosphere will by then have gathered strength. For many thousands of years Oriental Mysticism has spoken of this epoch, and since the coming of Gautama Buddha it has spoken with special emphasis about that future condition when the earth will be bathed in a "moral-ether-atmosphere." Ever since the time of the ancient Rishis it was the great hope of Oriental Mysticism that this moral impulse would come to the Earth from Vishva-Karman or, as Zarathustra proclaimed, from Ahura Mazdao. Thus Oriental Mysticism foresaw that this moral impulse, this moral atmosphere, would come to the Earth from the Being we call the Christ. And it was upon Him, upon Christ, that the hopes of Oriental Mysticism were set.

Oriental Mysticism was able to picture the consequences of that event but not the actual form it would take. The mind could picture that within a period of 5,000 years after the great Buddha achieved Enlightenment, pure Akashic forms, bathed in fire, lit by the sun, would appear in the wake of One beyond the ken of Oriental Mysticism. A wonderful picture in very truth: that something would happen to make it possible for the Sons of

Fire and of Light to move about the Earth, not in physically embodiment but as pure Akashic forms within the Earth's moral atmosphere. But then, so it was said, in 5,000 years after Gautama Buddha's Enlightenment, the Teacher will also be there to make known to men what the nature of these wonderful forms of pure Fire and Light. This teacher - the Maitreya Buddha - will appear 3,000 years after our present era and will speak of the Christ Impulse.

Thus Oriental Mysticism unites with the Christian knowledge of the West to form a wonderfully beautiful unity. It is also disclosed that he who will appear three thousand years after our era as the Maitreya Buddha will have incarnated again and again on the Earth as a Bodhisattva, as the successor of Gautama Buddha. One of his incarnations was that of Jeshu ben Pandira, who lived a hundred years before the Christian era. The being who incarnated in Jeshu ben Pandira is he who will one day become the Maitreya Buddha, and who from century to century returns ever and again in a body of flesh, not yet as Buddha, but as Bodhisattva. Even now there proceeds from him who later on will be the Maitreya Buddha, the most significant teachings concerning the Christ Being and the Sons of Fire - the Agnishvattas - of Indian Mysticism.

The indications by which the Being who is to become the Maitreya Buddha can be recognised are common to all genuine Eastern mysticism and to Christian gnosis. The Maitreya Buddha who, in contrast to the Sons of Fire, will appear in a physical body as Bodhisattva, can be recognised by the fact that in the first instance his early development gives no intimation of the nature of the individuality within him. Only those possessed of understanding will recognise the presence of a Bodhisattva in such a human being between the ages of thirty and thirty-three, and not before. Something akin to a change of personality then takes place. The Maitreya Buddha will reveal his identity to humanity in the thirty-third year of his life. As Christ Jesus began His mission in His thirtieth year, so do the Bodhisattvas, who will continue to proclaim the Christ Impulse, reveal themselves - in the thirty-third year of their lives. And the Maitreya Buddha himself, as transformed Bodhisattva, speaking in powerful words of which no adequate idea can be given at the present time, will proclaim the great secrets of existence. He will speak in a language that

has first be created, for no human being to-day could formulate words such as those in which the Maitreya Buddha will address humanity. The reason why men cannot be addressed in this way at the present time is that the physical instrument for this form of speech does not yet exist. The teachings of the Enlightened One will not stream into men as teachings only, but will pour moral impulses into their souls. Words such as will then be spoken cannot yet be uttered by a physical larynx; in our time they can be present only in the spiritual worlds.

Anthroposophy is the preparation for everything that the future holds in store. Those who take the process of man's evolution seriously resolve not to allow the soul's development to come to a standstill but to ensure that this development will eventually enable the spiritual part of the Earth to become free, leaving the grosser part to fall away like a corpse - for men could frustrate the whole process. Those who desire evolution to succeed must acquire understanding of the life of the spirit through what we to-day call Anthroposophy. The cultivation of Anthroposophy thus becomes a duty; knowledge becomes something that we actually feel, something towards which we have responsibility. When we are inwardly aware of this responsibility and have this resolve, when the mysteries of the world arouse in us the wish to become Anthroposophists, then our feeling is true and right. But Anthroposophy must not be something that merely satisfies our curiosity; it must rather be something without which we cannot live. Only then are our feelings what they ought to be, only then do we live as building stones in that great work of construction which must be carried out in human souls and can embrace all mankind.

Anthroposophy is a revelation of world-happenings which will confront the men of the future, will confront our own souls whether still in the physical body or in the life between death and a new birth. The coming changes will affect us, no matter whether we are still living in the physical body or whether it has been laid aside. Understanding of these events must however be acquired during life in the physical body if they are to take effect after death. To those who acquire some understanding of the Christ while they are still living in the physical body, it will make no difference, when the moment comes for



vision of the Christ, whether or not they have already passed through the gate of death. But if those who now reject any understanding of the Christ have already passed through the gate of death when this moment arrives, they must wait until their next incarnation, for such understanding cannot be acquired between death and rebirth. Once the foundation has been acquired, however, it endures, and then Christ becomes visible also during the period between death and the new birth.

And so Anthroposophy is not only something we learn for our physical life but is of essential value when we have laid aside the physical body at death.

This is what I wished to impart to you today as a help in answering many questions. Self-knowledge is difficult because man is such a complex being. The reason for this complexity is that he is connected with all the higher Worlds and Beings. We have within us shadow-images of the great Universe and all the members of our constitution - the physical, etheric, astral bodies and the ego - are worlds for Divine Beings. Our physical body, etheric body, astral body and ego form one world; the other is the higher World, the hEaven world. Divine-spiritual Worlds are the bodily members of the Beings of the higher spheres of cosmic existence.

Man is the complex being he is because he is a mirror-image of the spiritual world. Realisation of this should make him conscious of his intrinsic worth. But from the knowledge that although we are reflected images of the spiritual world we nevertheless fall far short of what we ought to be - from this knowledge we also acquire, as well as consciousness of our worth as human beings, the right attitude of modesty and humility towards the Macrocosm and its Gods.

## **Rudolf Steiner's Answers to Questions at the End of the Lecture**

Translated by George Adams

*Question:* How are the words used by St. Paul, "to speak in tongues" (Cor. I: 12), to be understood?

*Answer:* In exceptional human beings it can happen that not only is the phenomenon of speaking present in the waking state, but that something otherwise present in sleep-consciousness only, flows into this speaking. This is the phenomenon to which St. Paul refers. Goethe refers to it in the same sense; he has written two very interesting treatises on the subject.

*Question:* How are Christ's words of consolation received and experienced?

*Answer:* Men will feel these words of consolation as though arising in their own hearts. The experience may also seem like physical hearing.

*Question:* What is the relation of chemical forces and substances to the spiritual world?

*Answer:* There are in the world a number of substances which can combine with or separate from each other. What we call chemical action is projected into the physical world from the world of Devachan - the realm of the Harmony of the Spheres. In the combination of two substances according to their atomic weights, we have a reflection of two tones of the Harmony of the Spheres. The chemical affinity between two substances in the physical world is like a reflection from the realm of the Harmony of the Spheres. The numerical ratios in chemistry are an expression of the numerical ratios of the Harmony of the Spheres, which has become dumb and silent owing to the densification of matter. If one were able to etherealise material substance and to perceive the atomic numbers the inner formative principle thereof, he would be hearing the Harmony of the Spheres.

We have the physical world, the astral world, the Lower Devachan and the Higher Devachan. If the body is thrust down lower even than the physical world, it comes into the sub-physical world, the lower astral world, the lower or evil Lower Devachan, and the lower or evil Higher Devachan. The evil astral world is the province of Lucifer, the evil Lower Devachan the province of Ahriman, and the evil Higher Devachan the province of

the Asuras. When chemical action is driven down beneath the physical plane - into the evil Devachanic world - *magnetism* arises. When light is thrust down into the sub-material - that is to say, a stage deeper than the material world - *electricity* arises. If what lives in the Harmony of the Spheres is thrust down farther still, into the province of the Asuras, an even more terrible force - which it will not be possible to keep hidden very much longer - is generated. It can only be hoped that when this force comes to be known - a force we must conceive as being far, far stronger than the most violent electrical discharge - it can only be hoped that before some discoverer gives this force into the hands of humankind, men will no longer have anything un-moral left in them.

*Question:* What is electricity?

*Answer:* Electricity is light in the sub-material state. Light is there compressed to the utmost degree. An inward quality too must be ascribed to light; light is *itself* at every point in space. Warmth will expand in the three dimensions of space. In light there is a fourth; it is of fourfold extension - it has the quality of inwardness as a fourth dimension.

*Question:* What happens to the Earth's corpse?

*Answer:* As the residue of the Moon-evolution we have our present moon which circles around the Earth. Similarly there will be a residue of the Earth which will circle around Jupiter. Then these residues will gradually dissolve into the universal ether. On Venus there will no longer be any residue. Venus will manifest, to begin with, as pure Warmth, then it will become Light and then pass over into the spiritual world. The residue left behind by the Earth will be like a corpse. This is a path along which man must not accompany the Earth, for he would thereby be exposed to dreadful torments. But there are Beings who accompany this corpse, since they themselves will by that means develop to a higher stage.

Reflected as sub-physical world:

Astral World - the province of Lucifer

Lower Devachan- the province of Ahriman

Higher Devachan - the province of the Asuras

Diagram3

Translated from a shorthand report unrevised by the lecturer. The volume of the Complete Edition of the works of Rudolf Steiner containing the original text of the following lecture, among twenty-two others, is entitled: Das esoterische Christentum und die geistige Führung der Menschheit.. (No. 130 in the Bibliographical Survey, 1961). This English edition of the following lecture is published by permission of the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung, Dornach, Switzerland.

## **The Four Sacrifices of Christ**

A Lecture By Rudolf Steiner Basel, 01 June 1914 GA 152

In our present civilization we need, above all, a new knowledge of Christ. This new Christ knowledge is to be gained increasingly through the effects upon us of the science of the spirit. Much, however, that today bears the official seal of Christianity is antagonistic to this new knowledge. It must come to be realized that a school of unselfishness is needed in our present culture. A renewing of responsibility, a deepening of man's moral life, can come only through a training in unselfishness, and under the conditions of the present age only those can go through this school who have won for themselves an understanding of real, all-pervading selflessness.

We can search through the entire evolution of the world without finding a deeper understanding of selflessness than that offered by Christ's appearance upon earth. To know Christ is to go through the school of unselfishness, and to become acquainted with all those incentives to human development that fall gently into our souls, warming and animating every unselfish inclination within us, arousing it from passive to active soul life.

Under the influence of materialism the natural unselfishness of mankind was lost to an extent that will be fully realized only in the distant future. But by contemplating the Mystery of Golgotha, by permeating our knowledge of it with all our feeling, we may acquire again, with our whole soul-being, an education in selflessness. We may say that what Christ did for earthly evolution was included in the fundamental impulse of selflessness, and what He may become for the conscious development of the human soul is the school of unselfishness. We shall best realize this if we consider the Mystery of Golgotha in its most inclusive connection.

This mystery, as we know it, took place once in the physical evolution of the earth. The Being whom we acknowledge as the Christ clothed Himself once in a human body, in the

body of Jesus of Nazareth. But this act was preceded by three preparatory steps. Three times earlier something of a similar nature occurred, not as yet on earth but in the spiritual world, and we have in a sense, three Mysteries of Golgotha that had not yet been fulfilled upon the physical plane. Only the fourth took place in the physical realm, as related in the Gospels and in the Pauline Epistles. This greatest of earthly events was prepared for by three supramundane acts, one taking place in the old Lemurian period and two in the Atlantean. Although these three preparatory events occurred in the supramundane sphere, their power descended to the earth; we shall try to understand the effect of these forces upon human evolution.

In relation to our moral life, our understanding of the world, and in relation to all the activities of our consciousness soul, we must first become selfless. This is a duty of our present culture to the future. Mankind must become more and more selfless; therein lies the future of right living, and of all the deeds of love possible to earthly humanity. Our conscious life is and must be on its way to unselfishness. In a certain connection, essential unselfishness already exists in us, and it would be the greatest misfortune for earthly man if certain sections of his being were as self-seeking as he still is in his moral, intellectual and emotional life. If the same degree of selfishness could take over our senses, it would be a great misfortune because our senses now work in our bodies in a truly unselfish manner.

We have eyes in our body; through these eyes we see, but only because they are selfless and we do not feel them. We see things through them, but the eyes themselves are apart from our perception; it is the same with the other senses. Let us assume that our eyes were self-seeking. What would happen to men? We should approach the color blue, for example, and because our eyes would use up the color immediately within themselves instead of letting it pass through, we should feel a sort of suction in the eyes. If our eyes were as selfish as we are in our moral, intellectual and emotional life, and they wished to experience the effect of red in themselves, we should feel a sharp stab. If our eyes were self-seeking, all our impressions would give us sucking or stabbing pains. We should be painfully conscious that we have eyes. Today, however, humanity is aware of color and

light without having to think of the seeing process. The eye is selflessly extinguished during perception. It is the same with the other senses.

In our senses unselfishness reigns, but they would never have reached this unselfishness if Lucifer, even in the old Lemurian age, had been left to his own devices. The spirit who said, as related in the Bible, "Your eyes shall be opened," made it necessary to transfer man to a sphere of earthly life in which his eyes, if they had developed as they would have done under Lucifer's influence, would have become self-seeking. With every impression - and it would have been the same with the other senses - man would have cried out, "Oh, it stabs me here!" He would not have perceived red in his environment. Or he would have said, "Oh, something sucks in my eyes!" He would not have been aware of the color blue, but would have simply felt the suction. This danger to humanity was averted in the Lemurian age by a Being Who later, through the Mystery of Golgotha, incarnated in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. In this earlier age, however, He ensouled Himself - I cannot say incarnated - in one of the archangels.

While the earth was working through the Lemurian age, a Being living in spiritual heights became manifest - one might say, as a sort of prophecy of John's baptism - in an archangel who offered up his soul powers, and was thus permeated by the Christ. Through this means a force was released that acted within human evolution upon earth. Its effect was a quieting and harmonizing of our senses so that today we can use them and find them selfless. If we, understanding this, have become grateful to the world order, we shall say, looking back to these ancient times, that what makes it possible for us as sensory beings to enjoy without pain all the splendor of surrounding nature is Christ's first sacrifice. By ensouling Himself in an archangel He brought forth the power to avert the danger of the selfish senses in man. That was the first step leading to the Mystery of Golgotha.

The human being will gradually learn to develop this deep, significant and religious feeling when he is confronted with the beauty of nature, when he looks up at the starry heavens and at all that the sun illumines in the animal, mineral and vegetable kingdoms.

He will learn to say, "That I am so placed in the world that I can look at it around me, my senses being instruments for the perception of its splendor rather than sources of pain, I owe to Christ's first sacrifice in preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha." In perspective we see before us a time in which all observation and enjoyment of nature will be permeated by Christ; when men, refreshing themselves in an invigorating springtime, in the warmth of summer, or in any of the other delights of nature, will say to themselves, "In taking up all this beauty into ourselves, we must realize that it is not ourselves, but Christ within our senses Who enables us to experience it."

In the first period of the Atlantean evolution selfishness tried - this time through Lucifer and Ahriman - to take possession of another part of the human organism; that is, the vital organs. With this in mind, let us consider what is intrinsic in our life-organism. What is its essential nature? You need only think what it is like when injured by organic disease. Then man begins to suffer from the self-seeking of heart, lungs, stomach or other organs, and the time comes when man knows that he has a heart or stomach, knows it by direct experience, because he has a pain. To be ill means that an organ has become selfish and is leading its own independent life within us. In ordinary normal conditions this is not the case. Then the single organs live selflessly within us. Our everyday constitution holds us up securely in the physical world only when we do not feel that we have stomach, lungs, etc., but have them without feeling them, when they do not demand our attention but remain unselfish servants of the body.

On some other occasion and at some other time we shall consider the reason why illness results from the selfishness of our organs. Today we will confine our discussion to normal conditions. Had it depended upon Lucifer and Ahriman, quite a different state would have existed as early as the Atlantean period. Every single human organ would have been self-seeking, and the results most extraordinary. Assume, for example, that the human being looked at a fruit or something else in the outer world that can be eaten, or that stands in some sort of relation to his vital organs. Someday these relations of the outer world with our organs will be the subject of genuine scientific study. If the other sciences allow themselves to be aligned with spiritual science, it will be known that when



a human being gathers cherries from a tree and eats them, something enters with the cherries that is related to a particular organ; other fruits are related to other organs. Everything that enters the human organism is in some way related to it. If Lucifer and Ahriman could have carried out their designs during the Atlantean period, then, when we picked cherries, for example, the related organ would have felt an inordinate greed. The human being would have felt, not the self-seeking organ only, but all the other organs also, striving against it with equal selfishness! Let us take a different case. Suppose something harmful were present, for while certain things in the world are related to humanity in a beneficial way, others affect it injuriously. Suppose someone were to approach a poisonous plant, or anything else harmful to this or that organ; he would then recognize that he was confronting something that gave a burnt out feeling to one of his organs.

Now let us consider not what we eat, but the air surrounding us. Every element of the atmosphere is related to our organs. If we had become what Lucifer and Ahriman intended and had been thrown upon our own resources, we should have been chased about the world by animal desires for what satisfied one organ or another, or by terrible disgust for all that was injurious. Just imagine how we could possibly develop ourselves in this world if we had such physical organs that we were tossed to and fro like a rubber ball, a plaything for every agreeable odor that we would run after, or were forced by nausea to flee from. That this did not happen, that our vital organs were subdued and harmonized resulted from the great event in the first Atlantean epoch when, in supramundane spheres, the second step was taken toward the Mystery of Golgotha. The Christ Being ensouled Himself again in an archangel, and what was accomplished by this deed shone down into the earth's atmosphere. Then that harmonizing and balancing of the vital organs took place that rendered them selfless.

In our connection with the outer world we should be continuously exposed to severe illnesses and we could not be at all healthy but for this second Christ event. We see in perspective for the future that the human being will acquire, when he is able to imbue himself with a true understanding of the spiritual world, a feeling of gratitude toward the

spiritual beings upon whom humanity depends. He will say in true piety, "I realize that I am able to exist as a physical man with unselfish organs because not I alone have developed myself in the world, but Christ in me, Who has so conditioned my organs that I can be a man!" Thus we come to learn so to regard all that makes us human, fundamentally and in the most comprehensive sense, that we say, "Not I, but Christ in me." In His three preparatory steps, taken before the actual Mystery of Golgotha, Christ provided for the complete evolution of humanity.

In the last part of the Atlantean period humanity faced a third danger. Thinking, feeling and willing were threatened with disorder through the entrance of selfishness. What would have been the result of this? Well, the human being would have intended this or that, and followed this or that impulse of will, while his thinking would have impelled him in quite a different direction, and his feeling in still another. It was necessary for human evolution that thinking, feeling and willing should become unselfish members of the united soul. Under the influence of Lucifer and Ahriman they could not have done this. Thought, feeling and will, becoming independently self-seeking, would have rent asunder the harmonious working of the Christ. In consequence, toward the end of the Atlantean evolution, the third Christ event occurred. Once more the Christ Being ensouled Himself in an archangel, and the power thus generated in the spiritual world made possible the harmonization of thinking, feeling and willing. Truly, as the rays of the physical sun must act upon earth to prevent the withering of plant life, so must the Sun Spirit be reflected upon earth from supramundane spheres as I have just explained. What would have become of the human being without this third Christ event? As if by furies, he would have been seized by his unruly desires, by the activity of his will. He might have gone mad even though his self-seeking reason might have thought with scornful mockery about all that the raging will brought forth. This was averted by the third Christ event when Christ took for the third time the soul of an archangel as an outer vehicle.

Mankind has preserved some memory of how human passion and human thinking were harmonized at this period by forces that descended from supramundane worlds, but the

sign of this memory is not rightly understood. St. George who conquers the dragon, or Michael who conquers the dragon, are symbols of the third Christ event, when Christ ensouled Himself in an archangel. It is the dragon, trodden under foot, that has brought thinking, feeling and willing into disorder. All who turn their gaze upon St. George or Michael with the dragon, or some similar episode, perceive, in reality, the third Christ event. The Greeks who in their wonderful mythology made copies of what happened in the spiritual world at the end of the Atlantean age, revered the Sun Spirit as the harmonizer of man's thinking, feeling and willing. "Thou Sun Spirit," so said those who knew something about it, "Thou hast ensouled Thyself in an etheric spirit form," for such is the form of those we call archangels today; "Thou has brought thinking, feeling and willing, which might otherwise rage through us in confusion, into order with Thy lyre, sounding upon it harmoniously the tones of the human soul!"

So the Sun Spirit became the guardian of the wild, stormy passions when they, as it sometimes happened, gushed forth in the fumes that rise from within the earth and break through its surface. If a human being should expose himself to them and allow only these vapors to work upon him, then thought, feeling and will would rage madly within him. The Greeks placed the Pythia over those vapors, which, in rising out of the earth, bring the passions into disorder through Lucifer and Ahriman. But Apollo shone upon the Pythia, conquered the unruly passions and she became a sibyl. For the Greeks, Apollo, the Sun Spirit, represented the Christ at the stage of His third sacrifice, and the results of Christ's deed were discerned in the attuning of men's passions under the power of the Pythia, conferred upon her by the god Apollo. In this connection Apollo was to the Greeks what is expressed in the victory of Michael or St. George over the dragon. We see also the meaning of the extraordinary pronouncement of Justin Martyr, a saying which, since it emanated from him, we must regard as Christian, although many representatives of Christianity today would consider it heretical. Justin said, "Heraclites, Socrates and Plato were also Christians, the only kind of Christians possible before the actual consummation of the Mystery of Golgotha." Theologians of today no longer realize it but in the first centuries of Christianity the Christian martyrs still knew that the old Greek sages, although they did not use the name of Christ, if asked about Apollo,

would have answered out of their Mystery wisdom, “The great Sun Spirit, Who in the future will live as a man on earth, appears to us in Apollo as though ensouled in him in the form of an archangel.”

Then came the fourth, the earthly mystery, that of Golgotha. The same Christ Being Who had ensouled Himself three times in archangelic form incarnated through what we call the Baptism by John in the Jordan in the body of Jesus of Nazareth.

I admit that it may seem strange when I say that this great Being was ensouled three times in an archangelic form, and then incarnated in a human being. It would seem a more orderly progression if between His ensoulment as an archangel and His human incarnation He had taken an angelic form. So it may seem to us. Yet, even though it is claimed that the statements of spiritual science are fictitious, truly it is not so. You may gather this from corroborative evidence. If you ask me how it happens that Christ did not descend from hierarchy to hierarchy and only afterward to man - if you were to ask me that, I could only answer that I do not know, for I never make theoretical combinations. The facts adduced by spiritual research are that Christ chose three times an archangelic form, leaving out the angelic form, and then made use of a human body. I leave it to future research to determine the reason, which I do not yet know, though I do know that it is true.

Then came the fourth step in the Mystery of Golgotha, and this averted another danger, that of the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influences upon the human ego or I. In the Lemurian age the sense organs would have become disordered through Lucifer; in the first Atlantean period the vital organs were threatened with disorder and disharmony, and in the late Atlantean era the soul organs, the organs that underlie thinking, feeling and willing. In the post-Atlantean period the human ego itself was endangered.

Because the ego or I at this time was to take its place as a living factor in human evolution, an effort was made to establish harmony between this ego and the powers of the cosmos lest it become their plaything. This might have happened. The ego might have so developed that it could not keep a hold upon itself, and had it been delivered to these

forces, everything that came from the soul would have been overpowered by all sorts of elemental forces that arise from wind, air or water. They would have driven the human being violently in all directions.

Michelangelo painted it. In the Sibyls he showed what had threatened mankind. With wonderful skill he made them express the human types of those who felt the coming derangement of the ego, so that although all possible wisdom might come forth, human beings could neither manage nor direct it. Look at the way in which Michelangelo has painted the different degrees of derangement in egos given over to elemental beings. Upon the other side, however, he gives us something else. In the same space he has painted the musing figures of prophecy whose aspect shows the illumination of what preserves the integrity of the ego toward the cosmos. It touches us deeply when we see in the prophets the urgency, the pressure toward the ego and, on the other side, human beings suffering disorder through the ego itself. Then, standing in this space, is the Christ, incarnate in a human body, Who had to bring into order and harmony the ego that was to come into the world.

Yes, the science of the spirit will impress upon us ever more deeply that this human ego, through the fourth Christ event, the Mystery of Golgotha, can come to true unselfishness. The senses have said, "Not I, but Christ in us." The vital organs have said, "Not I, but Christ in us." In his moral and intellectual life man must learn to say, "Not I, but Christ in me." Every step into the spiritual world shows us this.

I wished to explain this today in order that upon another occasion in the near future we may offer certain occult proofs of these facts in order to show that what we call spiritual science will pour itself into our moral and intellectual lives in such a way that human beings may become students of selflessness, that Christ may live within us so that we may feel Him vitally in every word that is uttered in discussions of spiritual science. One more thing, my dear friends. You know that since 1909 we have been producing our Mystery Dramas in Munich. What we presented on the stage there may be considered good or bad; that is not the present question. What was done there, however, required a

certain spiritual power, a power that does not approach the human being simply because of his existence upon earth. Since we can now work in Dornach and carve our different kinds of hard wood, we need muscular strength. We cannot say that we can give this strength to ourselves consciously. It comes from our bodies, from our souls' capacity; it is not under our control. Equally, we have not under our control all that we perform in the spirit and for which we need spiritual power. That is not entirely dependent upon our natural ability, just as what we do physically is not dependent alone upon our talents but also upon the muscular strength of our bodies. We need spiritual powers that are as much outside ourselves as our muscular strength is outside our souls. I know that superficial critics may say, "You are a fool; you believe that spiritual powers come to you from without, whereas they simply rise from your own inner being." Let them think me a fool; I regard them as belonging to the clever men who cannot distinguish hunger from a piece of bread. I know how spiritual powers from without flow into human beings. The idea that hunger creates the bread that satisfies it - believed only by a crazy man - is as false as that the power of our own soul can create the forces needed for our spiritual activities. These forces must flow into us. Just as we know clearly that our hunger is within us, and that bread comes from without, does one who lives in spiritual worlds know what is within himself and what comes to him from without. Since 1909 I have felt personally, more and more, the spiritual power that came from without whenever there was occasion to develop, in stillness and calm, what was necessary for the Mystery Plays. I knew that a spiritual eye was resting upon what had been accomplished, and I relate this as a direct experience.

In the early days, when we were working at spiritual science in Germany, an acquaintance came to us who accepted with enthusiasm what we were able to give at that time. She accepted what it was possible to give out concerning human evolution, cosmic mysteries, reincarnation and karma, not only with devotion and enthusiasm but added to them a wonderful aesthetic sense. Every experience with this person, whether of teaching or conversation, was steeped in beauty. We were few at that time. We had no need to crowd ourselves into such a room as this, and what we now say to a large audience was then discussed by three people - two others and myself. One of these, the person

mentioned above, left us upon the physical plane in 1904, and entered the spiritual world. Such people go through a development after death. When we produced Schure's reconstruction of the *Mystery of Eleusis* at our Congress in 1907, no spiritual influence was perceptible. In 1909 it began, and has come more and more frequently since then. I have accurate knowledge that it was the individuality of our friend whom, objectively and because of her originality, we all loved. Removed to the spiritual world, she acted as a guardian angel to all that we accomplished in the combining of the aesthetic and esoteric elements in our Mysteries. We felt well protected, and looked gratefully upward, realizing that what penetrated us and flowed over into our earthly activities was an expression of the watchfulness of a spiritual personality. But then when it came to conversation with this personality - one may call it conversation since there was a certain reciprocal action - she asserted that she found the way to us easier the more we were permeated with the thought of Christ in the evolution of the earth. If I were to put into earthly words what she reiterated, I should say, expressing symbolically, of course, what is quite different in the spiritual world, "I find the way to you so easily because you are finding evermore the way to make spiritual science into an expression of the living Word of Christ."

The Christ impulse will become for us the living bridge between earthly life and life in superphysical worlds. From the spiritual world Christ three times conditioned for the human being the spiritual constitution that he needed in order to live rightly. Christ intervened three times, making the human sense, life and psychic organs unselfish. It is now man's task to learn unselfishness in his moral and intellectual life through his understanding of the saying, "Not I, but Christ in me."

The world will recognize that the message of the science of the spirit is the Word of Christ. He said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The mission of the science of the spirit in our age is to open doors to the living Christ. The dead, who know that Christ has found the passage from heaven to earthly activities, unite with the understanding of the living. If the dead, as their nearest protectors, bend to the earthly living, they will find those souls most intensive who are penetrated and spiritualized by

the Christ impulse. Christ, as the great Sun Spirit, descended from superphysical worlds through the Mystery of Golgotha in order to find a dwelling in the souls of men. Spiritual science is to be the message, telling how Christ may find that dwelling in human souls. If Christ will find His abode in men's earthly souls, then the Christ power will stream back from the earth's aura into the worlds that He forsook for the salvation of mankind, and the whole cosmos will be permeated through and through by Him.

We can work up gradually to such a deep understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha as this by completely imbuing ourselves with spiritual science. If we thus consider this and, in addition, think of it as a school of unselfishness for the intellectual and moral life of future humanity, we shall realize the necessity of the spiritually scientific proclamation of the Mystery of Golgotha! Then we shall know the meaning of the spiritually scientific impulses that are striving to enter our present life. Then that Christ impulse will penetrate humanity that all men can, indeed, accept, for Christ did not appear to one nation only but, being the great Sun Spirit, He belongs to the whole earth and can enter all human souls, regardless of nation and religion. May many gradually find the way to such an understanding of the Christ impulse and of the Mystery of Golgotha! Then, perhaps, that will appear the most Christian that today is stamped as unchristian and heretical. If we strive, not for a mere intellectual understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha, but for the ability to grasp it with our whole souls, we then need the science of the spirit and, as members of our spiritual stream, we shall belong to those souls who are permitted to know and understand the necessities of mankind now and in the immediate future.

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THE STORY OF MY LIFE  
BY RUDOLF STEINER, PH.D.

WITH AN AFTERWORD  
BY MARIE STEINER

WITH AUTOGRAPHS AND FOUR PORTRAITS  
OF RUDOLF STEINER

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SCHLACHTENSEE, 22. Sept. 1903.

DEAR FRAULEIN M---

There was no time left yesterday for what I should have liked to say to you: that your last letter was deeply gratifying to me. You will not misunderstand me: it is not because of your kind and good words to myself, but on account of the whole way in which you relate yourself to our cause. For a long time I have known that you love the truth; it has been a joy and satisfaction to me that we have found one another in this love for truth, and your recent letter confirms and strengthens this feeling. I can only say to you that this love for the truth has always been my guide. I have been much misunderstood, and shall no doubt be much misunderstood in future, too. That lies in the very nature of my path. Every imaginable role has been ascribed to me— not least, that of a fanatic in one direction or in another. Fanaticism is the one thing of all others from which I know that I am free. For it is the greatest tempter into illusions. And it has ever been my principle to keep out of the way of all illusion. You write that I make manifest the Spirit in my life. In one respect, I assure you, I strive to do so: I never speak of anything spiritual that I do not know by the most direct spiritual experience. This principle is my guiding star, and it has enabled me to overcome illusions. I can see

through the illusions. And I can truly say that for me the spiritual is absolutely real—not a whit less real than is the table at which I am now writing. Whoever is ready to look into all that I have said and done will discover harmony, where by not looking at the whole he only finds contradictions. I can but say: The same kind of experience which has taught me the truth in science has also taught me the "mystical fact" in Christianity. Moreover, those who know me well know that I have not unduly altered in my life. Of one thing I can assure you: I do not force myself, I put myself under no kind of strain, when I relate the truths of the spiritual life just as I would relate the realities of this world of the senses. We shall speak of these things again, no doubt, another time.

Your devoted

RUDOLF STEINER.

SCHLACHTENSEE NEAR BERLIN,  
SEESTRASSE 40.

[For original hand-written German letter,  
see file: SteinerLife-Letter1/2.tif]

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RUDOLF STEINER  
THE STORY OF MY LIFE (1928)

IN public discussions of the anthroposophy for which I stand there have been mingled for some time past statements and judgments about the course which my life has taken. From what has been said in this connection conclusions have been drawn with regard to the origin of the variations so called which some persons believe they have discovered in the course of my spiritual evolution. In view of these facts, friends have felt that it would be well if I myself should write something about my own life.

This does not accord, I must confess, with my own inclinations. For it has always been my endeavour so to order what I might have to say and what I might think well to do according as the thing itself might require, and not from personal considerations. To be sure, it has always been my conviction that in many provinces of life the personal element gives to human action a colouring of the utmost value; only it seems to me that this personal element should reveal itself through the manner in which one speaks and acts, and not through conscious attention to one's own personality. Whatever may come about as a result of such attention is something a man has to settle with himself.

And so it has been possible for me to resolve upon the following narration only because it is necessary to set in a true light by means of an objective written statement many a false judgment in reference to the consistency between my life and the thing that I have fostered, and because those who through friendly interest have urged this upon me seem to me justified in view of such false judgments.

The home of my parents was in Lower Austria. My father

was born at Geras, a very small place in the Lower Austrian forest region; my mother at Horn, a city of the same district.

My father passed his childhood and youth in the most intimate association with the seminary of the Premonstratensian Order at Geras. He always looked back with the greatest affection upon this time in his life. He liked to tell how he served in the college, and how the monks instructed him. Later on, he was a huntsman in the service of Count Hoyos. This family had a place at Horn. It was there that my father became acquainted with my mother. Then he gave up the work of huntsman and became a telegraphist on the Southern Austrian Railway. He was sent at first to a little station in southern Styria. Then he was transferred to Kraljevec on the border between Hungary and Croatia. It was during this period that he married my mother. Her maiden name was Blie. She was descended from an old family of Horn. I was born at Kraljevec on February 27, 1861. It thus happened that the place of my birth was far removed from that part of the world from which my family came.

My father, and my mother as well, were true children of the South Austrian forest country, north of the Danube. It is a region into which the railway was late in coming. Even to this day it has left Geras untouched. My parents loved the life they had lived in their native region. When they spoke of this, one realized instinctively how in their souls they had never parted from that birthplace in spite of the fate that forced them to pass the greater part of their lives far away from it. And so, when my father retired, after a life filled with work, they returned at once there-to Horn.

My father was a man of the utmost good will, but of a temper -especially while he was still young- which could be passionately aroused. The work of a railway employee was to him a matter of duty; he had no love for it. While I was still a boy, he would sometimes have to remain on duty for three days and three nights continuously. Then he would be relieved for twenty-four hours. Under such conditions life for him wore no bright colours; all was dull grey. Some pleasure he found in keeping up with political developments. In these he took the liveliest interest. My mother, since

our worldly goods were none too plentiful, was forced to devote herself to household duties. Her days were filled with loving care of her children and of the little home.

When I was a year and a half old; my father was transferred to Mšdling, near Vienna. There my parents remained a half-year. Then my father was put in charge of the little station on the Southern Railway at Pottschach in Lower Austria, near the Styrian border. There I lived from my second to my eighth year. A wonderful landscape formed the environment of my childhood. The view stretched as far as the mountains that separate Lower Austria from Styria: " Snow Mountain," Wechsel, the Rax Alps, the Semmering. Snow Mountain caught the sun's earliest rays on its bare summit, and the kindling reflection of these from the mountain down to the little village was the first greeting of dawn in the beautiful summer days. The grey back of the Wechsel put one by contrast in a sober mood. It was as if the mountains rose up out of the all-surrounding green of the friendly landscape. On the distant boundaries of the circle one had the majesty of the peaks, and close around the tenderness of nature.

But around the little station all interest was centered on the business of the railway. At that time the trains passed in that region only at long intervals; but, when they came, many of the men of the village who could spare the time were generally gathered at the station, seeking thus to bring some change into their lives, which they found otherwise very monotonous. The schoolmaster, the priest, the book-keeper of the manor, and often the burgomaster as well, would be there.

It seems to me that passing my childhood in such an environment had a certain significance for my life. For I felt a very deep interest in everything about me of a mechanical character; and I know how this interest tended constantly to overshadow in my childish soul the affections which went out to that tender and yet mighty nature into which the railway train, in spite of being in subjection to this mechanism, must always disappear in the far distance.

In the midst of all this there was present the influence of

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a certain personality of marked originality, the priest of St. Valentin, a place that one could reach on foot from Pottschach in about three-quarters of an hour. This priest liked to come to the home of my parents. Almost every day he took a walk to our home, and he nearly always stayed for a long time. He belonged to the liberal type of Catholic cleric, tolerant and genial; a robust, broad-shouldered man. He was quite witty, too; had many jokes to tell, and was pleased when he drew a laugh from the persons about him. And they would laugh even more loudly over what he had said long after he was gone. He was a man of a practical way of life, and liked to give good practical advice. Such a piece of practical counsel produced its effects in my family for a long time. There was a row of acacia trees (Robinien) on each side of the railway at Pottschach. Once we were walking along the little footpath under these trees, when he remarked: " Ah, what beautiful acacia blossoms these are ! " He seized one of the branches at once and broke off a mass of the blossoms. Spreading out his huge red pocket-handkerchief -he was extremely fond of snuff-he carefully wrapped the twigs in this, and put the " Binkerl " under his arm. Then he said: " How lucky you are to have so many acacia blossoms ! " My father was astonished, and answered: " Why, what can we do with them ? " " Wh-a-a-t ? " said the priest. " Don't you know that you can bake the acacia blossoms just like elder flowers, and that they taste much better then because they have a far more delicate aroma ? " From that time on we often had in our family, as opportunity offered from time to time, " baked acacia blossoms."

In Pottschach a daughter and another son were born to my parents. There was never any further addition to the family.

As a very young child I showed a marked individuality. From the time that I could feed myself, I had to be carefully watched. For I had formed the conviction that a soup-bowl or a coffee cup was meant to be used only once; and so, every time that I was not watched, as soon as I had finished eating something I would throw the bowl or the cup under the table and smash it to pieces. Then, when my mother appeared, I would call out to her : "Mother, I've finished ! "

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This could not have been a mere propensity for destroying things, since I handled my toys with the greatest care, and kept them in good condition for a long time. Among these toys those that had the

strongest attraction for me were the kind which even now I consider especially good. These were picture-books with figures that could be made to move by pulling strings attached to them at the bottom. One associated little stories with these figures, to whom one gave a part of their life by pulling the strings. Many a time have I sat by the hour poring over the picture-books with my sister. Besides, I learned from them by myself the first steps in reading.

My father was concerned that I should learn early to read and write. When I reached the required age, I was sent to the village school. The schoolmaster was an old man to whom the work of "teaching school" was a burdensome business. Equally burdensome to me was the business of being taught by him. I had no faith whatever that I could ever learn anything from him. For he often came to our house with his wife and his little son, and this son, according to my notions at that time, was a scamp. So I had this idea firmly fixed in my head: "Whoever has such a scamp for a son, nobody can learn anything from him." Besides, something else happened, "quite dreadful." This scamp, who also was in the school, played the prank one day of dipping a chip into all the ink-wells of the school and making circles around them with dabs of ink. His father noticed these. Most of the pupils had already gone. The teacher's son, two other boys, and I were still there. The schoolmaster was beside himself; he talked in a frightful manner. I felt sure that he would actually roar but for the fact that his voice was always husky. In spite of his rage, he got an inkling from our behaviour as to who the culprit was. But things then took a different turn. The teacher's home was next-door to the school-room. The "lady head mistress" heard the commotion and came into the school-room with wild eyes, waving her arms in the air. To her it was perfectly clear that her little son could not have done this thing. She put the blame on me. I ran away. My father was furious

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when I reported this matter at home. Then, the next time the teacher's family came to our house, he told them with the utmost bluntness that the friendship between us was ended, and added baldly: "My boy shall never set foot in your school again," Now my father himself took over the task of teaching me; and so I would sit beside him in his little office by the hour, and had to read and write between whiles whenever he was busy with his duties.

Neither with him could I feel any real interest in what had to come to me by way of direct instruction. What interested me was the things that my father himself was writing. I would imitate what he did. In this way I learned a great deal. As to the things I was taught by him, I could see no reason why I should do these just for my own improvement. On the other hand, I became rooted, in a child's way, in everything that formed a part of the practical work of life. The routine of a railway office, everything connected with it, -this caught my attention. It was, however, more especially the laws of nature that had already taken me as their little errand boy. When I wrote, it was because I had to write, and I wrote as fast as I could so that I should soon have a page filled. For then I could strew the sort of dust my father used over this writing. Then I would be absorbed in watching how quickly the dust dried up the ink, and what sort of mixture they made together. I would try the letters over and over with my fingers to discover which were already dry, which not. My curiosity about this was very great, and it was in this way chiefly that I quickly learned the alphabet. Thus my writing lessons took on a character that did not please my father, but he was good-natured and reproved me only by frequently calling me an incorrigible little "rascal." This, however, was not the only thing that evolved in me by means of the writing lessons. What interested me more than the shapes of the letters was the body of the writing quill itself. I could take my father's ruler and force the point of this into the slit in the point of the quill, and in this manner carry on researches in

physics, concerning the elasticity of a feather. Afterwards, of course, I bent the feather back into shape; but the beauty of my handwriting distinctly suffered in this process.

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This was also the time when, with my inclination toward the understanding of natural phenomena, I occupied a position midway between seeing through a combination of things, on the one hand, and "the limits of understanding" on the other. About three minutes from the home of my parents there was a mill. The owners of the mill were the god-parents of my brother and sister. We were always welcome at this mill. I often disappeared within it. Then I studied with all my heart the work of a miller. I forced a way for myself into the "interior of nature." Still nearer us, however, there was a yarn factory. The raw material for this came to the railway station; the finished product went away from the station. I participated thus in everything which disappeared within the factory and everything which reappeared. We were strictly forbidden to take one peep at the "inside" of this factory. This we never succeeded in doing. There were the "limits of understanding." And how I wished to step across the boundaries! For almost every day the manager of the factory came to see my father on some matter of business. For me as a boy this manager was a problem, casting a miraculous veil, as it were, over the "inside" of those works. He was spotted here and there with white tufts; his eyes had taken on a certain set look from working at machinery. He spoke hoarsely, as if with a mechanical speech. "What is the connection between this man and everything that is surrounded by those walls?" -this was an insoluble problem facing my mind. But I never questioned anyone regarding the mystery. For it was my childish conviction that it does no good to ask questions about a problem which is concealed from one's eyes. Thus I lived between the friendly mill and the unfriendly factory.

Once something happened at the station that was very "dreadful." A freight train rumbled up. My father stood looking at it. One of the rear cars was on fire. The crew had not noticed this at all. All that followed as a result of this made a deep impression on me. Fire had started in a car by reason of some highly inflammable material. For a long time I was absorbed in the question how such a thing could happen. What my surroundings said to me in this

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case was, as in many other matters, not to my satisfaction. I was filled with questions, and I had to carry these about with me unanswered. It was thus that I reached my eighth year.

During my eighth year the family moved to Neudorf, a little Hungarian village. This village is just at the border over against Lower Austria. The boundary here was formed by the Laytha River. The station that my father had in charge was at one end of the village. Half an hour's walk further on was the boundary stream. Still another half-hour brought one to Wiener-Neustadt.

The range of the Alps that I had seen close by at Pottschach was now visible only at a distance. Yet the mountains still stood there in the background to awaken our memories when we looked at lower mountains that could be reached in a short time from our family's new home. Massive heights covered with beautiful forests bounded the view in one direction; in the other, the eye could range over a level region, decked out in fields and woodland, all the way to Hungary. Of all the mountains, I gave my unbounded love to one that could be climbed in three-quarters of an hour. On its crest there stood a chapel containing a painting of Saint Rosalie. This chapel came to be the

objective of a walk which I often took at first with my parents and my sister and brother, and later loved to take alone. Such walks were filled with a special happiness because of the fact that at that time of year we could bring back with us rich gifts of nature. For in these woods there were blackberries, raspberries, and strawberries. One could often find an inner satisfaction in an hour and a half of berrying for the purpose of adding a delicious contribution to the family supper, which otherwise consisted merely of a piece of buttered bread or bread and cheese for each of us.

Still another pleasant thing came from rambling about in these forests, which were the common property of all. There the villagers got their supplies of wood. The poor gathered it for themselves; the well-to-do had servants to do this. One could become acquainted with all of these-most friendly persons. They always had time for a chat when " Steiner Rudolf

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met them. " So thou goest again for a bit of a walk, Steiner Rudolf "-thus they would begin, and then they would talk about everything imaginable. The people did not think of the fact that they had a mere child before them. For at the bottom of their souls they also were only children, even when they could number sixty years. And so I really learned from the stories they told me almost everything that happened in the houses of the village.

Half an hour's walk from Neudorf is Sauerbrunn, where there is a spring containing iron and carbonic acid. The road to this lies along the railway, and part of the way through beautiful woods. During vacation time I went there every day early in the morning, carrying with me a " Blutzger." This is a water vessel made of clay. The smallest of these hold three or four litres. One could fill this without charge at the spring. Then at midday the family could enjoy the delicious sparkling water.

Toward Wiener-Neustadt and farther on toward Styria, the mountains fall away to a level country. Through this level country the Laytha River winds its way. On the slope of the mountains there was a cloister of the Order of the Most Holy Redeemer. I often met the monks on my walks. I still remember how glad I should have been if they had spoken to me. They never did. And so I carried away from these meetings an undefined but solemn feeling which remained constantly with me for a long time. It was in my ninth year that the idea became fixed in me that there must be weighty matters in connection with the duties of these monks which I ought to learn to understand. There again I was filled with questions which I had to carry around unanswered. Indeed, these questions about all possible sorts of things made me as a boy very lonely.

On the foothills of the Alps two castles were visible: Pitten and Frohsdorf. In the second there lived at that time Count Chambord, who, at the beginning of the year 1870, claimed the throne of France as Henry V. Very deep were the impressions that I received from that fragment of life bound up with the castle Frohsdorf. The Count with his retinue frequently took the train for a journey from the station at Neudorf.

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Everything drew my attention to these men. Especially deep was the impression made by one man in the Count's retinue. He had but one ear. The other had been slashed off clean. The hair lying over

this he had braided. At the sight of this I perceived for the first time what a duel is. For it was in this manner that the man had lost one ear.

Then, too, a fragment of social life unveiled itself to me in connection with Frohsdorf. The assistant teacher at Neudorf, whom I was often permitted to see at work in his little chamber, prepared innumerable petitions to Count Chambord for the poor of the village and the country around. In response to every such appeal there always came back a donation of one gulden, and from this the teacher was always allowed to keep six kreuzer for his services. This income he had need of, for the annual salary yielded him by his profession was fifty-eight gulden. In addition, he had his morning coffee and his lunch with the "schoolmaster." Then, too, he gave special lessons to about ten children, of whom I was one. For such lessons the charge was one gulden a month.

To this assistant teacher I owe a great deal. Not that I was greatly benefited by his lessons at the school. In that respect I had about the same experience as at Pottschach. As soon as we moved to Neudorf, I was sent to school there. This school consisted of one room in which five classes of both boys and girls all had their lessons. While the boy who sat on my bench were at their task of copying out the story of King Arpad, the very little fellows stood at a black board on which \*i\* and \*u\* had been written with chalk for them. It was simply impossible to do anything save to let the mind fall into a dull reverie while the hands almost mechanically took care of the copying. Almost all the teaching had to be done by the assistant teacher alone. The "schoolmaster" appeared in the school only very rarely. He was also the village notary, and it was said that in this occupation he had so much to take up his time that he could never keep school.

In spite of all this I learned earlier than usual to read well. Because of this fact the assistant teacher was able to take hold of something within me which has influenced the whole course of my life. Soon after my entrance into the Neudorf

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school, I found a book on geometry in his room. I was on such good terms with the teacher that I was permitted at once to borrow the book for my own use. I plunged into it with enthusiasm. For weeks at a time my mind it was filled with coincidences, similarities between triangles, squares, polygons; I racked my brains over the question: Where do parallel lines actually meet? The theorem of Pythagoras fascinated me. That one can live within the mind in the shaping of forms perceived only within oneself, entirely without impression upon the external senses-this gave me the deepest satisfaction. I found in this a solace for the unhappiness which my unanswered questions had caused me. To be able to lay hold upon something in the spirit alone brought to me an inner joy. I am sure that I learned first in geometry to experience this joy.

In my relation to geometry I must now perceive the first budding forth of a conception which has since gradually evolved in me. This lived within me more or less unconsciously during my childhood, and about my twentieth year took a definite and fully conscious form.

I said to myself: "The objects and occurrences which the senses perceive are in space. But, just as this space is outside of man, so there exists also within man a sort of soul-space which is the arena of spiritual realities and occurrences." In my thoughts I could not see anything in the nature of mental images such as man forms within him from actual things, but I saw a spiritual world in this soul-arena. Geometry seemed to me to be a knowledge which man appeared to have produced but which had, nevertheless, a significance quite independent of man. Naturally I did not, as a child,



say all this to myself distinctly, but I felt that one must carry the knowledge of the spiritual world within oneself after the fashion of geometry.

For the reality of the spiritual world was to me as certain as that of the physical. I felt the need, however, for a sort of justification for this assumption. I wished to be able to say to myself that the experience of the spiritual world is just as little an illusion as is that of the physical world. With

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regard to geometry I said to myself: " Here one is permitted to know something which the mind alone, through its own power, experiences." In this feeling I found the justification for the spiritual world that I experienced, even as, so to speak, for the physical. And in this way I talked about this. I had two conceptions which were naturally undefined, but which played a great role in my mental life even before my eighth year. I distinguished things as those " which are seen " and those " which are not seen."

I am relating these matters quite frankly, in spite of the fact that those persons who are seeking for evidence to prove that anthroposophy is fantastic will, perhaps, draw the conclusion from this that even as a child I was marked by a gift for the fantastic: no wonder, then, that a fantastic philosophy should also have evolved within me.

But it is just because I know how little I have followed my own inclinations in forming conceptions of a spiritual world -having on the contrary followed only the inner necessity of things-that I myself can look back quite objectively upon the childlike unaided manner in which I confirmed for myself by means of geometry the feeling that I must speak of a world " which is not seen."

Only I must also say that I loved to live in that world For I should have been forced to feel the physical world as a sort of spiritual darkness around me had it not received light from that side.

The assistant teacher of Neudorf had provided me, in the geometry text-book, with that which I then needed- justification for the spiritual world.

In other ways also I owe much to him. He brought to me the element of art. He played the piano and the violin and he drew a great deal. These things attracted me powerfully to him. Just as much as I possibly could be, was I with him. Of drawing he was especially fond, and even in my ninth year he interested me in drawing with crayons. I had in this way to copy pictures under his direction. Long did I sit, for instance, copying a portrait of Count Szedgenyi.

Very seldom at Neudorf, but frequently in the neighbouring

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town of Sauerbrunn, could I listen to the impressive music of the Hungarian gipsies.

All this played its part in a childhood which was passed in the immediate neighbourhood of the church and the churchyard. The station at Neudorf was but a few steps from the church, and between these lay the churchyard. If one went along by the churchyard and then a short stretch further, one came into the village itself. This consisted of two rows of houses. One row began with

the school and the other with the home of the priest. Between those two rows of houses flowed a little brook, along the banks of which grew stately nut trees. In connection with these nut trees an order of precedence grew up among the children of the school. When the nuts began to get ripe, the boys and girls assailed the trees with stones, and in this way laid in a winter's supply of nuts. In autumn almost the only thing anyone talked about was the size of his harvest of nuts. Whoever had gathered most of all was the most looked up to, and then step by step was the descent all the way down-to me, the last, who as an " outsider in the village " had no right to share in this order of precedence.

Near the railway station, the row of most important houses, in which the " big farmers " lived, was met at right angles by a row of some twenty houses owned by the " middle class " villagers. Then, beginning from the gardens which belonged to the station, came a group of thatched houses belonging to the "small cottagers." These constituted the immediate neighbourhood of my family. The roads leading out from the village went past fields and vineyards that were owned by the villagers. Every year I took part with the " small cottagers " in the vintage, and once also in a village wedding.

Next to the assistant teacher, the person whom I loved most among those who had to do with the direction of the school was the priest. He came regularly twice a week to give instruction in religion and often besides for inspection of the school. The image of the man was deeply impressed upon my mind, and he has come back into my memory again and again throughout my life. Among the persons whom I came to know up to my tenth or eleventh year, he was by far

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the most significant. He was a vigorous Hungarian patriot. He took active part in the process of Magyarizing the Hungarian territory which was then going forward. From this point of view he wrote articles in the Hungarian language, which I thus learned through the fact that the assistant teacher had to make clear copies of these and he always discussed their contents with me in spite of my youthfulness. But the priest was also an energetic worker for the Church. This once impressed itself deeply upon my mind through one of his sermons.

At Neudorf there was a lodge of Freemasons. To the villagers this was shrouded in mystery, and they wove about it the most amazing legends. The leading role in this lodge belonged to the manager of a match-factory which stood at the end of the village. Next to him in prominence among the persons immediately interested in the matter were the manager of another factory and a clothing merchant. Otherwise the only significance attaching to the lodge arose from the fact that from time to time strangers from " remote parts " were visitors there, and these seemed to the villagers in the highest degree unwelcome. The clothing merchant was a noteworthy person. He always walked with his head bowed over as if in deep thought. People called him " the make-believe," and his isolation rendered it neither possible nor necessary that anyone should approach him. The building in which the lodge met belonged to his home.

I could establish no sort of relationship to this lodge. For the entire behaviour of the persons about me in regard to this matter was such that here again I had to refrain from asking questions; besides, the utterly absurd way in which the manager of the match-factory talked about the church made a shocking impression on me.

Then one Sunday the priest delivered a sermon in his energetic fashion in which he set forth in due order the true principles of morality for human life and spoke of the enemy of the truth in figures of speech framed to fit the lodge. As a climax, he delivered his advice: " Beloved Christians, beware of him who is an enemy of the truth: for example, a Mason or a Jew." In the eyes of the people, the factory owner and

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the clothing merchant were thus authoritatively exposed. The vigour with which this had been uttered made a specially deep impression upon me. I owe to the priest also, because of a certain profound impression made upon me, a very great deal in the later orientation of my spiritual life. One day he came into the school, gathered round him in the teacher's little room the " riper " children, among whom he included me, unfolded a drawing he had made, and with the help of this explained to us the Copernican system of astronomy. He spoke about this very vividly-the revolution of the earth around the sun, its rotation on its axis, the inclination of the axis in summer and winter, and also the zones of the earth. In all of it I was absorbed; I made drawings of a similar kind for days together, and then received from the priest further special instruction concerning eclipses of the sun and the moon; and thence-forward I directed all my search for knowledge toward this subject. I was then about ten years old, and I could not yet write without mistakes in spelling and grammar.

Of the deepest significance for my life as a boy was the nearness of the church and the churchyard beside it. Everything that happened in the village school was affected in its course by its relationship to these. This was not by reason of certain dominant social and political relationships existing in every community; it was due to the fact that the priest was an impressive personality. The assistant teacher was at the same time organist of the church and custodian of the vestments used at Mass and of the other church furnishings. He performed all the services of an assistant to the priest in his religious ministrations. We schoolboys had to carry out the duties of ministrants and choristers during Mass, rites for the dead, and funerals. The solemnity of the Latin language and of the liturgy was a thing in which my boyish soul found a Vital happiness. Because of the fact that up to my tenth year I took such an earnest part in the services of the church, I was often in the company of the priest whom I so revered. In the home of my parents I received no encouragement in this matter of my relationship to the church. My father

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took no part in this. He was then a " freethinker." He never entered the church to which I had become so deeply attached; and yet he also, as a boy and as a young man, had been equally devoted and active. In his case this all changed once more only when he went back, as an old man on a pension, to Horn, his native region. There he became again " a pious man." But by that time I had long ceased to have any association with my parents' home.

From the time of my boyhood at Neudorfl, I have always had the strongest impression of the manner in which the contemplation of the church services in close connection with the solemnity of liturgical music causes the riddle of existence to rise in powerful suggestive fashion before the mind. The instruction in the Bible and the catechism imparted by the priest had far less effect upon my mental world than what he accomplished by means of liturgy in mediating between the sensible and the supersensible. From the first this was to me no mere form, but a profound experience. It

was all the more so because of the fact that in this I was a stranger in the home of my parents. Even in the atmosphere I had to breathe in my home, my spirit did not lose that vital experience which it had acquired from the liturgy. I passed my life amid this home environment without sharing in it, perceived it; but my real thoughts, feelings, and experience were continually in that other world. I can assert emphatically however, in this connection that I was no dreamer, but quite self-sufficient in all practical affairs.

A complete counterpart to this world of mine was my father's political affairs. He and another employee took turns on duty. This man lived at another railway station, for which he was partly responsible. He came to Neudorf only every two or three days. During the free hours of the evening he and my father would talk politics. This would take place at a table which stood near the station under two huge and wonderful lime trees. There our whole family and the other employee would assemble. My mother knitted or crocheted; my brother and sister busied themselves about us; I would often sit at the table and listen to the unheard of political arguments of the two men. My participation, however,

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never had anything to do with the sense of what they were saying, but only with the form which the conversation took. They were always on opposite sides; if one said " Yes," the other always contradicted him with " No." All this, however, was marked, not only by a certain intensity-indeed, violence-but also by the good humour which was a basic element in my father's nature. In the little circle often gathered there, to which were frequently added some of the " notabilities " of the village, there appeared at times a doctor from Wiener-Neustadt. He had many patients in this place, where at that time there was no physician. He came from Wiener-Neustadt to Neudorf on foot, and would come to the station after visiting his patients to wait for the train on which he went back. This man passed with my parents, and with most persons who knew him, as an odd character. He did not like to talk about his profession as a doctor, but all the more gladly did he talk about German literature. It was from him that I first heard of Lessing, Goethe, Schiller. At my home there was never any such conversation. Nothing was known of such things. Nor in the village school was there any mention of such matters. There the emphasis was all on Hungarian history. Priest and assistant teacher had no interest in the masters of German literature. And so it happened that with the Wiener-Neustadt doctor a whole new world came within my range of vision. He took an interest in me; often drew me aside after he had rested for a while under the lime trees, walked up and down with me by the station, and talked-not like a lecturer, but enthusiastically-about German literature. In these talks he set forth all sorts of ideas as to what is beautiful and what is ugly.

This also has remained as a picture with me, giving me many happy hours in memory throughout my life: the tall, slender doctor, with his quick, long stride, always with his umbrella in his right hand held invariably in such a way that it dangled by his side, and I, a boy of ten years, on the other side, quite absorbed in what the man was saying.

Along with all these things I was tremendously concerned with everything pertaining to the railroad. I first learned the

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principles of electricity in connection with the station telegraph. I learned also as a boy to telegraph.

As to language, I grew up in the dialect of German that is spoken in Eastern Lower Austria. This was really the same as that then used in those parts of Hungary bordering on Lower Austria. My relationship to reading and that to writing were entirely different. In my boyhood I passed rapidly over the words in reading; my mind went immediately to the perceptions, the concepts, the ideas, so that I got no feeling from reading either for spelling or for writing grammatically. On the other hand, in writing I had a tendency to fix the word-forms in my mind by their sounds as I generally heard them spoken in the dialect. For this reason it was only after the most arduous effort that I gained facility in writing the literary language; whereas reading was easy for me from the first.

Under such influences I grew up to the age at which my father had to decide whether to send me to the Gymnasium (1) or to the Realschule at Wiener-Neustadt. From that time on I heard much talk with other persons-in between the political discussions-as to my own future. My father was given this and that advice; I already knew: " He likes to listen to what others say, but he acts according to his own fixed and definite determination."

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1 The Gymnasium and the Realschule are secondary schools, the curriculum of the former giving more prominence to the classics and that of the later to science and modern languages.

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THE decision as to whether I should be sent to the Gymnasium or the Realschule was arrived at by my father, on the basis of his intention to give me the right preparation for a " position " on the railway. This purpose of his finally took definite form in the decision that I should be a railway civil engineer. Hence his choice was the Realschule.

Next, however, the question remained to be settled as to whether in passing from the village school of Neudorf to one of the schools in the neighbouring Wiener-Neustadt, I should be prepared for admission to such a school. So I was taken to the town hall for an examination.

These plans which were thus being carried through for my own future did not excite in me any deep interest. At that age these questions concerning my " position," and whether the choice should fall on town school, Realschule, or Gymnasium were to me matters of indifference. Through what I observed around me and felt within me, I was conscious of undefined but burning questions about life and the world and the soul, and my wish was to learn something in order to be able to answer these questions of mine. I cared very little through what sort of school this should be brought about.

The examination at the town school I passed very creditably. All the drawings I had made for the assistant teacher had been brought along; and these made such an impression upon the teachers who examined me that on this account my very defective knowledge was overlooked. I came out of the examination with a " brilliant " record. There was great rejoicing on the part of my parents, the assistant teacher, the priest, and many of the notabilities of Neudorf. People were happy over the result of my examination because to many of them it was a proof that " the Neudorf school can teach a thing or two! "

For my father there came out of all this the thought that I should not spend a preliminary year in the town school- seeing that I was already so far along-but should enter the Realschule at once. So a few days later I was taken to that school for another examination. In this case matters did not turn out so well; nevertheless, I was admitted. This was in October 1872.

I had now to go every day from Neudorf to Wiener Neustadt. In the morning I could go by train; but I had to come back in the afternoon on foot, since there was no train at the right time. Neudorf was in Hungary, Wiener Neustadt in Lower Austria. So every day I went from " Transleitanien " to " Cisleitanien." (These were the official designations for the Hungarian and the Austrian districts.)

During the noon recess I remained in Wiener-Neustadt. It so happened that a certain woman had come to know me during one of her stops at the Neudorf station, and had learned that I was coming to Wiener-Neustadt to school. My parents had spoken to her of their concern as to how I was to pass the noon recess during my attendance at the Wiener-Neustadt school. She told them she would be glad to have me take lunch at her home without charge, and would welcome me there whenever I needed to come.

In summer the walk from Wiener-Neustadt to Neudorf was very beautiful; in winter it was often exceedingly hard. To get from the outskirts of the town to the village one had to walk for half an hour across fields which were not cleared of snow. There I often had to " wade " through the snow, and I would arrive at home a veritable " snow man."

The town life I could not share inwardly as I could the life of the country. I would fall into a brown study over the problem of what might be happening in and between those houses closed tight one against the other. Only before the booksellers' shops of Wiener-Neustadt did I often linger for a long time.

What went on in the school also, and what I had to do there, proceeded at first without awakening any lively interest in my mind. In the first two classes I had great difficulty in " keeping up." Only in the second half-year was the work

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easier in these two classes. Only then had I become a " good scholar. I was conscious of one overwhelming need. I craved men whom I could take as human models to follow. The teachers of the first two classes were not such men. In this school life something now occurred which impressed me deeply. The principal of the school, in one of the annual reports which had to be issued at the close of each school year, published a lecture entitled \*Die Anziehungskraft betrachtet als eine Wirkung der Bezuegung\*.(1) As a child of eleven years I could at first understand almost nothing of the content of this paper; for it began at once with higher mathematics. Yet from some of the sentences I got hold of a certain meaning. There formed itself in my mind a bridge between what I had learned from the priest concerning the creation of the world and these sentences in the paper. The paper referred also to a book which the principal had written, \*Die allgemeine Bewegung der Materie als Grundursache aller Naturerscheinungen\*.(2) I saved my money until I was able to buy that book. It now became my aim to learn as quickly as possible everything that might lead me to an understanding of the paper and the book.

The thing was like this. The principal held that the conception of forces acting at a distance from the bodies exerting these forces was an unproved " mystical " hypothesis. He wished to explain the

" attraction " between the heavenly bodies as well as that between molecules and atoms without reference to such " forces." He said that between any two bodies there are many small bodies in motion. These, moving back and forth, thrust the larger bodies. Likewise these larger bodies are thrust from every direction on the sides turned away from each other. The thrusts on the sides turned away from each other are much more numerous than those in the spaces between the two bodies. It is for this reason that they approach each other. " Attraction " is not any special force, but only an " effect of motion." I came

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1 Attraction Considered as an Effect of Motion.

2 The General Motion of Matter as the Fundamental Cause of All the Phenomenon of Nature.

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across two sentences stated positively in the first pages of the volume: " 1. There exist space and in space motion continuing for a long period of time. 2. Space and time are continuous, homogeneous masses; but matter consists of separate particles (atoms)." Out of the motions occurring in the manner described between the small and great parts of matter, the professor would derive all physical and chemical occurrences in nature.

I had nothing within me which inclined me in any way whatever to accept such a view; but I had the feeling that it would be a very important matter for me when I could understand what was in this manner expressed. And I did everything I could in order to reach that point. Whenever I could get hold of books of mathematics and physics, I seized the opportunity. It was a slow process. I set myself to read the paper over and over again; each time there was some improvement.

Now something else happened. In the third class I had a teacher who really fulfilled the " ideal " I had before my mind. He was a man whom I could emulate. He taught computation, geometry, and physics. His teaching was wonderfully systematic and thorough-going. He built everything so clearly out of its elements that it was in the highest degree beneficial to one's thinking to follow him.

A lecture accompanying the second annual school report was delivered by him. It had to do with the law of probabilities and calculations in life insurance. I buried myself in this paper also, although of this likewise I could not understand very much. But I soon came to grasp the idea of the law of probabilities. A more important result, however, for me was that the exactness with which my favourite teacher handled his materials gave me a model for my own thinking in mathematics. This now brought about a wonderfully beautiful relationship between this teacher and me. I was very happy to have this man through all the classes of the Realschule as teacher of mathematics and physics.

Through what I learned from him I drew nearer and nearer to the riddle that had arisen for me through the paper by the principal.

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With still another teacher I came only after a long time into a more intimate spiritual relationship. This was the one who taught constructive geometry in the lower classes and descriptive geometry

in the upper. He taught even in the second class. But only during his course in the third class did I come to an appreciation of the kind of man he was. He was an enthusiastic constructor. His teaching also was a model of clearness and order. The drawing of circles, lines, and triangles became to me, through his influence, a favourite occupation. Behind all that I was taking into myself from the principal, the teacher of mathematics and physics, and the teacher of geometrical design, there arose in me in a boyish way of thinking the problem of what goes on in nature. My feeling was: I must go to nature in order to win a standing place in the spiritual world, which was there before me, consciously perceived.

I said to myself: " One can take the right attitude toward the experience of the spiritual world by one's own soul only when one's process of thinking has reached such a form that it can attain to the reality of being which is in natural phenomena." With such feelings did I pass through life during the third and fourth years of the Realschule. Everything that I learned I so directed as to bring myself nearer to the goal I have indicated.

Then one day I passed a bookshop. In the show window I saw an advertisement of Kant's *\*Kritik der reinen Vernunft\**.<sup>(1)</sup> I did everything that I could to acquire this book as quickly as possible.

As Kant then entered the circle of my thinking, I knew nothing whatever of his place in the spiritual history of mankind. What anyone whatever had thought about him, in approval or in disapproval, was to me entirely unknown. My boundless interest in the *\*Critique of Pure Reason\** had arisen entirely out of my own spiritual life. In my boyish way I was striving to understand what human reason might be able to achieve toward a real insight into the being of things.

The reading of Kant met with every sort of obstacle in the

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1 " Critique of Pure Reason ".

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circumstances of my external life. Because of the long distance I had to traverse between school and home, I lost every day at least three hours. In the evenings I did not get home until six o'clock. Then there was an endless quantity of school assignments to master. On Sundays I devoted myself almost entirely to geometrical designing. It was my ideal to attain the greatest precision in carrying out geometrical constructions, and the most immaculate neatness in hatching and the laying on of colours.

So I had scarcely any time left for reading the *\*Critique of Pure Reason\**. I found the following way out. Our history course was handled in such a manner that the teacher appeared to be lecturing but was in reality reading from a book. Then from time to time we had to learn from our books what he had given us in this fashion. I thought to myself that I must take care of this reading of what was in my book while at home. From the teacher's " lecture " I got nothing at all. From listening to what he read I could not retain the least thing. I now took apart the single sections of the little Kant volume, placed these inside the history book, which I there kept before me during the history lesson, and read Kant while the history was being " taught " down to us from the professor's seat. This was, of course, from the point of view of school discipline, a serious fault; yet it disturbed nobody and it subtracted so little from what I should otherwise have acquired that the grade I was given on my history lesson at that very time was " excellent."



During vacations the reading of Kant went forward briskly. Many a page I read more than twenty times in succession. I wanted to reach a decision as to the relation sustained by human thought to the creative work of nature.

The feeling I had in regard to these strivings of thought was influenced here from three sides. In the first place, I wished so to build up thought within myself that every thought should be completely subject to survey, that no vague feeling should incline the thought in any direction whatever. In the second place, I wished to establish within myself a harmony between such thinking and the teachings of religion. For this also at that time had the very strongest hold upon me.

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In just this field we had truly excellent text-books. From these books I took with the utmost devotion the symbol and dogma, the description of the church service, the history of the church. These teachings were to me a vital matter. But my relation to them was determined by the fact that to me the spiritual world counted among the objects of human perception. The very reason why these teachings penetrated so deeply into my mind was that in them I realized how the human spirit can find its way consciously into the supersensible. I am perfectly sure that I did not lose my reverence for the spiritual in the slightest degree through this relationship of the spiritual to perception.

On the other side I was tremendously occupied over the question of the scope of human capacity for thought. It seemed to me that thinking could be developed to a faculty which would actually lay hold upon the things and events of the world. A "stuff" which remains outside of the thinking, which we can merely "think toward," seemed to me an unendurable conception. Whatever is in things, this must be also inside of human thought, I said to myself again and again. Against this conviction, however, there always opposed itself what I read in Kant. But I scarcely observed this conflict. For I desired more than anything else to attain through the \*Critique of Pure Reason\* to a firm standing ground in order to get the mastery of my own thinking. Wherever and whenever I took my holiday walks, I had in any case to set before myself this question, and once more clear it up: How does one pass from simple, clear-cut perceptions to concepts in regard to natural phenomena? I held then quite uncritically to Kant; but no advance did I make by means of him.

Through all this I was not drawn away from whatever pertains to the actual doing of practical things and the development of human skill. It so happened that one of the employees who took turns with my father in his work understood book-binding. I learned bookbinding from him, and was able to bind my own school books in the holidays between the fourth and fifth classes of the Realschule. And I learned stenography also at this time during the vacation without a teacher.

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Nevertheless, I took the course in stenography which was given from the fifth class on.

Occasions for practical work were plentiful. My parents were assigned near the station a little orchard of fruit trees and a small patch for potatoes. Gathering cherries, taking care of the orchard, preparing the potatoes for planting, cultivating the soil, digging the potatoes—all this work fell to my

sister and brother and me. Buying the family groceries in the village, of this I would not let anyone deprive me at those times when the school left me free.

When I was about fifteen years old I was permitted to come into more intimate relationship with the doctor at Wiener Neustadt whom I have already mentioned. I had conceived of a great liking for him because of the way in which he talked to me during his visits to Neudorf. So I often slipped past his home, which was on the ground floor of a building at the corner of two very narrow streets in Wiener-Neustadt. One day he was at the window. He called me into his room I stood before what seemed to me then a great library He talked again about literature; then took down Lessing's *\*Minna von Barnhelm\** from the collection of books, and said I must read that and afterwards come back to him. In this way he gave me one book after another to read and invite me from time to time to come to see him. Every time that I had an opportunity to go back, I had to tell him my impression of what I had read. In this way he became really my teacher in poetic literature. For up to that time both at my home and also at school, all this-except for some " extracts "-had been quite outside of my life. In the atmosphere of this lovable doctor, sensitive to everything beautiful, I learned especially to know Lessing.

Another event deeply influenced my life. The mathematics books which Lubsen had prepared for home study became known to me. I was then able to teach myself analytical geometry, trigonometry, and even differential and integral calculus long before I learned these in school. This enabled me to return to the reading of those books on *\*The General Motion of Matter as the Fundamental Cause of All the Phenomenon of Nature\**. For now I could understand them better

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through my understanding of mathematics. Meanwhile, we had come to the course in physics following that in chemistry, and this brought me a new set of riddles concerning human knowledge to add to the older ones. The teacher of chemistry was a distinguished man. He taught almost entirely by means of experiments. He spoke little. He let natural processes speak for themselves. He was one of our favourite teachers. There was something noteworthy in him which distinguished him in the eyes of his pupils from the other teachers. One felt that he stood in a closer relationship to his science than did the others. The others we addressed with the title " Professor "; he, although he was just as much a professor, was called " Doctor." He was the brother of the thoughtful Tyrolese poet Hermann von Gilm. He had an eye which held one's attention firmly. One felt that this man was accustomed to looking intently at the phenomena of nature and then retaining what he had perceived.

His teaching puzzled me a little. The feeling for facts which marked him could not always hold concentrated that state of mind through which I was then striving toward unification. Still he must have considered that I made good progress in chemistry, for he marked my notes from the start " creditable," and I kept this grade through all the classes.

One day I found at an antiquary's in Wiener-Neustadt Rotteck's history of the world. Until then, in spite of the fact that I received the highest grades in the school in history, this subject had always remained to me something external. Now it grew to be an inner thing. The warmth with which Rotteck conceived and set forth historic events swept me along. His one-sidedness of view I did not then perceive. Through him I was led to two other books which, by reason of their style and their vivid historical conceptions, made the deepest impression on me: Johannes von Mÿller and Tacitus.

Amid such impressions, it was very hard for me to take any interest in the school lessons in history and in literature. But I strove to give life to these lessons from all that I made my own out of other sources. In this manner I passed my time in the three upper classes of the seven years of the Realschule.

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From my fifteenth year on I taught other pupils of the same grade as myself or of a lower grade. The teachers were very willing to assign me this tutoring, for I was rated as a very "good scholar." Through this means I was enabled to contribute at least a very little toward what my parents had to spend out of their meagre income for my education. I owe much to this tutoring. In having to give to others in turn the matter which I had been taught, I myself became, so to speak, awake to this. For I cannot express the thing otherwise than by saying that I received in a sort of dream life the knowledge imparted to me by the school. I was always awake to what I gained by my own effort, and what I received from a spiritual benefactor, such as the doctor I have mentioned of Wiener-Neustadt. What I received thus in a fully self-conscious state of mind was noticeably different from what passed over to me like dream-pictures in the class-room instruction. The development of what had thus been received in a half-waking state was now brought about by the fact that in the periods of tutoring I had to vitalize my own knowledge.

On the other hand, this experience compelled me at an early age to concern myself with practical pedagogy. I learned the difficulties of the development of human minds through my pupils.

To the pupils of my own grade whom I tutored the most important thing I had to teach was German composition. Since I myself had also to write every such composition, I had to discover for each theme assigned to us various forms of development. I often felt then that I was in a very difficult situation. I wrote my own theme only after I had already given away the best thoughts on that topic.

A rather strained relationship existed between the teacher of the German language and literature in the three upper classes and myself. The pupils considered him the "keenest professor," and especially strict. My essays had always been unusually long. The briefer forms I had dictated to my fellow pupils. It took the teacher a long time to read my papers. After the final examination, during the celebration before the close of the session, when for the first time he was "in a

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good humour" among us pupils, he told me how I had annoyed him with my long themes.

Still another thing happened. I had the feeling that some thing was brought into the school through this teacher which I must master. When he discussed the nature of poetic descriptions, it seemed to me that there was something in the background behind what he said. After a time I found out what this was. He adhered to the philosophy of Herbart. He himself said nothing of this. But I discovered it. And so I bought an *\*Introduction to Philosophy\** and a *\*Psychology\**, both of which were written from the point of view of Herbart's philosophy.

And now began a sort of game of hide-and-peek between the teacher and me in my compositions. I began to understand much in him which he set forth in the colours of Herbart's philosophy; and he

found in my compositions all sorts of ideas that came from the same source. Only neither he nor I mentioned Herbart as the source of our ideas. This was through a sort of tacit agreement. But one day I ended a composition in a way that was imprudent in view of the situation. I had to write about some characteristic or other of human beings. At the end I used this sentence: "Such a man possesses psychological freedom." Our teacher would discuss the compositions with the class after he had corrected them. When he came to the discussion of this particular theme, he drew in the corners of his mouth with obvious irony and said: "You say something here about psychological freedom. There is no such thing." I answered: "That seems to me a mistake, Professor. There really is a psychological freedom, only there is no 'transcendental freedom' in an ordinary state of consciousness." The lips of the teacher became smooth again. He looked at me with a penetrating glance and remarked: "I have noticed for a long while from your compositions that you have a philosophical library. I would advise you not to use it; you only confuse your thinking by so doing." I could never understand at all why I would confuse my thinking by reading the same books from which his own thinking was derived. And thus the relation between us continued to be somewhat strained.

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His teaching gave me much to do. For he covered in the fifth class the Greek and Latin poets, from whom selections were used in German translation. Then for the first time I began to regret once in a while that my father had put me in the Realschule instead of the Gymnasium. For I felt how little of the character of Greek and Roman art I should get hold of through the translations. So I bought Greek and Latin text-books, and carried along secretly by the side of the Realschule course also a private Gymnasium course of instruction. This required much time; but it also laid the foundation by means of which I met, although in unusual fashion yet quite according to the rules, the Gymnasium requirements. I had to give many hours of tutoring, especially when I was in the Technische Hochschule (1) in Vienna. I soon had a Gymnasium pupil to tutor. Circumstances of which I shall speak later brought it about that I had to help this pupil by means of tutoring through almost the whole Gymnasium course. I taught him Latin and Greek, so that in teaching him I had to go through every detail of the Gymnasium course with him.

The teachers of history and geography who could give me so little in the lower classes became, nevertheless, important to me in the upper classes. The very one who had driven me to such unusual reading of Kant wrote once a lecture for a school report on *\*Die Eiszeit und ihre Ursachen\**.(2) I grasped the meaning of this with great eagerness of mind, and conceived from it a strong interest in the problem of the glacial age. But this teacher was also a good pupil of the distinguished geographer, Friedrich Simony. This fact led him to explain in the upper classes the geological-geographical evolution of the Alps with illustrative drawings on the blackboard. Then I did not by any means read Kant, but was all eyes and ears. From this side I now got a great deal from this teacher, whose lessons in history did not interest me at all.

In the last class I had for the first time a teacher who gripped

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1 The Technische Hochschule does not correspond wholly to any English or American institution. It might be called a "university" with marked scientific emphasis.

2 The Glacial Age and Its Causes.

me with his instruction in history. He taught history and geography. In this class the geography of the Alps was set forth in the same delightful fashion as had already been the case with the other teacher. In the history lessons the new teacher got a strong hold upon us. He was to us a personality in the full sense of the word. He was a partisan, enthusiastic for the progressive ideas of the Austrian liberal movement of the time. But in the school there was no evidence of this. He brought nothing from his partisan views into the class room. Yet his teaching of history had, by reason of his own participation in life, a strong vitality. I listened to the temperamental historical analyses of this teacher with the results from my reading of the Rotteck volumes still in my memory. The experience produced a satisfying harmony. I cannot but think it was an important thing for me to have had the opportunity to imbibe the history of modern times in this manner.

At home I heard much talk about the Russo-Turkish war (1877-8). The employee who then took my father's place every third day was an original sort of person. When he came to relieve my father, he always brought along a huge carpet-bag. In this he had great packets of manuscript. These were abstracts of the most varied assortments of scientific books. Those abstracts he gave to me, one after another, to read. I devoured them. He would then discuss these things with me. For he really had in his head a conception, somewhat chaotic to be sure but comprehensive, concerning all these things that he had compiled. With my father, however, he talked politics. He delighted to take the side of the Turks; my father defended with great earnestness the Russians. He was one of those persons still grateful to Russia for the service she rendered to Austria at the time of the Hungarian uprising (1848). For my father was on no sort of terms with the Hungarians. He lived in the Hungarian border town of Neudorf during that period when the process of Magyarizing was going forward, and the sword of Damocles hung over his head—the danger that he might not be allowed to remain in charge of the station of Neudorf unless he could speak Magyar. This language was quite unnecessary in that originally German

place, but the Hungarian regime was endeavouring to bring it to pass that railway lines in Hungary should be manned with Magyar-speaking employees, even the privately owned lines. But my father wished to hold his place at Neudorf long enough for me to finish at the school at Wiener-Neustadt. By reason of all this, he was then not friendly to the Hungarians. So, since he could not endure the Hungarians, he liked in his simple way to think of the Russians as those who in 1848 had "shown the Hungarians who were their masters." This way of thinking manifested itself with extraordinary earnestness, and yet in the wonderfully lovable manner of my father toward his Turkophile friend in the person of the "substitute." The tide of discussion rose oft times very high. I was greatly interested in the mutual outbursts of the two personalities, but scarcely at all in their political opinions. For me a much more vital need at that time was that of finding an answer to this question: To what extent is it possible to prove that in human thinking real spirit is the agent ?

MY father had been promised by the management of the Southern Railway that he would be assigned to a small station near Vienna as soon as I should have finished at the Realschule and should need to attend the Technische Hochschule. In this way it would be possible for me to go to Vienna and return every day. So it happened that my family came to Inzersdorf am Wiener Berge.

The station was at a distance from the town, very lonely, and in unlovely natural surroundings. My first visit to Vienna after we had moved to Inzersdorf was for the purpose of buying a greater number of philosophical books. What my heart was now especially devoted to was the first sketch of \*Fichte's Wissenschaftslehre\*. (1) I had got so far with my reading of Kant that I could form a notion, even though immature, of the advance which Fichte wished to make beyond Kant. But this did not greatly interest me. What interested me then was to express the living weaving of the human mind in a sharply outlined mental picture. My strivings after conceptions in natural science had finally brought me to see in the activity of the human ego the sole starting-point for true knowledge. When the ego is active and itself perceives this activity, man has something spiritual in immediate presence in his consciousness-thus I said to myself. It seemed to me that what was thus perceived ought now to be expressed in clear, vivid concepts. In order to find a way to do this, I devoted myself to Fichte's \*Theory of Science\*. And yet I had my own opinions. So I took the volume and rewrote it, page by page. This made a lengthy manuscript. I had previously striven to find conceptions for the phenomena of nature from which one might derive a conception of the ego. Now I wished to do the

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1 Theory of Science.

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opposite: from the ego to penetrate into the nature's process of becoming. Spirit and nature were present before my soul in their absolute contrast. There was for me a world of spiritual beings. That the ego, which itself is spirit, lives in a world of spirits was for me a matter of direct perception. But nature would not pass over into this spirit-world of my experience.

From my study of the Theory of Science I conceived a special interest in Fichte's treatises \*†ber die Bestimmung des Gelehrten\* (1) and \*†ber das Wesen des Gelehrten\* (2). In these writings I found a sort of ideal toward which I myself would strive. Along with these I read also the \*Reden an die Deutsche Nation\* (3). This took hold of me much less at that time than Fichte's other works.

But I wished now to come also to a better understanding of Kant than I had yet been able to attain. In the \*Critique of Pure Reason\* this understanding refused to be revealed to me. So I attacked the problem with the \*Prolegomena zu einer jeden KŸnftigen Metaphysik\*. (4) Through this book I thought I recognized that a thorough penetration into all the questions which Kant had raised among thinkers was necessary for me. I now worked more consciously to the end that I might mould into the forms of thought the immediate vision of the spiritual world which I possessed. And while I was occupied with this inner work I sought to get my bearings with reference to the roads which had been taken by the thinkers of Kant's time and the succeeding epoch. I studied the dry, bald \*Transcendentalen Synthetismus\* (5) s of Traugott Krug just as eagerly as I entered into the tragedy of knowledge by which Fichte was possessed when he wrote his \*Bestimmung des Menschen\*. (6) The history of philosophy by Thilo of the school of Herbart broadened my view of the evolution of philosophical thought from the period of Kant onward. I fought my way through to Schelling, to Hegel. The opposition between the thought of Herbart and of Fichte passed before my mind in all its intensity.

The summer months of 1879, from the end of my Realschule

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- 1 The Vocation of the Scholar.
- 2 The Nature of the Scholar.
- 3 Addresses to the German Nation.
- 4 Prolegomena to all Future Metaphysics
- 5 Transcendental Synthesism.
- 6 Destiny of Man.

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period until my entrance into the Technische Hochschule, I spent entirely in such philosophical studies. In the autumn I was to decide my choice of studies with reference to my future career. I decided to prepare to teach in a Realschule. The study of mathematics and descriptive geometry would have suited my inclination. But I should have to give up the latter; for the study of this subject required a great many practice hours during the day in geometrical drawings, but in order to earn some money I had to have leisure to devote to tutoring. This was possible while attending lectures whose subject-matter, when it was necessary to be absent from lectures, could afterwards be taken up in readings, but not possible when one had to spend hours assigned for drawing regularly in the school.

So I had myself enrolled for mathematics, natural history, and chemistry. Of special import for me, however, were the lectures which Karl Julius Schröer gave at that time in the Hochschule on German literature. He lectured during my first year on " Literature since Goethe " and " Schiller's Life and Work." From the very first lecture he impressed me. He developed a survey of the life of the spirit in Germany in the second half of the eighteenth century and placed in dramatic contrast with this Goethe's first appearance and its effect upon this spiritual life. The warmth of his manner of treating the subject, the inspiring way in which he entered into the selections read from the poets, introduced us through an inner process into the nature of poetry.

In connection with these lectures he had the habit of requiring " practice in oral and written lectures." The students had then to deliver orally or read what they themselves had prepared. Schröer would give informal suggestions during these student performances as to style, manner of delivery, and the like. My first discussion dealt with Lessing's \*Laokoon\*. Then I undertook a longer paper. I worked up the theme: " To what extent is man in his actions a free being ? " In connection with this paper I drew much upon Herbart's philosophy. Schröer did not like this at all. He had not shared in the enthusiasm for Herbart which then prevailed in

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Austria both in philosophical circles and also in pedagogy. He was devoted completely to Goethe's type of mind. So everything which was derived from Herbart seemed to him pedantic and prosaic, although he recognized the discipline of thought to be had from this philosopher.

I was now able to attend also certain lectures at the university. I took great satisfaction in the Herbartian, Robert Zimmermann. He lectured on " Practical Philosophy." I attended that part of his lectures in which he developed the ground principles of ethics. I alternated, generally attending his lecture one day and the next that of Franz Brentano, who at the same period lectured on the same field. I could not keep this up very long, for I missed too much of the courses in the Hochschule.

I was deeply impressed by learning philosophy in this way, not merely out of books, but from the lips of the philosophers themselves.

Robert Zimmermann was a notable personality. He had an extraordinarily high forehead and a long philosopher's beard. With him everything was measured, reduced to style. When he entered through the door and mounted to his seat, his steps seemed to be studied, and all the more so because one felt: " With this man it is obviously natural to be like that." In posture and movement he was as if he had formed himself thus through long discipline according to the aesthetic principles of Herbart. And yet one could entirely sympathize with all this. He then slowly sat down on the chair, cast a long glance through his spectacles over the auditorium, then slowly and precisely took off his glasses, looked once more for a long time without spectacles over the circle of auditors, and finally began to lecture, without manuscript but in carefully formed, artistically spoken sentences. There was something classic in his speech. Yet, owing to the long periods, one easily lost the thread of his discourse. He expounded Herbart's philosophy in a somewhat modified form. The close logic of his teaching impressed me. But it did not impress the other hearers. During the first three or four periods the great hall in which he lectured was full. " Practical Philosophy " was required for the law students

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in the first year. They needed the signature of the professor on their cards. From the fifth or sixth lecture on, most of them stayed away; while one listened to the classical philosopher, one was in a very small group of auditors on the farthest benches.

To me these lectures afforded a powerful stimulus, and the difference between the views of Schr̄er and Zimmermann interested me deeply. The little time I did not spend in attendance at lectures or in tutoring I utilized either in the \*Hofbibliothek\*(1) or the library of the Hochschule. Then for the first time I read Goethe's \*Faust\*. In truth, until my nineteenth year, when I was inspired by Schr̄er, I had never been drawn to this work. Then, however, it won a strong claim upon my interest. Schr̄er had already begun his lectures on the first part. It happened that after only a few of the lectures I became better acquainted with Schr̄er. He then often took me to his home, told me this or that in amplification of his lectures, gladly answered my questions, and sent me away with a book from his library, which he lent me to read. In addition he said many things about the second part of Faust, an annotated edition of which he was already preparing. This part also I read at that time.

In the library I spent my time on Herbart's metaphysics through Zimmermann's \*Aesthetic als Formwissenschaft\*(2), which was written from Herbart's point of view. Together with this I made a thorough study of Haeckel's \*Generelle Morphologie\*.(3) I may say that everything which I felt to be entering into me through the lectures of Schr̄er and Zimmermann, as well as the reading I have mentioned, became a matter of the deepest mental experience. Riddles of knowledge and of world conception shaped themselves within me from these things.

Schr̄er was a spirit who cared nothing for system. He thought and spoke out of a certain intuition. Besides, he gave the greatest possible care to the manner in which he clothed his views in language. For this reason he almost never lectured without manuscript. He needed to write

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1 The Public Library.



- 2 Aesthetics as the Science of Form.
- 3 General Morphology.

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things down undisturbed in order himself to give the requisite attention to the bodying forth of this thought in appropriate words. Then he read a lecture in such a way as to bring into prominence its true inner meaning. Yet once he spoke extemporaneously about Anastasius Grŷn and Lenau. He had forgotten his manuscript. In the next period, however, he treated the whole topic again, reading from his manuscript. He was not satisfied with the form he had been able to give to the matter extemporŷ.

From Schrŷer I learned to understand many concrete examples of beauty. Through Zimmermann there came to me a developed theory of beauty. The two did not agree well. Schrŷer, the intuitive personality with a certain scorn for the systematic, stood before my mind side by side with Zimmermann, the rigidly systematic theorist of beauty.

Franz Brentano, whose lectures also on " Practical Philosophy " I attended, particularly interested me through his personality. He was a keen thinker and at the same time given to reverie. In his manner of lecturing there was something ceremonious. I listened to what he said, but I had also to observe every glance, every movement of his head, every gesture of his expressive hands. He was the perfect logician. Each thought must be absolutely complete and linked up with many other thoughts. The forms of these thought-series were determined by the most scrupulous attention to the requirements of logic. But I had the feeling that these thoughts did not come forth from the loom of his own mind; never did they penetrate into reality. And such also was the whole attitude of Brentano. He held the manuscript loosely in his hand as if at any moment it might slip from his fingers; with his glance he merely skimmed along the lines. And this was the action suited to a merely superficial touch upon reality, not for a firm grasp of it. I could understand his philosophy better from his " philosopher's hands " than from his words.

The stimulus which came from Brentano worked strongly upon me. I soon began to study his writings, and in the course of the following years read most of what he had published.

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I felt in duty bound at that time to seek through philosophy for the truth. I had to study mathematics and natural science. I was convinced that I should find no relationship between these and myself unless I could place under them a solid foundation of philosophy. But I perceived a spiritual world, none the less, as a reality. In clear vision the spiritual individuality of every one revealed itself to me. This found in the physical body and in action in the physical world merely its manifestation. It united itself with that which came down as a physical germ from the parents. Dead men I followed farther on their way in the spiritual world. After the death of a schoolmate I wrote about this phase of my spiritual life to one of my former teachers, who had been a close friend of mine during my Realschule days. He wrote back to me with unusual affection; but he did not deign to say one word about what I had written regarding the dead schoolmate.

And this is what happened to me always at that time in this manner of my perception of the spiritual world. No one would pay any attention to it. From all directions persons would come with

all sorts of spiritistic stuff. With this I in turn would have nothing to do. It was distasteful to me to approach the spiritual in such a way.

It then chanced that I became acquainted with a simple man of the plain people. Every week he went to Vienna by the same train that I took. He gathered medicinal plants in the country and sold them to apothecaries in Vienna. We became friends. With him it was possible to talk about the spiritual world as with one who had his own experience therein. He was a personality of inner piety. He was quite without schooling. He had read very many mystical books, but what he said was not at all influenced by this reading. It was the outflowing of a spiritual life which was marked by its own quite elementary creative wisdom. It was easy to perceive that he read these books only because he wished to find in others what he knew for himself. He revealed himself as if he, as a personality, were only the mouthpiece for a spiritual content which desired to utter itself out of hidden fountains. When one was with him one could get a glimpse deep into the secrets of nature. He carried on his back his bundle of

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medicinal plants; but in his heart he bore results which he had won from the spirituality of nature in the gathering of these herbs. I have seen many a man smile who now and then chanced to make a third party while I walked through the streets of Vienna with this " initiate." No wonder; for his manner of expression was not to be understood at once. One had first in a certain sense to learn his spiritual dialect. To me also it was at first unintelligible. But from our first acquaintance I was in the deepest sympathy with him. And so I gradually came to feel as if I were in company with a soul of the most ancient times who-quite unaffected by the civilization, science, and general conceptions of the present age-brought to me an instinctive knowledge of earlier eras.

According to the usual conception of " learning," one might say that it would be impossible to " learn " anything from this man. But, if one possessed in oneself a perception of the spiritual world, one might obtain glimpses very deep into this world through another who had a firm footing there. Moreover, anything of the nature of mere dreams was utterly foreign to this personality. When one entered his home, one was in the midst of the most sober and simplest family of country folk. Above the entrance to his home were the words: " With the blessing of God, all things are good." One was entertained just as by other village people. I always had to drink coffee there, not from a cup, but from a porridge bowl (1) which held nearly a litre; with this I had to eat a piece of bread of enormous dimensions. Nor did the villagers by any means look upon the man as a dreamer. There was no occasion for jesting at his behaviour in his village. Besides, he possessed a sound, wholesome humour, and knew how to chat, whenever he met with young or old of the village folk, in such fashion that the people liked to hear him talk. There was no one who smiled like those persons that watched him and me going together through the streets of Vienna, and these persons simply perceived in him some thing quite foreign to themselves.

This man always continued to be, even after life had taken

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1 HŠferl.

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me again far away from him, very close to me in soul. He appears in my mystery plays in the person of Felix Balde.

It was no light matter for my mental life at that time that the philosophy which I learned from others could not in its thought be carried all the way to the perception of the spiritual world. Because of the difficulty that I experienced in this respect, I began to fashion a form of " theory of knowledge " within myself. The life of thought in men came gradually to seem to me the reflection radiated into physical man from that which I experienced in the spiritual world. Thought experience was to me the thing itself with a reality into which -as something actually experienced through and through- doubt could find no entrance. The world of the senses did not seem to me so completely a matter of experience. It is there; but one does not lay hold upon it as upon thought. In it or behind it there might be an unknown reality concealed. Yet man himself is set in the midst of this world. Therefore, the question arises: Is this world, then, a reality complete in itself ? When man from within weaves into this world of the senses the thoughts which bring light into this world, does he then bring into this world something foreign to it ? This does not accord at all with the experience that man has when the world of the senses stands before him and he breaks into it by means of his thought. Thought then appears to be that by means of which the world of the senses expresses its own nature. The further development of this reflection was at that time a weighty part of my inner life.

But I wished to be prudent. To follow a course of thought too hastily to the extent of building up a philosophical view of one's own appeared to me a risky thing. This drove me to a thorough-going study of Hegel. The manner in which this philosopher set forth the reality of thought was distressing to me. That he made his way through only to a thought world, even though a living thought-world, and not to the perception of a world of concrete spirit -this repelled me. The assurance with which one philosophizes when one advances from thought to thought drew me on. I saw that many persons felt there was a difference between experience and thought. To me thought itself was experience, but of such

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a nature that one lived in it, not such that it entered from without into men. And so for a long time Hegel was very helpful to me.

As to my required studies, which in the midst of these philosophical interests had naturally to be cramped for time, it was fortunate for me that I had already occupied myself a great deal with differential and integral calculus and with analytical geometry. Because of this I could remain away from many lectures in mathematics without losing my connection. Mathematics was very important for me as the foundation under all my strivings after knowledge. In mathematics there is afforded a system of percepts and concepts which have been reached independently of any external sense impressions. And yet, said I to myself constantly at that time, one carries over these perceptions and concepts into sense-reality and discovers its laws. Through mathematics one learns to understand the world, and yet in order to do this one must first evoke mathematics out of the human mind.

A decisive experience came to me just at that time from the side of mathematics. The conception of space gave me the greatest inner difficulty. As the illimitable, all-encompassing vacuity-the form in which it lay at the basis of the dominant theories of natural science-it could not be conceived in any definite manner. Through the more recent (synthetic) geometry, which I learned by means of

lectures and in private study, there came into my mind the perception that a line which should be prolonged endlessly toward the right hand would return again from the left to its starting-point. The infinitely distant point on the right is the same as the point infinitely distant on the left.

It came over me that by means of such conceptions of the newer geometry one might form a conception of space, which otherwise remained fixed in vacuity. The straight line returning upon itself like a circle seemed to be a revelation. I left the lecture at which this had first passed before my mind as if a great load had fallen from me. A feeling of liberation came over me. Again, as in my early boyhood, something satisfying had come to me out of geometry.

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Behind the riddle of space stood at that period of my life the riddle of time. Might a conception be possible here also which would contain within itself in idea a return out of the past by way of an advance into the infinitely distant future? My happiness over the space conception caused a profound unrest over that of time. But there was then visible no way out. All efforts of thought led only to the realization that I must beware especially of applying the clear conception of space to the problem of time. All clarification which the striving for understanding could bring was frustrated by the riddle of time. The stimulus which I had received from Zimmermann toward the study of aesthetics led me to read the writings of the famous specialist in aesthetics of that time, Friedrich Theodor Vischer. I found in a passage of his work a reference to the fact that more recent scientific thought rendered necessary a change in the conception of time. There was always a sense of joy aroused in me when I found in others the recognition of any cognitional need which I had conceived. In this case it was like a confirmation in my struggle toward a satisfying concept of time.

The lectures for which I was enrolled in the Technische Hochschule I always had to finish with a corresponding examination. For a scholarship had been granted me, and I could draw my allowance only when I showed each year the results of my studies. But my need for understanding, especially in the sphere of natural science, was but little aided by these required studies. It was possible then, however, in the technical institutes of Vienna both to attend lectures as a visitor and also to carry on practical courses. I found everywhere those who met me half-way when I sought thus to foster my scientific life, even so far as to the study of medicine.

I may state positively that I never allowed my insight into the spiritual world to become a disturbing factor when I was engaged in the endeavour to understand science as it was then developed. I applied myself to what was taught, and only in the background of my thought did I have the hope that some day the blending of natural science with the knowledge of the spirit would be granted me.

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Only from two sides was I disturbed in this hope.

The sciences of organic nature were then-wherever I could lay hold of them-steeped in Darwinian ideas. To me Darwinism appeared in its leading ideas as scientifically impossible. I had little by little reached the stage of forming for myself a conception of the inner man. This was of a spiritual sort. And this inner man I thought of as a member of the spiritual world. He was conceived as

dipping down out of the spiritual world into nature, uniting with the organism of nature in order thereby to perceive and to act in the world of the senses.

The fact that I felt a certain respect for the course of thought characterizing the evolutionary theory of organisms did not render it possible for me to sacrifice anything from the conception. The derivation of higher out of lower organisms seemed to me a fruitful idea, but the identification of this idea with that which I knew as the spiritual world appeared to me immeasurably difficult.

The studies in physics were penetrated throughout by the mechanical theory of heat and the wave theory of the phenomena of light and colour.

The study of the mechanical theory of heat had taken on for me the charm of a personal colouring because in this field of physics I attended lectures by a personality for whom I felt quite extraordinary respect. This was Edmund Reitlinger, the author of that beautiful book, \*Freie Blicke\*.(1)

This man was of the most captivating loveliness. When I became his student, he was already very seriously ill with tuberculosis. For two years I attended his lectures on the theory of heat, physics for chemists, and the history of physics. I worked under him in the physics laboratory in many fields, especially in that of spectrum-analysis.

Of special importance for me were Reitlinger's lectures on the history of physics. He spoke in such a way that one felt that, on account of his illness, every word was a burden to him. And yet his lectures were in the best possible sense inspiring. He was a man of a strongly inductive method of research. For all methods in physics he liked to cite the

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1 Open Vistas

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book of Whewel on inductive science. Newton marked for him the climax of research in physics. The history of physics he set forth in two parts: the first from the earliest times to Newton; the second from Newton to recent times. He was an universal thinker. From the historical consideration of problems in physics he always passed over to the perspective of the general history of culture. Indeed, quite general philosophic ideas would appear in his discussions of physics. In this way he treated the problems of optimism and pessimism, and spoke most impressively about the legitimacy of setting up scientific hypotheses. His exposition of Kepler, his characterization of Julius Robert Mayers, were masterpieces of scientific discussion.

I was then stimulated to read almost all the writings of Julius Robert Mayers, and I was able to experience the truly great pleasure of talking face to face with Reitlinger about the content of these.

I was filled with a deep sorrow when, only a few weeks after I had passed my final examination on the mechanical theory of heat under Reitlinger, my beloved teacher succumbed to his grievous illness. Just a short while before his death he had given me as his legacy a testimonial of personal qualifications which would enable me to secure pupils for private tutoring. This had most fortunate results. No small part of what came to me in the following years as means of livelihood I owed to Reitlinger after his death.

Through the mechanical theory of heat and the wave theory of light and of electric phenomena, I was impelled to a study of theories of cognition. At that time the external physical world was conceived as motion-events in matter. The sensations appeared to be only subjective experiences, as the effects of pure motion-events upon the senses of men. Out there in space occurred the motion-events in matter; if these events affected the human heat-sense, man experienced the sensation of heat. There are outside of man wave-events in the ether; if these affect the optic nerve, light and colour sensations are generated within man.

These conceptions met me everywhere. They caused me unspeakable difficulties in my thinking. They banished all

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spirit from the objective external world. Before my mind there stood the idea that even if the observations of natural phenomena led to such opinions, one who possessed a perception of the spiritual world could not arrive at these opinions. I saw how seductive these assumptions were for the manner of thought of that time, educated in the natural sciences, and yet I could not then resolve to oppose a manner of thought of my own against that which then prevailed. But just this caused me bitter mental struggles. Again and again must the criticism I could easily frame against this manner of thinking be suppressed within me to await the time in which more comprehensive sources and ways of knowledge should give me a greater assurance.

I was deeply stirred by the reading of Schiller's letters concerning the aesthetic education of man. His statement that human consciousness oscillates, as it were, back and forth between different states, afforded me a connection with the notion that I had formed of the inner working and weaving of the human soul. Schiller distinguished two states of consciousness in which man evolves his relationship to the world. When he surrenders himself to that which affects him through the senses, he lives under the compulsion of nature. The sensations and impulses determine his life. If he subjects himself to the logical laws and principles of reason then he is living under a rational compulsion. But he can evolve an intermediate state of consciousness. He can develop the "aesthetic mood," which is not given over either on the one side to the compulsion of nature, or on the other to the necessities of the reason. In this aesthetic mood the soul lives through the senses; but into the sense-perception and into the action set on foot by sense-stimuli the soul brings over something spiritual. One perceives through the senses, but as if the spiritual had streamed over into the senses. In action one surrenders oneself to the gratification of the present desire; but one has so ennobled this desire that to him the good is pleasing and the evil displeasing. Reason has then entered into union with the sensible. The good becomes an instinct; instinct can safely direct itself, for it has taken on the character of the spiritual. Schiller sees in this state of

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consciousness that condition of the soul in which man can experience and produce works of beauty. In the evolution of this state he sees the coming to life in men of the true human being.

These thoughts of Schiller's were to me very attractive. They implied that man must first have his consciousness in a certain condition before he can attain to a relationship to the phenomena of the world corresponding to man's own being. Something was here given to me which brought to greater

clarity the questions which presented themselves before me out of my observation of nature and my spiritual experience. Schiller spoke of the state of consciousness which must be present in order that one may experience the beauty of the world. Might one not also think of a state of consciousness which would mediate to us the truth in the beings of things? If this is granted, then one must not, after the fashion of Kant, observe the present state of human consciousness and investigate whether this can enter into the true beings of things. But one must first seek to discover the state of consciousness through which man places himself in such a relationship to the world that things and facts reveal their being to him.

And I believed that I knew that such a state of consciousness is reached up to a certain degree when man not only has thoughts which conceive external things and events, but \*such thoughts that he himself experiences them as thoughts\*. This living in thoughts revealed itself to me as quite different from that in which man ordinarily exists and also carries on ordinary scientific research. If one penetrates deeper and deeper into thought-life, one finds that spiritual reality comes to meet this thought life. One then takes the path of the soul into the spirit. But on this inner way of the soul one arrives at a spiritual reality which one also finds again within nature. One gains a deeper knowledge of nature when one then faces nature after having in living thoughts beheld the reality of the spirit.

It became clearer and clearer to me how, through going forward beyond the customary abstract thoughts to these spiritual perceptions--which, however, the calmness and

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luminousness of the thought serve to confirm--man lives himself into a reality from which customary consciousness bars him out. This customary state has on one side the living quality of the sense-perception; on the other the abstractness of thought-conceiving. The spiritual vision perceives spirit as the senses perceive nature; but it does not stand apart in thought from the spiritual perception as the customary state of consciousness stands in its thoughts apart from the sense-perceptions. Spiritual vision thinks while it experiences spirit, and experiences while it sets to thinking the awakened spirituality of man.

A spiritual perception formed itself before my mind which did not rest upon dark mystical feeling. It proceeded much more in a spiritual activity which in its thoroughness might be compared with mathematical thinking. I was approaching the state of soul in which I felt that I might consider that the perception of the spiritual world which I bore within me was confirmed before the forum of natural scientific thought.

When these experiences passed through my mind I was in my twenty-second year.

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FOR the form of the experience of spirit which I then desired to establish upon a firm foundation within me, music came to have a critical significance. At that time there was proceeding in the most intense fashion in the spiritual environment in which I lived the "strife over Wagner." During my boyhood and youth I had seized every opportunity to improve my knowledge of music. The attitude I held toward thinking required this by implication. For me, thought had content in itself. It possessed this not merely through the percept which it expressed. This, however, obviously led

over into the experience of pure musical tone-forms as such. The world of tone in itself was to me the revelation of an essential side of reality. That music should "express" something else besides the tone-form, as was then maintained in every possible way by the followers of Wagner, seemed to me utterly "unmusical."

I was always of a social disposition. Because of this I had even in my school-days at Wiener-Neustadt, and then again in Vienna, formed many friendships. In opinions I seldom agreed with these friends. This, however, did not mean at all that there was not an inwardness and mutual stimulus in these friendships. One of these was with a young man pre-eminently idealistic. With his blond hair and frank blue eyes he was the very type of a young German. He was then quite absorbed in Wagnerism. Music that lived in itself, that would weave itself in tones alone, was to him a cast-off world of horrible Philistines. What revealed itself in the tones as in a kind of speech—that for him gave the toneforms their value. We attended together many concerts and many operas. We always held opposite views. My limbs grew as heavy as lead when "oppressive music" inflamed

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him to ecstasy; and he was horribly bored by music which did not pretend to be anything else but music.

The debates with this friend stretched out endlessly. In long walks together, in long sessions over our cups of coffee, he drew out his "proofs" expressed in animated fashion, that only with Wagner had true music been born, and that everything which had gone before was only a preparation for this "discoverer of music." This led me to assert my own opinions in drastic fashion. I spoke of the barbarism of Wagner, the graveyard of all understanding of music.

On special occasions the argument grew particularly animated. At one time my friend very noticeably formed the habit of directing our almost daily walk to a narrow little street, and passing up and down it many times discussing Wagner. I was so absorbed in our argument that only gradually did it dawn upon me how he had got this bent. At the window of one of the little houses on the narrow alley there sat at the time of our walk a charming girl. There was no relationship between him and the girl except that he saw her sitting at the window almost every day, and at times was aware that a glance she let fall on the street was meant for him.

At first I only noticed that his championship of Wagner—which in any case was fierce enough—was fanned to a brilliant flame in this little alley. And when I became aware of what a current flowed from that vicinity into his inspired heart, he grew confidential in this matter also, and I came to share in the tenderest, most beautiful, most passionate young love. The relation between the two never went much beyond what I have described. My friend, who came of people not blessed with worldly goods, had soon after to take a petty journalistic job in a provincial city. He could not think of any nearer tie with the girl. But neither was he strong enough to overcome the existing relationship. I kept up a correspondence with him for a long time. A melancholy note of resignation marked his letters. That from which he had been forced to cut himself off was still living and strong in his heart.

Long after life had brought to an end my correspondence



with this friend of my youth, I chanced to meet a person from the same city in which he had found a place as a journalist. I had always been fond of him, and I asked about him. This person said to me: " Yes, things turned out very badly for him; he could scarcely earn his bread. Finally he became a writer in my employ, and then he died of tuberculosis." This news stabbed me to the heart, for I knew that once the idealistic, fair-haired youth, under the compulsion of circumstances, had in his own feelings severed his relation with his young love, then it made no difference to him what life might further bring to him. He considered it of no value to lay the basis for a life which could not be that one which had floated before him as an ideal during our walks in that little street.

In intercourse with this friend my anti-Wagnerism of that period came to realization in even more positive form. But, apart from this, it played any way a great role in my mental life at that time. I strove in all directions to find my way into, music which had nothing to do with Wagnerism. My love for " pure music " increased with the passage of years; my horror at the " barbarism " of " music as expression " continued to increase. And in this matter it was my lot to get into a human environment in which there were scarcely any other persons than admirers of Wagner. This all contributed much toward the fact that only much later did I grudgingly fight my way to an understanding of Wagner, the obviously human attitude toward so significant a cultural phenomenon. This struggle, however, belongs to a later period of my life. In the period I am now describing, a performance of Tristan, for example, to which I had to accompany one of my pupils, was to me " mortally boring."

To this time belongs still another youthful friendship very significant for me. This was with a young man who was in every way the opposite of the fair-haired youth. He felt that he was a poet. With him, too, I spent a great deal of time in stimulating talk. He was very sensitive to everything poetic. At an early age he undertook important productions. When we became acquainted, he had already written a tragedy, \*Hannibal\*, and much lyric verse.

I was with both these friends in the " practice in oral and written lectures " which Schrřer conducted in the Hochschule. From this course we three, and many others, received the greatest inspiration. We young people could discuss what we had arrived at in our minds and Schrřer talked over everything with us and elevated our souls by his dominant idealism and his noble capacity for imparting inspiration.

My friend often accompanied me when I had the privilege of visiting Schrřer. There he always grew animated, whereas elsewhere a note of burden was manifest in his life. Because of a certain discord he was not ready to face life. No calling was so attractive to him that he would gladly have entered upon it. He was altogether taken up with his poetic interest, and apart from this he found no satisfying relation with existence. At last he had to take a position quite unattractive to him. With him also I continued my connection by means of letters. The fact that even in his poetry he could not find real satisfaction preyed upon his spirit. Life for him was not filled with anything possessing worth. I had to observe to my sorrow, how little by little in his letters and also in his conversation the belief grew upon him that he was suffering from an incurable disease. Nothing sufficed to dispel this groundless obsession. So one day I had to receive the I distressing news that the young man who was very near to me had made an end of himself.

A real inward friendship I formed at this time also with a young man who had come from the German Transylvania to the Vienna Hochschule. Him also I had first met in Schröer's seminar periods. There he had read a paper on pessimism. Everything which Schopenhauer had presented in favour of this conception of life was revived in that paper.

In addition there was the personal, pessimistic temperament of the young man himself. I determined to oppose his views. I refuted pessimism with veritable words of thunder, even calling Schopenhauer narrow-minded, and wound up my exposition with the sentence: " If the gentleman who read the paper were correct in his position with respect to pessimism, then I had rather be the wooden board on which my feet

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now tread than be a man." These words were for a long time repeated jestingly about me among my acquaintances. But they made of the young pessimist and me inwardly united friends. We now passed much time together. He also felt himself to be a poet, and many a time I sat for hours in his room and listened with pleasure to the reading of his poems. In my spiritual strivings of that time he also showed a warm interest, although he was moved to this less by the thing itself with which I was concerned than by his personal affection for me. He was bound up with many a delightful friendship, and also youthful love affairs. As a means of living he had to carry a truly heavy burden. At Hermannstadt he had gone through the school as a poor boy and even then had to make his living by tutoring. He then conceived the clever idea of continuing to instruct by correspondence from Vienna the pupils he had gained at Hermannstadt. The sciences in the Hochschule interested him very little. One day, however, he wished to pass an examination in chemistry. He had never attended a lecture or opened a single one of the required books. On the last night before the examination he had a friend read to him a digest of the whole subject-matter. He finally fell asleep over this. Yet he went with this friend to the examination. Both made " brilliant " failures.

This young man had boundless faith in me. For a long time he treated me almost as his father-confessor. He opened up to my view an interesting, often melancholy, life sensitive to all that is beautiful. He gave to me so much friendship and love that it was really hard at times not to cause him bitter disappointment. This happened especially because he often felt that I did not show him enough attention. And yet this could not be otherwise when I had so many varieties of interests for which I found in him no real understanding.

All this, however, only contributed to make the friendship a more inward relationship. He spent his summer vacation at Hermannstadt. There he sought for students in order to tutor them by correspondence the following year from Vienna. I always received long letters at these times from him. He was grieved because I seldom or never answered these. But, when he returned to Vienna in the autumn, he hurried to

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me like a boy, and the united life began again. I owed it to him at that time that I was able to mingle with many men. He liked to take me to meet all the people with whom he associated. And I was eager for companionship. This friend brought into my life much that gave me happiness and

warmth. Our friendship remained the same till my friend died a few years ago. It stood the test of many storms of life, and I shall still have much to say of it.

In retrospective consciousness much comes to mind of human and vital relationships which still continues to-day fully present in my mind, united with feelings of love and gratitude. Here I cannot relate all this in detail, but must leave quite unmentioned much which was indeed very near to me in my personal experience, and is near even now.

My youthful friendships in the time of which I am here speaking had in the further course of my life a special import. They forced me into a sort of double mental life. The struggle with the riddle of cognition, which then filled my mind more than all else, aroused in my friends always, to be sure, a strong interest, but very little active participation. In the experience of this riddle I was always rather lonely. On the other hand, I myself shared completely in whatever arose in the existence of my friends. Thus there flowed along in me two parallel currents of life: one which I as a lone wanderer followed, the other which I shared in vital companionship with men bound to me by ties of affection. But this twofold life was on many occasions of profound and lasting significance for my development.

In this connection I must mention especially a friend who had already been a schoolmate of mine at Wiener-Neustadt. During that time, however, we were far apart. First in Vienna, where he visited me often and where he later lived as an employee, he came very close to me. And yet even at Wiener-Neustadt, without any external relationship between us, he had already had a significance for my life. Once I was with him in a gymnasium period. While he was exercising and I had nothing to do, he left a book lying by me. It was Heine's book on the romantic school and the history of

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philosophy in Germany. I glanced into it. The result of this was that I read the whole book. I found many stimulating things in the book, but was vitally opposed to the manner in which Heine treated the content of life which was dear to me. In this perception of a way of thought and order of feeling which were utterly opposed to those shaping themselves in me, I received a powerful stimulus toward a self-consciousness in the orientation of the inner life which was a necessity of my very nature. I then talked with my schoolmate in opposition to the book. Through this the inner life of his soul came to the fore, which later led to the establishing of a lasting friendship. He was an uncommunicative man who confided very little. Most people thought him an odd character. With those few in whom he was willing to confide he became quite expressive, especially in letters. He considered himself called by his inner nature to be a poet. He was of the opinion that he bore a great treasure in his soul. Besides, he was inclined to imagine that he was in intimate relation with other persons, especially women, rather than actually to form these ties into objective fact. At times he was close to such a relation, but he could not bring it to actual experience. In conversation with me he would then live through his fancies with the same inwardness and enthusiasm as if they were actual. Therefore it was inevitable that he experienced bitter emotions when the dreams always went amiss.

This produced in him a mental life that had not the slightest relation to his outward existence. And this life again was to him the subject of tormenting reflections about himself, which were mirrored for me in many letters and conversations. Thus he once wrote me a long exposition of the way in

which the least or the greatest experience became to him a symbol and how he lived in such symbols.

I loved this friend, and in my love for him I entered into his dreams, although I always had the feeling when with him: " We are moving about in the clouds and have no ground under our feet ! " For me, who ceaselessly busied myself to find firm support for life just there-in knowledge-this was an unique experience. I always had to slip outside of my own being and leap across into another skin, as it were,

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when I was in company with this friend. He liked to share his life with me; at times he even set forth extensive theoretical reflections concerning the " difference between our two natures." He was quite unaware how little our thoughts harmonized, because his friendly sentiments led him on in all his thinking.

The case was similar in my relation with another Wiener-Neustadt schoolmate. He belonged to the next lower class in the Realschule, and we first came together when he entered the Hochschule in Vienna a year after me. Then, however, we were often together. He also entered but little into that which concerned me so inwardly, the problem of cognition. He studied chemistry. The natural scientific opinions in which he was then involved prevented him from showing himself in any other light than as a sceptic concerning the spiritual conceptions with which I was filled. Later on in life I found in the case of this friend how close to my state of mind he then stood in his innermost being; but at that time he never allowed this innermost being to show itself. Thus our lively and long arguments became for me a " battle against materialism." He always opposed to my avowal of the spiritual substance of the world all the contradictory results which seemed to him to be given by natural science. Then I always had to array everything I possessed by way of insight in order to drive from the field his arguments, drawn from the materialistic orientation of his thought, against the knowledge of a spiritual world.

Once we were arguing the question with great zeal. Every day after attending the lectures in Vienna my friend went back to his home, which was still at Wiener-Neustadt. I often accompanied him through the streets of Vienna to the station of the Southern Railway. One day we reached a sort of climax in the argument over materialism after we had already arrived at the station and the train was almost due. Then I put together what I still had to say in the following words: " So, then, you maintain that, when you say ' I think,' this is merely the necessary effect of the occurrences in your brain-nerve system. Only these occurrences are a reality. So it is, likewise, When you say ' I am this or that,' ' I go,' and so

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forth. But observe this. You do not say, ' My brain thinks,' 'My brain sees this or that,' ' My brain goes.' If, however, you have really come to the opinion that what you theoretically maintain is actually true, you must correct your form of expression. When you continue to speak of ' I,' you are really lying. But you cannot do otherwise than follow your sound instinct against the suggestion of your theory. Experience offers you a different group of facts from that which your theory makes up. Your consciousness calls your theory a lie." My friend shook his head. He had no time to reply. As I went back alone, I could not but think that opposing materialism in this crude fashion did not

correspond with a particularly exact philosophy. But it did not then really concern me so much to furnish, five minutes before the train left, a philosophically convincing proof as to give expression to my certitude from inner experience of the reality of the human ego. To me this ego was an inwardly observable experience of a reality present in itself. This reality seemed to me no less certain than any known to materialism. But in it there is absolutely nothing material.

This thorough-going perception of the reality and the spirituality of the ego has in the succeeding years helped me to overcome every temptation to materialism. I have always known " the ego is unshakable." And it has been clear to me that no one really knows the ego who considers it as a form of phenomenon, as a result of other events. The fact that I possessed this perception inwardly and spiritually was what I wished to get my friend to understand. We fought together many times thereafter on this battlefield. But in general conceptions of life we had so many similar sentiments that the earnestness of our theoretical battling never resulted in the least disturbance of our personal relationship. During this time I got deeper into the student life in Vienna. I became a member of the " German Reading Club " in the Hochschule. In the assembly and in smaller gatherings the political and cultural phenomena of the time were thoroughly discussed. These discussions brought out all possible-and impossible-points of view, such as young people hold. Especially when officers were to be elected, opinions clashed

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against one another quite violently. Very exciting and stimulating was much that there found expression among the youth in connection with the events in the public life of Austria. It was the time when national parties were becoming more and more sharply defined. Everything which led later more and more to the disruption of the Empire, which appeared in its results after the World War, could then be experienced in germ.

I was first chosen librarian of the reading-room. As such I found out all possible authors who had written books that I thought would be of value to the student library. To such authors I wrote " begging letters." I often wrote in a single week a hundred such letters. Through this " work " of mine the library was very soon much enlarged. But the thing had a secondary effect for me. Through the work it was possible for me to become acquainted in a comprehensive fashion with the scientific, artistic, culture-historical, political literature of the time. I was an eager reader of the books given.

Later I was chosen president of the Reading Club. This, however, was to me a burdensome office. For I faced a great number of the most diverse party view-points and saw in all of these their relative justification. Yet the adherents of the various parties would come to me. Each would seek to persuade me that his party alone was right. At the time when I was elected every party had favoured me. For until then they had only heard how in the assemblies I had taken the part of justice. After I had been president for a half-year, all turned against me. In that time they had found that I could not decide as positively for any party as that party wished.

My craving for companionship found great satisfaction in the reading-room. And an interest was awakened in a broader field of the public life through its reflection in the occurrences in the common life of the students. In this way I came to be present at very interesting parliamentary debates, sitting in the gallery of the House of Delegates or of the Senate.

Apart from the bills under discussion-which often affected life profoundly-I was especially interested in the personalities of the House of Delegates. There stood every year at the

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end of his bench, as the chief budget expositor, the keen philosopher, Bartolemaus Carneri. His words were a hailstorm of accusations against the Taaffe Ministry; they were a defence of Germanism in Austria. There stood Ernst von Plener, the dry speaker, the unexcelled authority in matters of finance. One was chilled while he criticized the statement of the Minister of Finance, Dunajewski, with the coldness of an accountant. There the Ruthenian Thomeszuck thundered against the politics of nationalities. One had the feeling that upon his discovery of an especially well-coined word for that moment depended the fostering of antipathy against the Minister. There argued, in peasant-theatrical fashion, always intelligently, the clerical Lienbacher. His head, bowed over a little, caused what he said to seem like the outflow of clarified perceptions. There argued in his cutting style the Young Czech Gregr. One felt in him a half-demagogue. There stood Rieger of the Old Czechs, altogether with the deeply characteristic sentiment of the organized Czechs as they had been built up during a long period and had come to self consciousness during the second half of the nineteenth century - a man seldom shut up to himself, a powerful mind and a steadfast will. There spoke on the right side of the Chamber in the midst of the Polish seats Otto Hausner-often only setting forth the results of reading spiritually rich; often sending well-aimed shafts to all sides of the House with a certain sense of satisfaction in himself. A thoroughly self-satisfied but intelligent eye sparkled behind a monocle; the other always seemed to say " Yes " to the sparkle. A speaker who, however, even then often spoke prophetic words as to the future of Austria. One ought to-day to read again what he then said; one would be amazed at the keenness of his vision. One then laughed, to be sure, over much which years later became bitter earnest.

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I COULD not at that time bring myself to reflections concerning public life in Austria which might have taken a deeper hold in any way whatever upon my mind. I merely continued to observe the extraordinarily complicated relationships involved. Expressions which won my deeper interest I could find only in connection with Karl Julius Schršer. I had the pleasure of being with him often just at this time. His own fate was closely bound up with that of German Austria-Hungary. He was the son of Tobias Schršer, who conducted a German school in Presburg and wrote dramas as well as books on historical and aesthetic subjects. The last appeared under the name \*Christian Oeser\*, and they were favourite text-books. The poetic writings of Tobias Gottfried Schršer, although they are doubtless significant and received marked recognition within restricted circles, did not become widely known. The sentiment that breathes through them was opposed to the dominant political current in Hungary. They had to be published in part without the author's name in German regions outside of Hungary. Had the tendencies of the author's mind been known in Hungary, he would have risked, not only dismissal from his post, but also severe punishment.

Karl Julius Schršer thus experienced the impulse toward Germanism even as a young man in his own home. Under this impulse he developed his intimate devotion to the German nature and German literature as well as a great devotion to everything belonging to Goethe or concerning him. The history of German poetry by Gervinus had a profound influence upon him. He went in the fortieth year of the nineteenth century to

Germany to pursue his studies in the German language and literature at the universities of Leipzig, Halle, and Berlin. After his return he was occupied in teaching German literature in his father's school, and in conducting a Seminar. He now became acquainted with the Christmas folk-plays which were enacted every year by the German colonists in the region of Presburg. There he was face to face with Germanism in a form profoundly congenial to him. The roving Germans who had come from the west into Hungary hundreds of years before had brought with them these plays of the old home, and continued to perform them as they had done at the Christmas festival in regions which no doubt lay in the neighbourhood of the Rhine. The Paradise story, the birth of Christ, the coming of the three kings were alive in popular form in these plays. Schršer then published them, as he heard them, or as he read them in old manuscripts that he was able to see at peasants' homes, using the title \*Deutsche Weihnachtsspiele aus Ungarn\*.(1)

The delightful experience of living in the German folk life took an even stronger hold upon Schršer's mind. He made journeys in order to study German dialects in the most widely separated parts of Austria. Wherever the German folk was scattered in the Slavic, Magyar, or Italian geographical regions, he wished to learn their individuality. Thus came into being his glossary and grammar of the Zipser dialect, which was native to the south of the Carpathians; of the Gottschze dialect, which survived with a little fragment of German folk in Krain; the language of the Heanzen, which was spoken in western Hungary.

For Schršer these studies were never merely a scientific task. He lived with his whole soul in the revelation of the folk-life, and wished by word and writing to bring its nature to the consciousness of those men who have been uprooted from it by life. He was then a professor in Budapest. There he could not feel at home in the presence of the prevailing current of thought; so he removed to Vienna, where at first he was entrusted with the direction of the evangelical schools, and where he later became a professor of the German

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1 German Christmas Plays from Hungary.

language and literature. When he already occupied this position, I had the privilege of knowing him and of becoming intimate with him. At the time when this occurred, his whole sentiment and life were directed toward Goethe. He was engaged in editing the second part of \*Faust\*, and writing an introduction for this, and had already published the first part.

When I went to call at Schršer's little library, which was also his work-room, I felt that I was in a spiritual atmosphere in the highest degree beneficial to my mental life. I understood at once why Schršer was maligned by those who accepted the prevailing literary-historical methods on account of his writings, and especially on account of his \*Geschichte der Deutschen Dichtung im neunzehnten Jahrhundert\*.(1) He did not write at all like the members of the Scherer school, who treated literary phenomena after the fashion of investigators in natural science. He had certain sentiments and ideas concerning literary phenomena, and he spoke these out in frank, manly fashion without turning his eyes much at the moment of writing to the "sources." It had even been said that he had written his exposition "from the wrist out."

This interested me very little. I experienced a spiritual warmth when I was with him. I could sit by his side for hours. Out of his inspired heart the Christmas plays lived on his lips, the spirit of the German dialect, the course of the life of literature. The relation between dialect and cultured speech became perceptible to me in a practical way. I experienced a real joy when he spoke to me, as he had already done in his lectures, of the poet of the Lower Austrian dialect, Joseph Misson, who wrote the splendid poem, \*Da Nanz, a nieder šterreichischer Bauernbua, geht ind Fremd\*.(2) Schršer then constantly gave me books from his library in which I could pursue further what was the content of this conversation. I always had, in truth, when I sat there alone with Schršer, the feeling that still another was present-Goethe's spirit. For Schršer lived so strongly in the spirit and the work of Goethe that in every sentiment or idea which entered his

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1 History of German Poetry in the Nineteenth Century.

2 Ignatius, a peasant boy of Lower Austria, goes abroad.

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soul he feelingly asked the question, " Would Goethe have felt or thought thus ? "

I listened in a spiritual sense with the greatest possible sympathy to everything that came from Schršer. Yet I could not do otherwise even in his presence than build up independently in my own mind that toward which I was striving in my innermost spirit. Schršer was an idealist, and the world of ideas as such was for him that which worked as a propulsive force in the creation of nature and of man. I then found it indeed difficult to express in words for myself the difference between Schršer's way of thinking and mine. He spoke of ideas as the propelling forces in history. He felt life in the idea itself. For me the life of the spirit was behind the ideas, and these were only the phenomena of that life in the human soul. I could then find no other terms for my way of thinking than " objective idealism." I wished thereby to denote that for me the reality is not in the idea; that the idea appears in man as the subject, but that just as colour appears on a physical object, so the idea appears on the spiritual object, and that the human mind- the subject-perceives it there as the eye perceives colour on a living being.

My conception, however, Schršer very largely satisfied in the form of expression he used when we talked about that which reveals itself as " folk-soul." He spoke of this as of a real spiritual being which lives in the group of individual men who belong to a folk. In this matter his words took on a character which did not pertain merely to the designation of an idea abstractly held. And thus we both observed the texture of ancient Austria and the individualities of the several folk-souls active in Austria. From this side it was possible for me to conceive thoughts concerning the state of public life which penetrated more deeply into my mind.

Thus my experience at that time was strongly bound up with my relationship to Karl Julius Schršer. What, however, were more remote from him, and in which I strove most of all for an inner explanation, were the natural sciences. I wished to know that my " objective idealism " was in harmony with the knowledge of nature.

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It was during the period of my most earnest intercourse with Schröer that the question of the relation between the spiritual and natural worlds came before my mind in a new form. This happened at first quite independently of Goethe's way of thought concerning the natural sciences. For even Schröer could tell me nothing distinctive concerning this realm of Goethe's creative work. He was happy whenever he found in one or another natural scientist a generous recognition of Goethe's observations concerning the beings of plants and animals. As regards Goethe's theory of colour, however, he was met on all sides by natural scientific conceptions utterly opposed. So in this direction he developed no special opinion.

My relationship to natural science was not at this time of my life influenced from this side, in spite of the fact that in my intercourse with Schröer I came into close touch with Goethe's spiritual life. It was determined much more by the difficulties I experienced when I had to think out the facts of optics in the sense of the physicist.

I found that light and sound were thought of in an analogy which is invalid. The expressions " sound in general " and " light in general " were used. The analogy lay in the following: The individual tones and sounds were viewed as specially modified air-vibrations; and objective sound, outside of the human perception, was viewed as a state of vibration of the air. Light was thought of similarly. That which occurs outside of man when he has a perception by means of phenomena caused by light was defined as vibration in ether. The colours, then, are especially formed ether-vibrations. These analogies became at that time an actual torment to my inner life. For I believed myself perfectly clear in the perception that the concept " sound " is merely an abstract union of the individual occurrences in the sphere of sound; whereas " light " signifies a concrete thing over against the phenomena in the sphere of illumination. " Sound " was for me a composite abstract concept; " light " a concrete reality. I said to myself that light is really not perceived by the senses; " colours " are perceived by means of light, which manifests itself everywhere in the perception of colours but

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is not itself sensibly perceived. " White " light is not light, but that also is a colour. Thus for me light became a reality in the sense-world, yet in itself not perceptible to the senses. Now there came before my mind the conflict between nominalism and realism as this was developed within scholasticism. The realists maintained that concepts were realities which lived in things and were simply reproduced out of these by human understanding. The nominalists maintained, on the contrary, that concepts were merely names formed by man which include together a complex of what is in the things, but names which have no existence themselves. It now seemed to me that the sound experience must be viewed in the nominalist manner and the experiences which proceed from light in the realist manner.

I carried this orientation into the optics of the physicist. I had to reject much in this science. Then I arrived at perceptions which gave me a way to Goethe's colour theory.

On this side the door opened before me through which to approach Goethe's writings on natural science. I first took to Schröer brief treatises I had written on the basis of my views in the field of natural science. He could make but little of them; for they were not yet worked out on the basis of Goethe's way of thinking, but I had merely attached at the end this remark: " When men come to the point of thinking about nature as I have here set forth, then only will Goethe's researches in science be confirmed." Schröer felt an inner pleasure when I made such a statement, but beyond this

nothing then came of the matter. The situation in which I then found myself comes out in the following: Schröter related to me one day that he had spoken with a colleague who was a physicist. But, said the man, Goethe opposed himself to Newton, and Newton was "such a genius"; to which Schröter replied: But Goethe "also was a genius." Thus again I felt that I had a riddle to solve with which I struggled entirely alone.

In the views at which I had arrived in the physics of optics there seemed to me to be a bridge between what is revealed to insight into the spiritual world and that which comes out of researches in the natural sciences. I felt then a need to

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prove to sense experience, by means of certain experiments in optics in a form of my own, the thoughts which I had formed concerning the nature of light and that of colour.

It was not easy for me to buy the things needed for such experiments; for the means of living I derived from tutoring was little enough. Whatever was in any way possible for me I did in order to arrive at such plans of experimentation in the theory of light as would lead to an unprejudiced insight into the facts of nature in this field.

With the physicist's usual arrangements for experiments I was familiar through my work in Reitlinger's physics laboratory. The mathematical treatment of optics was easy to me, for I had already pursued thorough courses in this field. In spite of all objections raised by the physicists against Goethe's theory of colour, I was driven by my own experiments farther and farther away from the customary attitude of the physicist toward Goethe. I became aware that all such experimentation is only the establishing of certain facts "about light" to use an expression of Goethe's-and not experimentation with light itself. I said to myself: "The colours are not, in Newton's way of thinking, produced out of light; they come to manifestation when obstructions hinder the free unfolding of the light." It seemed to me that this was the lesson to be learned directly from my experiments. Through this, however, light was for me removed from the properly physical realities. It took its place as a midway stage between the realities perceptible to the senses and those visible to the spirit.

I was not inclined forthwith to engage in a merely philosophical course of thinking about these things. But I held strongly to this: to read the facts of nature aright. And then it became constantly clearer to me how light itself does not enter the realm of the sense-perceptible, but remains on the farther side of this, while colours appear when the sense perceptible is brought into the realm of light. I now felt myself compelled anew to press inward to the understanding of nature from the most diverse directions. I was led again to the study of anatomy and physiology. I observed the members of the human, animal, and plant organisms

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in their formations. In this study I came in my own way to Goethe's theory of metamorphosis. I became more and more aware how that conception of nature which is attainable through the senses penetrates through to that which was visible to me in spiritual fashion.

If in this spiritual way I directed my look to the soul-activity of man, thinking, feeling, and willing, then the " spiritual man " took form for me, a clearly visible image. I could not linger in the abstractions in which men generally think when they speak of thinking, feeling, and willing. In these living manifestations I saw creative forces which set " the man as spirit " there before me. If I then turned my glance to the sense-manifestation of man, this became complete to my observation by means of the spirit-form which ruled in the sense-perceptible.

I came upon the sensible-supersensible form of which Goethe speaks and which thrusts itself, both for the true natural vision and for the spiritual vision, between what the senses grasp and what the spirit perceives.

Anatomy and physiology struggled through step by step to the sensible-supersensible form. And in this struggling I through my look fell, at first in a very imperfect way, upon the threefold organization of the human being, concerning which -after having pursued my studies regarding this for thirty years in silence-I first began to speak openly in my book \*Von SeelenrStzeln\*.(1) It then became clear to me that in that portion of the human organization in which the shaping is chiefly directed to the elements of the nerves and the senses, the sensible-supersensible form also stamps itself most strongly in the sense-perceptible. The head organization appeared to me as that in which the sensible-supersensible becomes most strongly visible in the sensible form. On the other hand, I was forced to look upon the organization consisting of the limbs as that in which the sensible-supersensible most completely submerges itself, so that in this organization the forces active in nature external to man pursue their work in the shaping of the human body. Between these poles of the human organization everything seemed to me to exist which

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1 Riddles of the Soul.

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expresses itself in a rhythmic manner, the processes of breathing, circulation, and the like. At that time I found no one to whom I could have spoken of these perceptions. If I referred here or there to something of this, then it was looked upon at once as the result of a philosophic idea, whereas I was certain that I had disclosed these things to myself by means of an understanding drawn from unbiased anatomical and physiological experimentation.

For the mood which depressed my soul by reason of this isolation in my perceptions I found an inner release only when I read over and over the conversation which Goethe had with Schiller as the two went away from a meeting of the Society for Scientific Research in Jena. They were both agreed in the view that nature should not be observed in such piece-meal fashion as had been done in the paper of the botanist Batsch which they had heard read. And Goethe with a few strokes drew before Schiller's eyes his " archetypal plant." This through a sensible-supersensible form represents the plant as a whole out of which leaf, blossom, etc., reproducing the whole in detail, shape themselves. Schiller, because he had not yet overcome his Kantian point of view, could see in this " whole " only an " idea " which human understanding formed through observation of the details. Goethe would not allow this to pass. He saw spiritually the whole as he saw with his senses the group of details, and he admitted no difference in principle between the spiritual and the sensible perception, but only a transition from the one to the other. To him it was clear that both had the right to a place in the reality of experience. Schiller, however, did not cease to maintain that the archetypal plant was no experience, but an idea. Then Goethe replied, in his way of thinking, that in

this case he perceived his ideas with his eyes. There was for me a rest after a long struggle in my mind, in that which came to me out of the understanding of these words of Goethe, to which I believed I had penetrated Goethe's perception of nature revealed itself before my mind as a spiritual perception.

Now, by reason of an inner necessity, I had to strive to work in detail through all of Goethe's scientific writings. At first

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I did not think of undertaking an interpretation of these writings, such as I soon afterward published in an introduction to them in Kÿrschner's \*Deutsche National Literatur\*. I thought much more of setting forth independently some field or other of natural science in the way in which this science now hovered before me as " spiritual." My external life was at that time not so ordered that I could accomplish this. I had to do tutoring in the most diverse subjects. The " pedagogical " situations through which I had to find my way were complex enough. For example, there appeared in Vienna a Prussian officer who for some reason or other had been forced to leave the German military service. He wished to prepare himself to enter the Austrian army as an officer of engineers. Through a peculiar course of fate I became his teacher in mathematics and physical-scientific subjects. I found in this teaching the deepest satisfaction; for my " scholar " was an extraordinarily lovable man who formed a human relationship with me when we had put behind us the mathematical and scientific developments he needed for his preparation. In other cases also, as in those of students who had completed their work and who were preparing for doctoral examinations, I had to give the instruction, especially in mathematics and the physical sciences.

Because of this necessity of working again and again through the physical sciences of that time, I had ample opportunity of immersing myself in the contemporary views in these fields. In teaching I could give out only these views; what was most important to me in relation to the knowledge of nature I had still to carry locked up within myself.

My activity as a tutor, which afforded me at that time the sole means of a livelihood, preserved me from one-sidedness. I had to learn many things from the foundation up in order to be able to teach them. Thus I found my way into the " mysteries " of book-keeping, for I found opportunity to give instruction even in this subject.

Moreover, in the matter of pedagogical thought, there came to me from Schrŕer the most fruitful stimulus. He had worked for years as director of the Evangelical schools in Vienna, and he had set forth his experiences in the charming

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little book, \*Unterrichtsfrage\*.(1) What I read in this could then be discussed with him. In regard to education and instruction, he spoke often against the mere imparting of information, and in favour of the evolution of the full and entire human being.

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1 Questions on Teaching.

IN the field of pedagogy Fate gave me an unusual task. I was employed as tutor in a family where there were four boys. To three I had to give only the preparatory instruction for the Volksschule (1) and then assistance in the work of the Mittelschule. The fourth, who was almost ten years old, was at first entrusted to me for all his education. He was the child of sorrow to his parents, especially to his mother. When I went to live in the home, he had scarcely learned the most rudimentary elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic. He was considered so subnormal in his physical and mental development that the family had doubts as to his capacity for being educated. His thinking was slow and dull. Even the slightest mental exertion caused a headache, lowering of vital functions, pallor, and alarming mental symptoms. After I had come to know the child, I formed the opinion that the sort of education required by such a bodily and mental organism must be one that would awaken the sleeping faculties, and I proposed to the parents that they should leave the child's training to me. The mother had enough confidence to accept this proposal, and I was thus able to set myself this unusual educational task.

I had to find access to a soul which was, as it were, in a sleeping state, and which must gradually be enabled to gain the mastery over the bodily manifestations. In a certain sense one had first to draw the soul within the body. I was thoroughly convinced that the boy really had great mental capacities, though they were then buried. This made my task a profoundly satisfying one. I was soon able to bring the

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1 The Volksschule course usually extends from the sixth to the tenth year; the Mittelschule covers the three following years, though the term is not always so definite.

child into a loving dependence upon me. This condition caused the mere intercourse between us to awaken his sleeping faculties of soul. For his instruction I had to feel my way to special methods. Every fifteen minutes beyond a certain time allotted to instruction caused injury to his health. To many subjects of instruction the boy had great difficulty in relating himself.

This educational task became to me the source from which I myself learned very much. Through the method of instruction which I had to apply there was laid open to my view the association between the spiritual-mental and the bodily in man. Then I went through my real course of study in physiology and psychology. I became aware that teaching and instructing must become an art having its foundation in a genuine understanding of man. I had to follow out with great care an economic principle. I frequently had to spend two hours in preparing for half an hour of instruction in order to get the material for instruction in such a form that in the least time, and with the least strain upon the mental and physical powers of the child, I might reach his highest capacity for achievement. The order of the subjects of instruction had to be carefully considered; the division of the entire day into periods had to be properly determined. I had the satisfaction of seeing the child in the course of two years accomplish the work of the Volksschule, and successfully pass the examination for entrance to the Gymnasium (1). Moreover, his physical condition had materially improved. The hydrocephalic condition was markedly diminishing. I was able to advise the parents to send the child to a public school. It seemed to me necessary that he should find his vital development in company with other children. I continued to be a tutor for several years in the

family, and gave special attention to this boy, who was always guided to make his way through the school in such a way that his home activities should be carried through in the spirit in which they were begun. I then had the inducement, in the way I have already mentioned, to increase my knowledge

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1 That is, the boy completed in two years what children usually do in the years from the sixth to the tenth year of age.

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of Latin and Greek, for I was responsible for the tutoring of this boy and another in this family for the Gymnasium lessons.

I must needs feel grateful to Fate for having brought me into such a life relationship. For through this means I developed in vital fashion a knowledge of the being of man which I do not believe could have been developed by me so vitally in any other way. Moreover, I was taken into the family in an extraordinarily affectionate way; we came to live a beautiful life in common. The father of these boys was a sales-agent for Indian and American cotton. I was thus able to get a glimpse of the working of business, and of much that is connected with this. Moreover, through this I learned a great deal. I had an inside view of the conduct of a branch of an unusually interesting import business, and could observe the intercourse between business friends and the interlinking of many commercial and industrial activities.

My young charge was successfully guided through the Gymnasium; I continued with him even to the Unter-Prima (1). By that time he had made such progress that he no longer needed me. After completing the Gymnasium he entered the school of medicine, became a physician, and in this capacity he was later a victim of the World War. The mother, who had become a true friend of mine because of what I had done for her boy, and who clung to this child of sorrow with the most devoted love, soon followed him in death. The father had already gone from this world.

A good portion of my youthful life was bound up with the task which had grown so close to me. For a number of years I went during the summer with the family of the children whom I had to tutor to the Attersee in the Salzkammergut, and there became familiar with the noble Alpine nature of Upper Austria. I was gradually able to eliminate the private lessons I had continued to give to others even after beginning this tutoring, and thus I had time left for prosecuting my own studies.

In the life I led before coming into this family I had little opportunity for sharing in the play of children. In this way

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1 The next to the last year in the Gymnasium.

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it came about that my " play-time " came after my twentieth year. I had then to learn also how to play, for I had to direct the play, and this I did with great enjoyment. To be sure, I think I have not

played any less in my life than other men. Only in my case what is usually done in this direction before the tenth year I repeated from the twenty-third to the twenty-eighth year.

It was during this period that I was occupied with the philosophy of Eduard von Hartmann. As I studied his theory of knowledge, continual opposition was aroused within me. The opinion that the genuinely real lies as the unconscious beyond conscious experience, and that the latter is nothing more than an unreal pictorial reflection from the real-this was to me utterly repugnant. In opposition to this I postulated that the conscious experience can, through the strengthening of mental life, dip down within the real. I was clear in my own mind that the divine-spiritual reveals itself in man if man makes this revelation possible through his own inner life.

The pessimism of Eduard von Hartmann appeared to me as an utterly false questioning of human life. I had to conceive man as striving toward the goal of drawing up from within himself that with which life fills him for his satisfaction. I said to myself: " If through the ordering of the world a ' best life ' were simply imparted to man, how could he bring this inner spring to a flowing stream ? " The external world order has come to a stage in evolution in which it has ignored the good and the bad in things and in facts. Then first the human being awakes to self-consciousness and guides the evolution farther, but in such way that this evolution takes its direction toward freedom, not from things and facts, but only from the fountain head of man's being. The mere introduction of the question of pessimism or optimism seemed to me to be running counter to the free being of man. I frequently said to myself: " How could man be the free creator of his highest happiness if a measure of happiness were imparted to him through the ordering of the external world ? "

On the other hand, Hartmann's work \*Phänomenologie des

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Sittlichen Bewusstseins\*(1) attracted me. There, I found, the moral evolution of man was traced according to the clue of what is empirically observable. It does not become-as in the case of Hartmann's theory of knowledge-speculative thought linked to unknown being which lies beyond consciousness; but rather it is that which can be experienced as morality, and grasped in its manifestations. And it was clear to me that no philosophical speculation must think \*beyond\* the phenomena if it desires to reach the genuinely real. The phenomena of the world reveal of themselves this genuinely real as soon as the conscious soul prepares itself to receive the revelation. Whoever takes into consciousness only what is perceptible to the senses may seek for real being in a beyond-consciousness; whoever grasps the spiritual in his perception speaks of this as being on this side, not of a beyond in the sense characteristic of a theory of cognition. Hartmann's consideration of the moral world seemed to me congenial because in this his \*beyond\* standpoint withdraws wholly into the background, and he confines himself to that which can be observed. Through a deeper penetration into phenomena, even to the point where these disclose their spiritual being- it was in this way that I desired to know that knowledge of real being is brought to pass, not through inferential reasoning as to what is " behind " phenomena.

Since I was always striving to sense a human capacity on its positive side, Eduard von Hartmann's philosophy became useful to me, in spite of the fact that its fundamental tendency and its conception of life were repugnant; for it cast a penetrating light upon many phenomena. And even in those writings of the " philosopher of the unconscious " from which in principle I dissented I yet found much that was immensely stimulating. So it was also with the popular writings of Eduard von Hartmann, which dealt with cultural historical, pedagogical, and political problems. I found in

this pessimist " sound " conceptions of life such as I could not discover in many optimists. It was just in connection with him that I experienced that which I needed,-to be able to understand even though I had to oppose.

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1 Phenomenology of Moral Consciousness.

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It was thus that I sat till late many a night-when I could leave my boys to themselves, and after I had admired the starry heavens from the balcony of the house-in studying the \*Phenomenology of Moral Consciousness\* and the \*Religiöses Bewusstsein der Menschheit in der Stufenfolge seiner Entwicklung\*(1), and while I was reading these writings I attained to an ever increasing assurance concerning my own standpoint in regard to the theory of knowledge.

Upon the suggestion of Schröer, Joseph Kürschner invited me in 1884 to edit Goethe's scientific writings with an introduction and accompanying interpretive notes as a part of the edition of \*Deutsche National-Literatur\* planned by him. Schröer, who had taken responsibility for Goethe's dramas within the great collective work, was to preface the first volume assigned to me with an introductory foreword. In this he analysed the manner in which Goethe as poet and as thinker was related to the contemporary spiritual life. In the philosophy introduced by the age of natural science which followed after Goethe, he saw a falling away from the spiritual height upon which Goethe had been standing. The task which had been assigned to me in the editing of Goethe's scientific writings was characterized in a general way in this preface.

For me the task included an exposition in which natural science should be on one side and Goethe's whole philosophy on the other. Now that I had to come before the public with such an exposition, it was necessary for me to bring to a certain issue all that I had thus far won for myself in the way of a world-conception.

Until that time I had occupied myself as a writer with nothing more than brief articles for the press. It was not easy for me to write down what was a vital inner experience in such manner that I could consider my work worthy of publication. I always had the feeling that what had been elaborated within appeared in a very paltry form when I had to present it in a finished shape. So all literary endeavours became to me the source of continual inner unhappiness.

The form of thought by which natural science has been

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1 Religious Consciousness in Man in the Stages of its Evolution.

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dominated since the beginning of its great influence upon the civilization of the nineteenth century seemed to me ill-adapted to reach an understanding of that which Goethe strove to attain for natural science, and actually did in large measure attain.



I beheld in Goethe a personality who, by reason of the unusual spiritual relationship in which he had placed man with reference to nature, was also in a position to place the knowledge of nature in the right form in the totality of human achievement. The form of thought of the period in which I had grown up appeared to me fit only for shaping ideas regarding lifeless nature. I considered it powerless to enter with capacity for knowledge into the realm of living nature. I said to myself: " In order to attain to ideas which can mediate a knowledge of the organic, it is necessary that one should first endue with life the concepts adapted for an understanding of inorganic nature." For these seemed to me dead, and therefore fit only for grasping that which is dead.

How the ideas became endued with life in Goethe's spirit, how they became ideal forms, this is what I sought to set forth in order to clarify Goethe's conception of nature.

What Goethe thought and elaborated in detail regarding this or that field of the knowledge of nature appeared to me of less importance than the central discovery which I was forced to attribute to him. This I saw in the fact that he had discovered how one must think in regard to the organic in order to come at it understandingly.

I found that mechanics completely satisfy the need for knowledge in that they generate conceptions in a rational manner in the human mind which then prove to be real when applied in the sense-perception of that which is lifeless. Goethe was to me the founder of a law of organics, which in like manner applies to that which has life. When I looked back to Galileo in the history of modern spiritual life, I was forced to remark how he, by the shaping of ideas from the inorganic, had given to the new natural science its present form. What he had introduced for the inorganic Goethe had striven to attain for the organic. Goethe became for me the Galileo of the organic.

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For the first volume of Goethe's natural-scientific writings I had first to elaborate his ideas on metamorphosis. It was difficult for me to express the relation between the living ideal forms through which the organic can be understood and the formless ideas suited to enable one to grasp the inorganic. But it seemed to me that my whole task depended upon making this point in true fashion intelligible. In understanding the inorganic, concept is added in series to concept, in order to survey the correlation of forces which bring about an effect in nature. In reference to the organic it is necessary so to allow one concept to grow out of another that in the progressive living metamorphosis of concepts there come to light images of that which appears in nature as a being possessing form. This Goethe strove to do in that he sought to hold fast in his mind an ideal image of a leaf which was not a fixed lifeless concept but such a one as might present itself in the most varied forms. If one permits these forms in the mind to proceed one out of another, one thus constructs the whole plant. One re-creates in the mind in ideal fashion the process whereby nature in actual fashion shapes the plant.

If one seeks in this way to conceive the plant world, one thus stands much nearer in spirit to the world of nature than in conceiving the inorganic by means of formless concepts. For the inorganic one conceives only a spiritual fantasm of that which is present in nature in a manner void of spirit. But in the coming into existence of a plant there lives some thing which has a remote resemblance to that which arises in the human mind as an image of the plant. One becomes aware of how nature, while bringing forth the organic, is really bringing into action something spiritually similar within her own being.

I desired to show, in the introduction to Goethe's botanical writings, how in his theory of metamorphosis he took the direction of thinking about the workings of organic nature in the manner in which one thinks of spirit. Still more spiritual in form appeared to me Goethe's way of thinking in the realm of the animal and in the lower natural stages of the human being.

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In relation to the animal-human, Goethe began by seeing through an error which he noticed among his contemporaries. These sought to ascribe a special position in nature to the organic bases of the human being by finding individual distinctions between man and the animal. They found such a distinction in the intermaxillary bones which the animals possess, in which their upper incisor teeth are bedded. In man, they said, such a special intermediary bone in the upper jaw is lacking; his upper jaw consists of a single piece.

This seemed to Goethe an error. For him the human form was a metamorphosis of the animal to a higher stage. Everything which appears in the forming of the animal must be present also in the human, only in a higher form so that the human organism might become the bearer of the self-conscious spirit.

In the elevation of the whole united form of man Goethe saw the distinction from the animal, not in details.

Step by step does one perceive the organic creative forces become more like spirit as one rises from consideration of the plant-beings to the varied forms of the animals. In the organic form of man creative forces are active which bring to pass the highest metamorphosis of the animal shape. These forces are present in the process of becoming of the human organism; and they finally live there as the human spirit after they have formed in the natural basic parts a vessel which can receive them in their form of existence free from nature.

In this conception of the human organism it seemed to me that Goethe had anticipated everything true which was later affirmed, on the ground of Darwinism, concerning the kinship of the human with the animal. But it also seemed to me that all which was untrue was omitted. The materialistic understanding of that which Darwin discovered leads to the adoption of conceptions based upon the kinship between man and the animals which deny the spirit where it appears in its highest form in an earthly existence-in man. Goethe's conception leads to the perception of a spiritual creation in the animal form which has simply not yet arrived at the stage

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at which the spirit as such can live. That which lives in man as spirit creates in the animal form at a preliminary stage; and it metamorphoses this form in the case of man in such a way that it can then appear, not only as creative, but also in its own living presence.

Viewed in this way, Goethe's consideration of nature becomes one which, while tracing the natural process of becoming from the inorganic to the organic, also leads natural science over into spiritual science. To bring out this fact was to me of more importance than anything else in working up the first volume of Goethe's natural-scientific writings. For this reason I allowed my introduction to

narrow down to an explanation of the way in which Darwinism establishes a one-sided view, coloured by materialism, which must be restored to wholeness by Goethe's way of thinking.

How one must think in order to penetrate into the phenomena of life-this is what I wished to show in discussing Goethe's view of the organic. I soon came to feel that this discussion required a basis upon which to rest. The nature of cognition was then conceived by my contemporaries in a way which could never arrive at Goethe's view. The theorists of cognition had in mind natural science as it then existed. What they said in regard to the nature of cognition held good only for a conception of inorganic nature. There could be no agreement between what I must say in regard to Goethe's kind of cognition and the theories of cognition ordinarily held at that time.

Therefore, whatever I had established upon the basis of Goethe's theory of the organic sent me afresh to the theory of cognition. I had before my mind theories such as that of Otto Liebmann, which expressed in the most varied forms the dogma that human consciousness can never get outside itself; that it must therefore be content to live in that which reality sends into the human soul, and which presents itself within in spiritual form. If one views the thing in this way, one cannot say that one perceives a spiritual relationship in organic nature after the manner of Goethe. One must seek for the spirit within the human soul, and consider a spiritual contemplation of nature inadmissible.

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I discovered that there was no theory of cognition fitting Goethe's kind of cognition. This induced me to undertake to sketch such a theory. I wrote my *\*Erkenntnistheorie der Goethe'schen Weltanschauung\**(1) out of an inner need before I proceeded to prepare the other volumes of Goethe's natural scientific writings. This little book was finished in 1886.

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1 Theory of Cognition in Goethe's World Conception

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I WROTE down the ideas of the *\*Theory of Cognition in Goethe's World-Conception\** at a time when Fate had led me into a family which made possible for me many happy hours within its circle, and a fortunate chapter of my life. Among my friends there had for a long time been one whom I had come to hold very dear because of his gay and sunny disposition, his accurate observations upon life and men, and his whole manner, so open and loyal. He introduced me and other mutual friends into his home. There we met, in addition to this friend, two daughters of the family, his sisters, and a man whom we soon had to recognize as the fiancŽ of the elder daughter. In the background of this family there hovered something we were never able to see. This was the father of the brother and sisters. He was there, and yet not there. We learned from the most various sources something about the man who was to us unknown. According to what we were told, he must have been somewhat unusual. At first the brother and sisters never spoke of their father, even though he must have been in the next room. Then they began, at first very gradually, to make one or another remark about him. Every word showed a feeling of genuine reverence. One felt that in this man they honoured a very important person. But one also felt that they dreaded lest by chance we should happen to see him.

Our conversations in the family circle were generally of a literary character, and, in order to refer to this thing or that, many a book would be brought by the brother or sisters from the father's library. And the circumstances brought it about that I became acquainted, little by little, with much which the man in the next room read, although I never had an opportunity to see him.

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At last I could no longer do otherwise than inquire about much that concerned the unknown man. And thus, from the talk of the brother and sisters-which held back much, and yet revealed much-there gradually arose in my mind an image of a noteworthy personality. I loved the man, who to me also seemed an important person. I came finally to reverence in him a man whom the hard experiences of life had brought to the pass of dealing thenceforward only with the world within himself, and of foregoing all human intercourse.

One day we visitors were told that the man was ill, and soon afterward the news of his death had to be conveyed to us. The brother and sisters entrusted to me the funeral address. I said what my heart impelled me to say regarding the personality whom I had come to know only through descriptions. It was a funeral at which only the family, the fiancŽ of one daughter, and my friends were present. The brother and sisters said to me that I had given a true picture of their father in my funeral address. And from the way they spoke, and from their tears, I could not but feel that this was their real conviction. Moreover, I knew that the man stood as near me in the spirit as if I had had much intercourse with him.

Between the younger daughter and me there gradually came about a beautiful friendship. She really had in her something of the primal type of the German maiden. She bore in her soul nothing acquired from her education, but expressed in her life an original and charming naturalness together with a noble reserve, and this reserve of hers caused a like reserve in me. We loved each other, and both of us were fully aware of this; but neither of us could overcome the fear of saying that we loved each other. Thus the love lived between the words we spoke to each other, and not in the words themselves. I felt the relationship as to our souls was of the most universal kind; but it found no possibility of taking a single step beyond what is of the soul.

I was happy in this friendship; I felt my girl friend like something of the sun in my life. Yet this life later bore us far apart. In place of hours of happy companionship there then remained only a short-lived correspondence, followed by

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the melancholy memory of a beautiful period of my past life-a memory, however, which has through all my later life arisen again and again from the depths of my soul.

It was at that same time that I once went to Schrřer. He was altogether filled with an impression which he had just received. He had become acquainted with the poems of Marie Eugenie delle Grazie. Before him there lay a little volume of her poems, an epic \*Herman\*, a drama \*Saul\*, and a story \*Die Zigeunerin\*(1). Schrřer spoke enthusiastically of these poetical writings. " And all these have been written by a young person before completing her sixteenth year ! " he said. Then he added that Robert Zimmermann had said that she was the only genius he had known in his life.

Schršer's enthusiasm now led me also to read the productions one after another. I wrote an article about the poet. This brought me the great pleasure of being permitted to call upon her. During this call I had the opportunity of a conversation with the poet which has often come to mind during my life. She had already begun to work upon an undertaking in the grand style, her epic \*Robespierre\*. She discussed the basic ideas of this composition. Already there was present in her conversation an undertone of pessimism. I felt in regard to her as if she meant to represent in such a personality as Robespierre the tragedy in all idealism. Ideals arise in the human heart, but they have no power over the horrible destructive action of nature, empty of all ideals, who utters against all ideals her pitiless cry: "Thou art mere illusion, a fantasm of my own, which I again and again hurl back into nothingness."

This was her conviction. The poet then spoke to me of a further poetic plan, a \*Satanid\*. She would represent the antitype of God as the Primal Being which is the Power revealing itself to man in terrible, ruinous nature, empty of the ideal. She spoke with genuine inspiration of the Power from the abyss of being, dominant over all being. I went away from the poet profoundly shocked. The greatness with which she had spoken remained impressed upon me; the content of her ideas was the opposite of everything which

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1 The Gipsy.

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stood before my mind as a view of the world. But I was never inclined to withhold my interest or my admiration from that which seemed to me great, even when it repelled me utterly by its content. Indeed, I said to myself, such opposites in the world must somewhere find their reconciliation. And this enabled me to follow what repelled me just as if it lay in the same direction as the conception held by my own mind.

Shortly after this I was invited again to the home of delle Grazie. She was to read her \*Robespierre\* before a number of persons, among whom were Schršer and his wife and also a woman friend of his family. We listened to scenes of lofty poetic rhythm, but with a pessimistic undertone of a richly coloured naturalism: life painted in its most terrible aspects. Great human beings, inwardly deceived by Fate, rose to the surface, or sank below in the grip of tragedy. This was my impression. Schršer became indignant. For him art ought not to plunge beneath such abysses of the "terrible." The women withdrew. They had experienced a sort of convulsion. I could not agree with Schršer, for he seemed to me to be wholly filled with the feeling that poetry can never be made out of what is terrible in the experience of the human soul, even though this terrible experience is nobly endured. Delle Grazie soon after published a poem in which Nature is celebrated as the highest Power, but in such a way that she mocks at all ideals, which she calls into existence only in order to delude man, and which she hurls back into nothingness when this delusion has been accomplished.

In relation to this composition I wrote a paper entitled \*Die Natur und unsere Ideale\*(1), which I did not publish but had privately printed in a small number of copies. In this I discussed the apparent correctness of delle Grazie's view. I said that a view which does not shut out the hostility manifested by nature against human ideals is of a higher order than a "superficial optimism" which blinds itself to the abysses of existence. But I also said in regard to this matter that the free

inner being of man creates for itself that which gives meaning and content to life, and that this being

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1 Nature and Our Ideals.

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could not fully unfold itself if a prodigal nature bestowed upon it from without that which ought to arise within.

Because of this paper I had a painful experience. When Schrřer had received it, he wrote me that, if I thought in such a way about pessimism, we had never understood one another, and that anyone who spoke in such a way about nature as I had done in the paper showed thereby that he could not have taken in a sufficiently profound sense Goethe's words: " Know thyself, and live at peace with the world."

I was cut to the heart when I received these lines from the person to whom I felt the most devoted attachment. Schrřer could be passionately aroused when he became aware of a sin against the harmony manifesting itself in art in the form of beauty. He turned against *delle Grazie* when he was forced to observe this sin against his conception. And he considered the admiration which I felt for the poet as a falling away both from him and also from Goethe. He failed to see in my paper what I said regarding the human spirit overcoming from within itself the obstacles of nature; he was offended because I said that external nature could not be the creator of true inner satisfaction for man. I wished to set forth the meaninglessness of pessimism in spite of its correctness within certain limits; Schrřer saw in every concession to pessimism something which he called " the slag from burned-out spirits."

In the home of Marie Eugenie *delle Grazie* I passed some of the happy hours of my life. Saturday evening she always received visitors. Those who came were persons of diverse spiritual tendencies. The poet formed the centre of the group. She read aloud from her poems; she spoke in the spirit of her world-conception in very positive language. She cast the light of these ideas upon human life. It was by no means the light of the sun. Always in truth only the pale light of the moon-threatening, overcast skies. But from human dwellings there arose flames of fire into the dusky air as if carrying the sorrows and illusions in which men are consumed. All this, nevertheless, humanly gripping, always fascinating, the bitterness enveloped in the magic power of a wholly spiritualized personality.

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At *delle Grazie's* side was Laurenz Mřllner, a Catholic priest, teacher of the poet, and later her discreet and noble friend. He was at that time professor of Christian philosophy in the theological faculty of the University. The impression he made, not only by his face but in his whole figure, was that of one whose development had been mental and ascetic. A sceptic in philosophy, thoroughly grounded in all aspects of philosophy, in conceptions of art and literature. He wrote for the Catholic clerical journal, *\*Vaterland\**, stimulating articles upon artistic and literary subjects. The poet's pessimistic view of the world and of life fell always from his lips also.

Both united in a positive antipathy to Goethe; on the other hand, their interest was directed to Shakespeare and the later poets, children of the sorrowful burden of life, and of the naturalistic confusions of human nature. Dostoevsky they loved warmly; Leopold von Sacher-Masoch they looked upon as a brilliant writer who shrank back from no truth in order to represent that which is growing up in the morass of modern life as all too human and worthy of destruction. In Laurenz Mýllner the antipathy to Goethe took on something of the colour of Catholic theology. He praised Baumgarten's monograph, which characterized Goethe as the antithesis of that which is deserving of human endeavour. In delle Grazie there was something like a profound personal antipathy to Goethe.

About the two were gathered professors of the theological faculty, Catholic priests of the very finest scholarship. First among them all was the priest of the Cistercian Order of the Holy Cross, Wilhelm Neumann. Mýllner justly esteemed him because of his comprehensive scholarship. He said to me once, when in the absence of Neumann I was speaking with enthusiastic admiration of his broad and comprehensive scholarship: " Yes, indeed, Professor Neumann knows the whole world and three villages besides." I liked to accompany the learned man when we went away from delle Grazie's at the same time. I had many a conversation with this "ideal " of a scientific man who was at the same time a " true son of his Church." I would here mention only two of these. One was in regard to the person of Christ. I

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expressed my view to the effect that Jesus of Nazareth, by reason of supramundane influence, had received the Christ into himself, and that Christ as a spiritual Being has lived in human evolution since the Mystery of Golgotha. This conversation remained deeply imprinted in my mind; ever and again it has arisen in memory. For it was profoundly significant for me. There were really three persons engaged in that discussion: Professor Neumann and I, and a third, unseen person, the personification of Catholic dogmatic theology, visible to spiritual perception as he walked behind the professor, always beckoning with his finger threateningly, and always tapping Professor Neumann on the shoulder as a reminder whenever the subtle logic of the scholar led him too far in agreement with me. It was noteworthy how often the first clause of the latter's sentences would be reversed in the second clause. There I was face to face with the Catholic way of life in one of its best representatives. It was through him that I learned to esteem it, but also to know it through and through.

Another time we discussed the question of repeated earth lives. The professor then listened to me, spoke of all sorts of literature in which something on this subject could be found; he often nodded his head lightly, but had no inclination to enter into the merits of a question which seemed to him very fanciful. So this conversation also became of great import to me. The uncomfortableness with which Neumann felt the answers he did not utter in response to my statements was deeply impressed upon my memory.

Besides these, the Saturday evening callers were the historian of the Church and other theologians, and in addition I met now and then the philosopher Adolf Stšhr, Goswine von Berlepsch, the emotionally moving story-teller Emilie Mataja (who bore the pen-name of Emil Marriott, the poet and writer Fritz Lemmermayer, and the composer Stross. Fritz Lemmermayer, with whom I was later on terms of intimate friendship, I came to know at one of delle Grazie's afternoons. A highly noteworthy man. Whatever interested him he expressed with inwardly measured dignity. In his outward appearance he resembled equally the musician

Rubinstein and the actor Lewinsky. With Hebbel he developed almost a cult. He had definite views on art and life born out of the sagacious understanding of the heart, and these were unusually fixed. He had written the interesting and profound romance, \*Der Alchemist\*(1), and much besides that was characterized by beauty and depth. He knew how to consider the least things in life from the view-point of the most vital. I recall how I once saw him in his charming little room in a side-street in Vienna together with other friends. He had planned his meal: two soft-boiled eggs, to be cooked in an instantaneous boiler, together with bread. He remarked with much emphasis while the water was heating to boil the eggs for us: " This will be delicious ! " In a later phase of my life I shall again have occasion to speak of him.

Alfred Stross, the composer, was a gifted man, but one tinged with a profound pessimism. When he took his seat at the piano in delle Grazie's home and played his *Žtudes*, one had the feeling: Anton Bruckner's music reduced to airy tones which would fain flee this earthly existence. Stross was little understood; Fritz Lemmermayer was inexpressibly devoted to him.

Both Lemmermayer and Stross were intimate friends of Robert Hamerling. Through them I was led later into a brief correspondence with Hamerling, to which I shall refer again. Stross finally died of a serious illness in spiritual darkness.

The sculptor Hans Brandstadter I also met at delle Grazie's. Even though unseen, there hovered over all this group of friends, through frequent wonderful descriptions of him almost like hymns of praise, the historian of theology Werner. Delle Grazie loved him more than anyone else. Never once did he appear on a Saturday evening when I was able to be present. But his admirer showed us the picture of the biographer of Thomas Aquinas from ever new angles, the picture of the good, lovable scholar who remained naive even to extreme old age. One imagined a man so selfless, so absorbed in the matter about which he spoke as a historian, so exact, that one said, " If only there were many such historians ! "

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1 The Alchemist.

A veritable fascination ruled over these Saturday evening gatherings. After it had grown dark, a lamp was lighted under a shade of some red fabric, and we sat in a circular space of light which made the whole company festive. Then delle Grazie would frequently become extraordinarily talkative-especially when those living at a distance had gone- and one was permitted to hear many a word that sounded like sighs from the depths in the after-pangs of grievous days of fate. But one listened also to genuine humour over the personalities of life, and tones of indignation over the corruption in the press and elsewhere. Between-whiles there were the sarcastic, often caustic, remarks of Mÿllner on all sorts of philosophical, artistic, and other themes. Delle Grazie's house was a place in which pessimism revealed itself in direct and vital force, a place of anti-Goetheanism. Everyone listened whenever I spoke of Goethe; but Laurenz Mÿllner held the opinion that I ascribed to Goethe things which really had little to do with the actual minister of the Grand-duke Karl August. Nevertheless for me every visit at this house-and I knew that I was



welcomed there-was something for which I am inexpressibly grateful; I felt that I was in a spiritual atmosphere which was of genuine benefit to me. For this purpose I did not require agreement in ideas; I required earnest and striving humanity susceptible to the spiritual. I was now between this house, which I frequented with much pleasure, and my teacher and fatherly friend Karl Julius Schröer, who, after the first visit, never again appeared at delle Grazie's. My emotional life, drawn in both directions by sincere love and esteem, was actually torn in two. But it was just at this time that those thoughts first came to maturity in me which later formed the volume *\*Die Philosophie der Freiheit\**(1). In the unpublished paper about delle Grazie mentioned above, *\*Nature and Our Ideals\**, there lie the germs of the later book in the following sentences: "Our ideals are no longer so superficial as to be satisfied with a reality often so flat and so empty. Yet I cannot believe that there is no means whereby to rise above the profound

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1 The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity.

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pessimism which comes from this knowledge. This elevation comes to me when I look into our inner world, when I enter more intimately into the nature of our ideal world. This is a self-contained world, complete in itself, which can neither win anything nor lose anything by reason of the transitoriness of the external. Do not our ideals, if these are really living individualities, possess an existence for themselves independently of the kindness or unkindness of nature ? Even though the lovely rose may for ever be shattered by the pitiless gusts of the wind, it has fulfilled its mission, for it has rejoiced hundreds of human eyes; if to-morrow it should please murderous nature to destroy the whole starry sky, yet for thousands of years men have gazed up reverently toward it, and this is enough. Not the existence in time, no, but the inner being of things, constitutes their completion. The ideals of our spirits are a world for themselves, which must also live for themselves, and which can gain nothing from the co-operation of a good nature. What a pitiable creature man would be if he could not gain satisfaction within his own ideal world, but must first to this end have the co-operation of nature ! What divine freedom remains to us if nature guides and guards us like helpless children tied to leading strings ? No, she must deny us everything, in order that, when happiness comes to us, this shall all be the result of our free selves. Let nature destroy every day what we shape in order that we may every day experience anew the joy of creation! We would fain owe nothing to nature; everything to ourselves.

" This freedom, one may say, is only a dream ! While we think that we are free, we obey the iron necessity of nature. The loftiest thoughts that we conceive are merely the fruit of the blind power of nature within us. But we surely should finally admit that a being who knows himself cannot be unfree ! . . . We see the web of law ruling over things, and this it is which constitutes necessity. In our knowledge we possess the power to separate the natural laws from things; and must we ourselves be nevertheless without a will, slaves to these same laws ? "

These thoughts I did not evolve out of a spirit of controversy;

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but I was forced to set forth what my perception of the spiritual world said to me in opposition to a view of life which I had to consider as being at the opposite pole from my own, but which I none

the less profoundly revered because it was revealed to me from the depths of true and earnest souls.

At the very time during which I enjoyed such stimulating experiences at the home of delle Grazie, I had the privilege of entering also a circle of the younger Austrian poets. Every week we had a free expression and mutual sharing together of whatever one or the other had produced. The most varied characters met in this gathering. Every view of life and every temperament was represented, from the optimistic, naïve painter of life to the leaden-weighted pessimist. Fritz Lemmermayer was the soul of the group. There was present something of the storm which the Hart brothers, Karl Henckel, and others had loosed in the German Empire against " the old " in the spiritual life of the time. But all this was tinged with Austrian " amiability." Much was said about how the time had come in which new tones must sound forth in all spheres of life; but this was done with that disapproval of radicalism which is characteristic of the Austrian.

One of the youngest of this circle was Joseph Kitir. He devoted his effort to a form of lyric to which he had been inspired by Martin Greif. He did not wish to bring subjective feelings to expression; he wished to set forth an event or situation objectively, and yet as if this had been observed, not with the senses, but with the feelings. He did not wish to say that he was enchanted; but rather he would paint the enchanting event, and its enchantment should act upon hearer or reader without the poet's statement. Kitir did really beautiful things in this way. His soul was naïve. A little while after this he bound himself more closely to me. In this circle I now heard an Austro-German poet spoken of with great enthusiasm, and I afterward became familiar with some of his poems. These made a deep impression upon me. I endeavoured to meet the poet. I asked Fritz Lemmermayer, who knew him well, and also some others whether the poet could not be invited to our gatherings.

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But I was told that he could not be dragged there with a four-horse team. He was a recluse, they said, and would not mingle with people. But I was deeply desirous of knowing him. Then one evening the whole company went out and roamed over to the place where the " knowing ones " could find him. It was a little wine-shop in a street parallel to KŠrtnerstrasse. There he sat in one corner, his glass of red wine-not a small one-before him. He sat as if he had sat there for an indefinitely long time, and would continue to sit indefinitely long. Already a rather old gentleman, but with shining, youthful eyes, and a countenance which showed the poet and idealist in the most delicate and most speaking lines. At first he did not see us enter. For it was clear that in the nobly shaped head a poem was taking form. Fritz Lemmermayer had first to take him by the arm; then he turned his face in our direction and looked at us. We had disturbed him. His perplexed glance could not conceal this; but he showed it in the most amiable fashion. We took our places around him. There was not space enough for so many to sit in the cramped little room. It was now remarkable how the man who had been described as a " recluse " showed himself in a very short while as enthusiastically talkative. We all had the feeling that with what our minds were then exchanging in conversation we could not remain in the dull closeness of that room. And there was now not much difficulty in bringing the " recluse " with us to another \*Lokal\*. Except for him and one other acquaintance of his who had for a long time mingled with our circle, we were all young; yet it soon became evident that we had never been so young as on this evening when the old gentleman was with us, for he was really the youngest of us all.

I was completely captivated by the charm of this personality. It was at once clear to me that this man must have produced much that was more significant than what he had published, and I pressed him with questions regarding this. He answered almost timidly: " Yes, I have besides at home some cosmic things." I succeeded in persuading him to promise that he would bring these the next evening that we could see him.

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It was thus that I became acquainted with Fercher von Steinwand. A poet from the Karntnerland, pithy, full of ideas, idealistic in his sentiments. He was the child of poor people, and had passed his youth amid great hardships. The distinguished Anatorn Hyrtl came to know his worth, and made possible for him the sort of existence in which he could live wholly in his poems, thoughts, and conceptions. For a considerable time the world knew very little of him. After the appearance of his first poem, \*Grafin Seelenbrand\*, Robert Hamerling brought him into full recognition.

After that night we never needed again to go for the " recluse." He appeared almost regularly on our evenings. I was extremely glad when on one of these evenings he brought along one of his " cosmic things." It was the \*Chor der Urtriebe\*(1) and the \*Chor der Urtraume\*(2), poems in which feelings live in swinging rhythm which seem as if they penetrated into the very creative forces of the world. There hover ideas as if actual beings in splendid euphony, forming themselves into pictures of the Powers which in the beginning created the world. I consider the fact that I came to know Fercher von Steinwand as one of the most important events of my youth; for his personality acted like that of a sage who reveals his wisdom in genuine poetry.

I had struggled with the riddle of man's repeated earth lives. Many a perception in this direction had come to me when I came close to men who in the habit of their lives, in the impress of their personalities revealed clearly the signs of a content within their beings which one would not expect to find in what they had inherited through birth or acquired afterward through experience. But in the play of countenance, in every gesture of Fercher, I saw the essence of a soul which could only have been formed in the time from the beginning of the Christian evolution, while Greek paganism was still influencing this evolution. One does not arrive at such a view when one thinks only of those expressions of a personality which press immediately upon one's attention; it is aroused in one rather by the intuitively perceived marks of the individuality which seem to accompany such direct

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1 The Chorus of Primal Instincts.

2 The Chorus of Primal Dreams.

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expressions but which in reality deepen these expressions immeasurably. Moreover, one does not attain to this view when one seeks for it, but only when the strong impression remains active in retrospect, and becomes like the memory of an experience in which that which is essential in the external life falls away and the usually " unessential " begins to speak a deeply significant language. Whoever observes men in order to solve the riddle of their previous earth-lives will certainly not reach his goal. Such observation one must feel to be an offence which does injury to

the one observed, for one can hope for the present disclosure of the long past of a man only through the dispensation of fate coming from the outer spiritual world.

It was in the very time of my life which I am now describing that I succeeded in attaining to these definite views of the repeated earth-lives of man. Before this time I was not far from the conceptions, but they had not yet come out of indeterminate lines to sharply defined impressions. Theories, however, in regard to such things as repeated earth-lives, I did not form in my own thoughts; I took them into my understanding out of literature or other sources of information as something illuminating, but I did not theorize about them. And now, since I was conscious within myself of real perception in this region, I was in a position to have the conversation mentioned above with Professor Neumann. A man is not to be blamed if he becomes convinced of the truth of repeated earth-lives and other insights which can be attained only in supersensible ways; for a complete conviction in this region is possible also to the sound and unprejudiced human understanding, even though the man has not yet attained to actual perception. Only the way of theorizing in this region was not my own way.

During the time when concrete perceptions were more and more forming within me in regard to repeated earth-lives, I became acquainted with the theosophical movement, which had been initiated by H. P. Blavatsky. Sinnett's Esoteric Buddhism came into my hands through a friend to whom I had spoken in regard to these things. This book, the first from the theosophical movement with which I became familiar,

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made upon me no impression whatever. And I was glad that I had not read this book before I had experienced perception out of the life of my own soul. For the content of the book was repellent to me, and my antipathy against this way of representing the supersensible might well have prevented me from going farther at once upon the road which had been pointed out to me.

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DURING this time-about 1888-I felt within me, on the one hand, the impulse to intense spiritual concentration; on the other hand, my life brought me into intercourse with a wide circle of acquaintances. Because of the interpretive introduction which I had to prepare for the second volume of Goethe's scientific writings, I felt an inner necessity to state my view of the spiritual world in a form of thought transparently clear. This required an inward withdrawal from all that bound me to the outer life. It was due in large measure to a certain circumstance that such a withdrawal was possible. I could at that time sit in a coffee-house, with the greatest excitement all around me, and yet be absolutely tranquil within, my thoughts concentrated upon the task of writing down in a rough draft that which later composed the introduction I have mentioned. In this way I led an inner life which had no relation whatever to the outer world, although my interests were still intimately bound up with that world.

It was at this time that these interests were forced to turn to the critical phenomena then appearing in the external situation of things. Persons with whom I was in frequent relation were devoting their strength and their labour to the arrangements which were then coming to completion between the nationalities in Austria. Others were occupied with the social question. Still others were in the midst of a struggle for the rejuvenation of the artistic life of the nation. When I was living inwardly

in the spiritual world, I often had the feeling that the struggles toward all these objectives must play themselves out fruitlessly because they refused to enter into the spiritual forces of existence. The sense of these spiritual forces seemed to me the thing needed first of

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all. But I could find no clear consciousness of this in that sort of spiritual life which surrounded me.

Just then Robert Hamerling's satiric epic *\*Homunculus\** was published. In this a mirror was held before the times in which were reflected purposely caricatured images of its materialism, its interests centred on the outer life. A man who can live only in mechanistic, materialistic conceptions marries a woman whose nature lies, not in a real world, but in a world of fantasy. Hamerling desired to represent the two aspects in which civilization has become warped. On one side he perceived the utterly unspiritual struggle which conceives the world as a mechanism, and would shape human life mechanically; on the other side the soulless fantasy which cares not at all whether its make-believe spiritual life comes into any relation whatever to reality.

The grotesque pictures drawn by Hamerling repelled many who had esteemed him for his earlier works. Even in d'Almeida's home, where Hamerling had enjoyed unmeasured admiration, there was a certain reserve after the appearance of this epic. Upon me, however, the *Homunculus* made a deep impression. It showed, so I thought, those spiritually darkening forces which are dominant in modern civilization. I found in it a first warning to the time. But I had difficulty in establishing a relationship to Hamerling. And the appearance of the *\*Homunculus\** at first increased this difficulty in my own mind.

In Hamerling I saw a person who was himself a special revelation of the times. I looked back to the period when Goethe and those who worked with him had brought idealism to a height worthy of humanity. I recognized the need to pass through the gateway of this idealism into the world of real spirit. To me this idealism seemed the noble shadow, not cast into man's soul by the sense-world, but falling into his inner being from a spiritual world, and creating the obligation to go forward from this shadow to the world which has cast it.

I loved Hamerling who had painted these idealistic reflections in such mighty pictures. But it gave me deep distress to have him remain at that stage—that his look was

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directed backward to the reflections of a spirituality destroyed by materialism rather than forward to the spiritual world now breaking through in a new form. Yet the *\*Homunculus\** strongly attracted me. Though it did not show how man enters into the spiritual world, still it indicated the pass to which men come when they restrict themselves to the unspiritual. My interest in the *Homunculus* happened at a time when I was thinking over the problem of the nature of artistic creation and of beauty. What was then passing through my mind is recorded in the pamphlet *\*Goethe als Vater einer neuen Aesthetik\**(1), which reproduces a paper that I had read at the Goethe Society in Vienna. I desired to discover the reasons why the idealism of a bold philosophy, such as had spoken so impressively in Fichte and Hegel, had nevertheless failed to penetrate to the living spirit. One of the ways by which I sought to discover these causes was my reflection over the errors of a merely idealistic philosophy in the sphere of aesthetics. Hegel and those who thought in

his way found the content of art in the appearance of the " idea " in the sense-world. When the " idea " appears in the stuff of the senses, it is manifest as the beautiful. This was their opinion. But the succeeding period refused to recognize any reality in the " idea." Since the idea of the idealistic world-conception, as this lived in the consciousness of the idealists, did not point to a world of spirit, it could therefore not maintain itself with the successors of these idealists as something possessing reality. Thus arose the " realistic " aesthetics, which saw in the work of art, not the appearance of the idea in a sense-form, but only the sense-image which, because of the needs of human nature, takes on in the work of art an unreal form.

I desired to see as the reality in a work of art the same thing which appears to the senses. But the way which the true artist takes in his creative work appeared to me as a way leading to real spirit. He begins with that which is perceptible to the senses, but he transforms this. In this transformation he is not guided by a merely subjective impulse, but he seeks to give to the sensibly apparent a form which reveals it as

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1 Goethe as the Founder of a New Science of Aesthetics.

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if the spirit itself were there present. Not the appearance of the idea in the sense-form is the beautiful, so I said to myself, but the representation of the sensible in the form of the spirit. Thus I saw in the existence of art the entrance of the world of spirit within the world of sense. The true artist yields himself more or less consciously to the spirit. And it is only necessary-so I then said to myself over and over again-to metamorphose the powers of the soul, which in the case of the artist work upon matter, to a pure spiritual perception free of the senses in order to penetrate into a knowledge of the spiritual world.

At that time, true knowledge, the manifestation of the spiritual in art, and the moral will in man became in my thought the members which unite to form a single whole. I could not but recognize in the human personality a central point at which these are bound in the most immediate unity with the primal being of the world. It is from this central point that the will takes its rise. If the clear light of the spirit shines at this central point, then the will is free. Man is then acting in harmony with the spiritual nature of the world, which creates, not by reason of necessity, but in the evolution of its own nature. At this central point in man the motives of action arise, not out of obscure impulses, but from intuitions which are just as transparent in character as the most transparent thought. In this way I desired by means of a conception of the freedom of the will to find that spirit through which man exists as an individual in the world. By means of an experience of true beauty I desired to find the spirit which works in man when he so labours through the sensible as to express his own being, not merely spiritually as a free spirit, but in such a way that this spiritual being of his flows forth into the world, which is indeed of the spirit but does not directly manifest it. Through a perception of the true I desired to experience the spirit which manifests itself in its own being, whose spiritual reflection is moral conduct, and toward which creative art strives in the shaping of sensible form.

A " philosophy of freedom," a living vision of the sense world thirsting for the spirit and striving toward it through

beauty, a spiritual vision of the living world of truth hovered before my mind.

This was in the year 1888, just at the time when I was introduced into the home of the Protestant pastor, Alfred Formey, in Vienna. Once a week a group of artists and writers used to gather there. Alfred Formey himself had come out as a poet. Fritz Lemmermayer, speaking out of a friendly heart, described him thus: " Warm-hearted, intimate in his feeling for nature, enthusiastic, almost drunk with faith in God and blessedness, so does Alfred Formey write verse in mellow resounding harmonies. It is as if his tread did not rest upon the hard earth, but as if he mused and dreamed high in the clouds." Such was Alfred Formey also as a man. One felt quite borne away from the earth, when one entered the rectory, and found at first only the host and hostess. The pastor was of a childlike piety; but this piety passed over in its warm disposition in the most obvious way into a lyric mood. One was, as it were, surrounded by an atmosphere of good-heartedness as soon as Formey had spoken a few words. The lady of the house had exchanged the theatre for the rectory. No one would, ever have discovered the former actress in the lovable wife of the pastor entertaining her guests with such delightful charm. Into the mood of this rectory, so other-worldly, the guests now brought " the world " from all directions of the spiritual compass. There from time to time appeared the widow of Friedrich Hebbel. Her appearance was always the signal for a festival. In high old age she developed a sort of art of declamation which took possession of one's heart with an inner fascination, and completely captivated one's artistic sensibilities. And when Christine Hebbel told a story, the whole room was permeated with the warmth of the soul. At these Formey evenings I became acquainted also with the actress Wilborn. An interesting person with a brilliant voice in declamation. Lenau's *\*Drei Zigeuner\**(1) which one could hear from her lips with constantly renewed pleasure. It soon came about that the group which had assembled at the home of Formey would from time to time gather also at

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1 Three Gipsies.

that of Frau Wilborn. But how different it was there! Fond of the world, lovers of life, thirsty for humour-such were then the same persons who at the rectory remained serious even when the " Vienna People's Poet," Friederich Schlägel, read aloud his boisterous drolleries. He had, for instance, written a " skit " when the practice of cremation had been introduced among a small circle of the Viennese. In this he told how a husband who had loved his wife in a somewhat " coarse " manner had always shouted to her whenever anything did not please him: " Old woman, off to the crematorium " At Formey's such things would call forth remarks which formed a sort of episode in cultural history throughout Vienna; at Wilborn's people laughed till the chairs rattled. At Wilborn's Formey looked like a man of the world; Wilborn at Formey's like an abbess. One could pursue the most penetrating reflections upon the metamorphosis of human beings even to the point of the facial expression.

To Formey's came also Emilie Mataja, who, under the name of Emil Marriot, wrote her romances marked by penetrating observation of life: a fascinating personality, who in the manner of her life revealed the cruelties of human existence clearly, with genius, and often charmingly. An artist who knew how to represent life when it mingles its riddles with everyday affairs, where it hurls the tragedy of fate ruinously among men.

We often had the opportunity to hear also the four women artists of the Austrian Ischamper quartette; there Fritz Lemmermayer melodramatically recited Hebbel's Heideknabe, to a fiery piano accompaniment by Alfred Stross.

I loved this rectory, where one could find so much warmth. There the noblest humanity was actively manifest.

At the same period I realized that I must busy myself in a more serious manner with the situation of public affairs in Austria. For during a brief period in 1888 I was entrusted with the editorship of the \*Deutsche Wochenschrift\*(1). This journal had been founded by the historian, Heinrich Friedjung. My brief editorial experience came during a time when the interrelationships between the races in Austria had reached a specially tense condition. It was not easy for me to write

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1 The German Weekly.

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each week an article on public affairs; for at bottom I was at the farthest possible remove from all partisan conceptions of life. What interested me was the evolution of culture in the progress of humanity. And I had so to handle the point of view resulting from this fact that the complete justification of this view should not cause my article to seem the product of a person alien to the world. Besides, it happened that the " educational reform " then being introduced into Austria, especially by Minister Gautsch, seemed to me injurious to the interests of culture. In this field my comments seemed questionable to Schršer, who always felt a strong sympathy for partisan points of view. I praised the very suitable plans which the Catholic clerical Minister, Leo Thun, had brought about in the Austrian Gymnasium as early as the fifties, as opposed to the measures of Gautsch. When Schršer had read my article, he said, " Do you wish, then, to have again a clerical educational policy for Austria ? "

This editorial activity, though brief, was for me very important. It turned my attention to the style in which public affairs were then discussed in Austria. To me this style was intensely antipathetic. Even in discussing such situations I desired to bring in something which should be marked by its comprehensive relation to the great spiritual and human objectives. This I missed in the style of the daily paper in those days. How to bring this characteristic into play was then my daily care. And it had to be a care, for at that time I did not possess the power which a rich life experience in this field would have given me. At bottom I was quite unprepared for this editorial work. I thought I could see whither we ought to steer in the most varied departments of life; but I had not the formulae so systematized as to be enlightening to newspaper readers. So the preparation of each week's issue was a difficult struggle for me.

Thus I felt as if I had been relieved of a great burden when this activity came to an end through the fact that the owner of the paper got into a controversy with the founder over the question of the price at which the property had been sold.

Yet this work brought me into a rather close relationship with persons whose activities had to do with the most diverse



phases of public life. I became acquainted with Victor Adler, who was then the undisputed leader of the Socialists in Austria. In this slender, unassuming man, there resided an energetic will. When he talked over a cup of coffee I always had the feeling: "The content of what he says is unimportant, commonplace, but his way of speaking marks a will which can never be bent." I became acquainted with Pernerstorffer, who was then changing over from the German National to the Socialist camp. A strong personality possessed of comprehensive knowledge. A keen critic of misconduct in public life. He was then editing a monthly, *\*Deutsche Worte\**. I found this stimulating reading. In company with these persons I met with others who either for scientific or for partisan reasons were advocates of Socialism. Through these I was led to take up Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Rodbertus, and other writers on social economics. To none of these could I gain any inner relationship. It was a personal distress to me to hear men say that the material economic forces in human history carried forward man's real evolution, and that the spiritual was only an ideal superstructure over this sub-structure of the "truly real." I knew the reality of the spiritual. The assertions of the theorizing Socialists meant to me the closing of men's eyes to true reality. In this connection, however, it became clear to me that the "social question" itself had an immeasurable importance. But it seemed to me the tragedy of the times that this question was treated by persons who were wholly possessed by the materialism of contemporary civilization. It was my conviction that just this question was one which could be rightly put only from the point of view of a spiritual world-conception. Thus as a young man of twenty-seven years I was filled with "questions" and "riddles" concerning the outer life of humanity, while the nature of the soul and its relationships to the spiritual world had taken on, in a self-contained conception, a more and more definite form within me. At first I could work only in a spiritual way from this perception. And this work took on more and more the direction which some years later led me to the conception of my *\*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\**.

It was at this time (1888) that I took my first journey into Germany. This was made possible through the invitation to participate in the Weimar edition of Goethe, which was to be prepared by the Goethe Institute under a commission from the Grand-duchess Sophie of Saxony. Some years earlier Goethe's grandson, Walther von Goethe, had died. He had left as a legacy to the Grand-duchess the manuscripts of Goethe. She had thereupon founded the Goethe Institute and, in conjunction with a number of Goethe specialists -chief among whom were Hermann Grimm, Gustav von Loeper, and William Scherer-had determined to prepare an edition of Goethe in which his already known works should be combined with the unpublished remains.

My publications concerning Goethe were the occasion of my being requested to prepare a part of Goethe's writings on natural science for this edition. I was called to Weimar to make a general survey of the natural-scientific part of the remains and to take the first steps required by my task.

My sojourn for some weeks in Goethe's city was a festival time in my life. For years I had lived in the thoughts of Goethe; now I was permitted to be in the places where these thoughts had arisen. I passed these weeks in the elevated impression arising from this feeling. I was able from day to day to have before my eyes the papers in which were contained the supplements to that which I had already prepared for the edition of Goethe for the Kÿrschner *\*National-Literatur\**.

My work in connection with this edition had given me a mental picture of Goethe's world-conception. Now the question to be settled was how this picture would stand in view

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of the fact that hitherto unpublished material dealing with natural science was to be found in these literary remains. With the greatest intensity I worked at this portion of the Goethe legacy.

I soon thought I could recognize that the previously unpublished material afforded an important contribution toward the very task of more thoroughly understanding Goethe's form of cognition.

In my writings published up to that time I had conceived this form of cognition as consisting in the fact that Goethe perceived vitally. In the ordinary state of consciousness man is at first a stranger to the being of the world by which he is surrounded. Out of this remoteness arises the impulse first to develop, before knowing the world, powers of knowledge which are not present in ordinary consciousness.

From this point of view it was highly significant for me when I came upon such directing thoughts as the following among Goethe's papers:-

" In order to get our bearings to some extent in these different sorts [Goethe here refers to the different sorts of knowledge in man and his different relationships to the outer world] we may classify these as: practising, knowing, perceiving, and comprehending.

" 1. Practical, benefit-seeking, acquisitive persons are the first who, so to speak, sketch the field of science and lay hold upon practice. Consciousness gives a sort of certitude to these through experience, and necessity gives them a certain breadth.

" 2. Knowledge-craving persons require a serene look free from personal ends, a restless curiosity, a clear understanding, and these stand always in relationship with the previous type. They likewise elaborate what they discover, only they do this in a scientific sense.

" 3. The perceptive are in themselves productive; and knowledge, while itself progressing, calls for perception without intending this, and goes over into perception; and, no matter how much the knowers may make the sign of the cross to shield themselves from imagination, yet they must none the less, if

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they are not to deceive themselves, call in the aid of the imagination.

" 4. The comprehending, whom one may call in a proud sense the creative, are in themselves in the highest sense productive; beginning as they do with the idea, they express thereby the unity of the whole, and it is in a certain sense in accord with the facts of nature thus to conform themselves with this idea."

It becomes clear from such comment that Goethe considered man in his ordinary consciousness as standing \*outside\* the being of the external world. He must pass over into another form of

consciousness if he desires knowingly to unite with this being. During my sojourn in Weimar the question arose within me in more and more decisive form: How must a man build further upon the foundations of knowledge laid by Goethe in order to be guided knowingly over from Goethe's sort of perceptions to that sort which can take up into itself actual experience in the spirit, as this has been given to me ?

Goethe goes forward from that which is attained on the lower stages of knowledge, by " practical " persons and by those " craving knowledge." Upon this he causes to shine in his mind whatever can shine in the " perceiving " and the "comprehending" through productive powers of the mind upon the content of the lower stages of knowledge. When he stands thus with the lower knowledge in the mind in the light of the higher perception and comprehension, then he feels that he is in union with the being of things. To live knowingly in the spirit is, to be sure, not yet attained in this way; but the road to this is pointed out from one side, from that side which results from the relation of man to the outer world. It was clear to my mind that satisfaction could come only with a grasp upon the other side, which arises from man's relation to himself.

When consciousness becomes \*productive\*, and therefore brings forth from within itself something to add to the first pictures of reality, can it then remain within a reality, or does it float out of this to lose itself in the unreal ? What stands against consciousness in its own " product " -it is this

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thing that we must look into. Human consciousness must first effect an understanding of itself; then can man find a confirmation of the experience of pure spirit. Such were the ways taken by my thoughts, repeating in clearer fashion their earlier forms, as I pored over Goethe's papers in Weimar.

It was summer. Little was to be seen of the contemporary art life of Weimar. One could yield oneself in complete serenity to the artistic, which represented, as it were, a memorial to Goethe's work. One did not live in the present; one was drawn back to the time of Goethe. At the moment it was the age of Liszt in Weimar. But the representatives of this age were not there.

The hours after work I passed with those who were connected with the Institute. In addition there were others sharing in the work who came from elsewhere for longer or shorter visits. I was received with extraordinary kindness by Bernhard Suphan, the director of the Goethe Institute; and in Julius Wahle, a permanent collaborator, I found a dear friend. All this, however, took on a definite form when I went there two years later for a longer period, and it must be narrated at the point where I shall tell about that period of my life.

More than anything else at that time I craved to know personally Eduard von Hartmann, with whom I had corresponded for years in regard to philosophical matters. This was to take place during a brief stay in Berlin which followed that in Weimar.

I had the privilege of a long conversation with the philosopher. He lay upon a sofa, his legs stretched out and his upper body erect. It was in such a posture that he passed by far the greater part of his life from the time when the suffering with his knee began. I saw before me a forehead which was an evident manifestation of a clear and keen understanding, and eyes which in their look revealed that assurance felt in the innermost being of the man as to that which he knew. A mighty beard framed in the face. He spoke with complete confidence, which showed how he had woven

certain basic thoughts about the whole world-concept and thus in his way illuminated it. In these thoughts everything which came to him from other points of view was at once overwhelmed

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with criticism. So I sat facing him while he sharply passed, judgment upon me, but in reality never inwardly listened to me. For him the being of things lay in the unconscious, and must ever remain hidden there so far as concerned human consciousness; for me the unconscious was something which could more and more be raised up into consciousness through the strivings of the soul's life. During the course of the conversation about this, I said that one should not assume beforehand that a concept is something severed from reality and representing only an unreality in consciousness. Such a view could never be the starting-point for a theory of cognition. For by this means one shuts oneself off from access to all reality in that one can then only believe that one is living in concepts and that one can never approach toward a reality except, through hypothetical concepts-that is, in an unreal manner. One should rather seek to prove beforehand whether this view of the concept as an unreality is tenable, or whether it rises out of a preconception. Eduard von Hartmann replied that there could be no argument as to this; in the very definition of the term "concept" lay the evidence that nothing real is to be found there. When I received such an answer I was chilled to the soul. Definitions to be the point of departure for conceptions of life ! I realized how far removed I was from contemporary philosophy. While I sat in the train on my return journey, buried in thoughts and recollections of this visit, which was nevertheless so valuable to me, I felt again that chilling of the heart. It was something which affected me for a long time afterward.

Except for the visit to Eduard von Hartmann, the brief sojourns I made at Berlin and Munich, while passing through Germany after my stay at Weimar, were given over entirely to absorption in the art which these places afforded. The broadening of the scope of my perception in this direction seemed to me at that time especially enriching to my mental life. So this first long journey that I was able to take was of very comprehensive significance in the development of my conceptions as to art. A fullness of vital impressions remained with me when I spent some weeks just after this visit in the Salzkammergut with the family whose sons I had already

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been teaching for a number of years. I was further advised to find my vocation in private tutoring, and I was inwardly determined upon the same course because I desired to bring forward to a certain point in his life evolution the boy whose education had been entrusted to me some years before, and in whom I had succeeded in awakening the soul from a state of absolute sleep.

After this, when I had returned to Vienna, I had the opportunity to mingle a great deal in a group of persons bound together by a woman whose mystical, theosophical type of mind made a profound impression upon all the members of this group. The hours I spent in the home of this woman, Marie Lang, were in the highest degree useful to me. An earnest type of life-conception and life-experience was present in vital and nobly beautiful form in Marie Lang. Her profound inner experiences came to expression in a sonorous and penetrating voice. A life which struggled hard with itself and the world could find in her only in a mystical seeking a sort of satisfaction, even though one that was incomplete. So she almost seemed created to be the soul of a group of seeking men. Into this circle had penetrated theosophy initiated by H. P. Blavatsky at the close of the preceding century. Franz Hartmann, who by reason of his numerous theosophical works and his

relations with H. P. Blavatsky, had become widely known, also introduced his theosophy into this circle - Marie Lang had accepted much out of this theosophy. The thought-content which is there to be found seemed in many respects to harmonize with the characteristics of her mind. Yet what she took from this source had attached itself to her in a merely external way. But within herself she had mystical possession which had been lifted into the realm consciousness in a quite elementary fashion out of a heart tested by life.

The architects, litterateurs, and other persons whom I met in the home of Marie Lang would scarcely have been interested in the theosophy offered by Franz Hartmann had not Marie Lang to some extent participated in this. Least of all would I myself have been interested in it; for the way of relating oneself to the spiritual world which was evidenced in the

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writings of Franz Hartmann was absolutely opposite to the bent of my own mind. I could not concede that it was possessed of real and inner truth. I was less concerned with its content than with the manner in which it affected men who, nevertheless, were truly seekers.

Through Marie Lang I became acquainted with Frau Rosa Mayreder, who was a friend of hers. Rosa Mayreder was one of those persons to whom in the course of my life I have given the greatest reverence, and in whose development I have had the greatest interest. I can well imagine that what I have to say here will please her very little; but this is the way that I feel as to what came into my life by reason of her. Of the writings of Rosa Mayreder which since that time have justly made so great an impression upon so many persons, and which undoubtedly gave her a very conspicuous place in literature, nothing had at that time appeared. But what is revealed in these writings lived in Rosa Mayreder in a spiritual form of expression to which I had to respond with the strongest possible inner sympathy. This woman impressed me as if she possessed each of the gifts of the human mind in such measure that these in their harmonious interaction constituted the right expression of a human being. She united various artistic gifts with a free, penetrating power of observation. Her paintings are just as much marked by individual unfoldings of life as by absorption in the depths of the objective world. The stories with which she began her literary career are perfect harmonies made up of personal strivings and objective observations. Her later works show this character more and more. Most clearly of all does this come to light in her late two-volume work, *\*Kritik der Weiblichkeit\**(1). I consider it a beautiful treasure of my life to have spent many hours during the time about which I am here writing together with Rosa Mayreder during the years of her seeking and mental strivings.

I must in this connection refer again to one of my human relationships which took its rise and reached a vital intensity above the sphere of thought-content, and, in a sense, quite independently of this. For my world-conception, and even more

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1 A survey of the Woman Problem.

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my emotional tendencies, were not those of Rosa Mayreder. The way by which I ascended from that which is in this respect recognized as scientific into an experience of the spiritual cannot

possibly be congenial to her. She seeks to use the scientific as the foundation for ideas which have as their goal the complete development of human personality without permitting the knowledge of a world of pure spirit to find access into this personality. What is to me a necessity in this direction to her means almost nothing. She is wholly devoted to the furtherance of the present human individuality and pays no attention to the action of spiritual forces within these individualities. Through this method of hers she has achieved the most significant exposition yet produced of the nature of womanhood and the vital needs of woman.

Neither could I ever satisfy Rosa Mayreder in respect to the view she formed of my attitude toward art. She thought that I denied true art, because I sought to get a grasp upon specific examples of art by means of the view which entered my mind by reason of my experience of the spiritual. Because of this she maintained that I could not sufficiently penetrate into the revelation of the sense-world and thus arrive at the reality of art, whereas I was seeking just this thing-to penetrate within the full truth of the sensible forms. But all this did not detract from the inner friendly interest in this personality which developed in me at the time, during which I owe to her some of the most valuable hours of my life-an interest which in truth remains undiminished even to the present day.

At the home of Rosa Mayreder I was often privileged to share in conversations for which gifted men gathered there. Very quiet, seemingly with his gaze inward upon himself rather than listening to those about him, sat Hugo Wolf, who was an intimate friend of Rosa Mayreder. One listened inwardly to him even though he spoke so little. For whatever entered into his life was communicated in mysterious fashion to those who might be with him. With heartfelt affection was I attached to the husband of Frau Rosa, Karl Mayreder, so fine a person both as man and as artist, and also to his brother, Julius Mayreder, so enthusiastic in regard to art. Marie Lang and her circle and Friedrich Eckstein, who was then

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wholly given over to the spiritual tendencies and world-conception of theosophy, were often present. This was the time when my Philosophy of Spiritual activity was taking more and more definite form in my mind. Rosa Mayreder is the person with whom I talked most concerning this form at the time when my book was thus coming into existence. She relieved me of a part of the inner loneliness in which I had lived. She was striving for a conception of the actual human personality; I toward a revelation of the world which might seek for this personality at the basis of the soul by means of spiritual eyes thus opened. Between the two there were many bridges. Often in later life has there arisen before my grateful spirit one or another picture from this experience, for example, memory pictures of a walk through the noble Alpine forests, during which Rosa Mayreder and I discussed the true meaning of human freedom.

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WHEN I look back upon my life, the first three decades appeal to me as a chapter complete in itself. At the close of this period I removed to Weimar, to work for almost seven years at the Goethe and Schiller Institute. The time that I spent in Vienna between the first journey to Germany, which I have described, and my later settling down in the city of Goethe I look upon as the period which brought to a certain conclusion within me that toward which the mind had been striving. This conclusion found expression in the preparation for my book \*The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\*. An essential part of the general ideas in which I then expressed my views consisted in

the fact that the sense-world did not pass with me as true reality. In my writings and lectures at that time I always expressed myself in such a way as to make the human mind appear as a true reality in the creation of a thought, which it does not form out of the sense world but unfolds in an activity above the region of sense perception. This sense-free thinking I conceived as that which places the soul within the spiritual being of the world. But I also emphasized strongly the fact that, while man lives within this sense-free thinking, he really finds himself consciously in the spiritual foundations of existence. All talk about limits of knowledge had for me no meaning. Knowing meant to me the rediscovery within the perceptual world of the spiritual content experienced in the soul. When anyone spoke of limits of knowledge, I saw therein the admission that he did not experience spiritually within himself the true reality, and for this reason could not rediscover this in the perceptual world.

The first consideration with me in advancing my own insight was the problem of refuting the conception of the limitation

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of knowledge. I wished to turn away from that road to knowledge which looked toward the sense-world, and which would then break through from the sense-world into true reality. I desired to make clear that true reality is to be sought, not by such a breaking through from without, but by sinking down into the inner life of man. Whoever seeks to break through from without and then discovers that this is impossible—such a person speaks of the limitation of knowledge. But this impossibility does not consist in a limitation of man's capacity for knowledge, but in the fact that one is seeking for something of which one cannot speak in true self-comprehension. While pressing on farther into the sense-world, one is there seeking in a certain sense a continuation of the sensible behind the perceptual. It is as if one living in illusions should seek in further illusions the causes of his illusions.

The sense of my conception at that time was as follows: While man is evolving from birth onward he stands consciously facing the world. He attains first to physical perception.

But this is at first an outpost of knowledge. In this perception there is not at once revealed all that is in the world. The world is real, but man does not at first attain to this reality. It remains at first closed to him. While he has not yet set his own being over against the world, he fashions for himself a world-conception which is void of being. This conception of the world is really an illusion. In sense-perception man faces a world of illusion. But when from within man sense-free thought comes forth to meet the sense-perception, then illusion is permeated with reality and ceases to be illusion.

Then the human spirit, living its own life within, meets the spirit of the world which is now no longer concealed from man behind the sense-world, but weaves and breathes within the sense-world.

I now saw that the finding of the spirit within the sense-world is not a question of logical inferences or of projection of sense perception, but something which comes to pass when man continues his evolution from perception to the experience of sense-free thinking.

What I wrote in 1888 in the second volume of my edition

of Goethe's scientific writings is permeated with such views: " Whoever attributes to thinking his capacity for an awareness which goes beyond sense-perception must also attribute to thought objects which lie beyond mere sense reality. But these objects of thought are ideas. When this thinking of the idea grows strong enough, then it merges with the fundamental existence of the world; what is at work without enters into the spirit of man: he becomes one with objective reality at its highest potency. Becoming aware of the idea within reality is the true communion of man. Thinking has the same significance in relation to the idea as the eye has for light, the ear for sound. It is the organ of perception.(1)

I was then less concerned to represent the world as it is when sense-free thought advances beyond the experience of oneself to a spiritual perception, than I was to show that the being of nature as revealed to sense-perception is spiritual. I wished to express the truth that nature is in reality spiritual. It was inevitable from this that my fate should bring me into conflict with the contemporary formulators of theories of cognition. These conceived, to begin with, a nature void of spirit, and therefore their task was to show how far man is justified in conceiving in his own spirit a spiritual conception of nature. I wished to oppose to this an entirely different theory of cognition. I wished to show that man in thinking does not form conceptions in regard to nature while standing outside of her, but that knowing means experiencing, so that man while knowing is actually inside the being of things. Moreover, it was my fate to knit my own views to those of Goethe. In this union there were many opportunities to show how nature is spiritual, because Goethe had striven toward a spiritual nature; but one does not in the same way have the opportunity to speak of the world of pure spirit as such since Goethe did not carry his spiritual view of nature all the way to direct perception of spirit.

In a secondary degree I was then concerned to find expression for the idea of freedom. When man acts upon his instincts, impulses, passions, etc., he is not free. Then impulses of

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1 Cf. Einleitung zu Goethes naturwissenschaftlichen Schriften, in Kÿrschner's Deutsche National-Literatur, p. iv.

which he becomes conscious as he does of the impressions from the sense-world determine his action. But his true being is then not acting. He is then acting on a plane where his true being has not yet manifested itself. He then discloses himself as man just as little as the sense-world discloses its being to mere sense-observation. Now, the sense-world is not really an illusion, but is only made such by man. But man in his action can permit the sense-like impulses, desires, etc., really to become illusions; then he permits illusions to act upon him; it is not he himself that acts. He permits the unspiritual to act. His spiritual being acts only when he finds the impulses for action in the moral intuitions of his sense-free thought. Then he alone acts, nothing else. Then he is a free being acting from within. I desired to show that whoever rejects sense-free thought as something purely spiritual in man can never grasp the conception of freedom; but that such a conception comes about the moment one understands the reality of sense-free thinking.



In this field I was at that time less intent upon representing the world of pure spirit, in which man experiences his moral intuitions, than to emphasize the spiritual character of these moral intuitions. Had I been concerned with the former should have been obliged to begin the chapter in *\*The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\** on "Moral Imagination" in the following way: "The free spirit acts upon his impulses; these are intuitions which are experienced by him apart from the existence of nature in the world of pure spirit without his being aware of this spiritual world in the ordinary state of consciousness." But it was my concern then only to describe the purely spiritual character of moral intuitions. Therefore I referred to the existence of these intuitions within the totality of the world of human ideas, and said in regard to them: "The free spirit acts upon his impulses, which are intuitions that by means of thought are selected from the totality of his world of ideas."-One who does not direct his gaze toward a world of pure spirit, and who could not, therefore, write the first statement, could also not entirely admit the second. But allusions to the first statement are to be found in plenty

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in my *\*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\**; for example: "The highest stage of the individual life is thinking in concepts without reference to a specific content of perception. We determine the content of a concept by means of pure intuition out of the sphere of ideas. Such a concept then shows no relation to definite perceptions." Here sense-perceptions are intended. Had I then desired to write about the spiritual world, and not merely about the spiritual character of moral intuitions, I should have been forced to refer to the contrast between sense-perceptions and spiritual perceptions. But I was concerned only to emphasize the non-sensible character of moral intuitions.

My world of ideas was moving in this direction when the first chapter of my life ended with my thirtieth year, and my entrance upon the Weimar period.

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AT the close of this first stage of my life it became a question of inner necessity for me to attain a clearly defined position in relation to certain tendencies of the human mind. One of these tendencies was mysticism. As this passed in review before my mind at the various epochs in the evolution of humanity-in Oriental Wisdom, in Neo-Platonism, in the Christian Middle Ages, in the endeavours of the Kabalists- it was only with the greatest difficulty that I, with my different temper of mind, could establish any relationship to it. The mystic seemed to me to be a man who failed to come into right relation to the world of ideas, in which for me the spiritual has its existence. I felt that it was a deficiency in real spirituality when, in order to attain satisfaction in one's ideas, one plunges into an inner world void of all ideas. In this I could see no road to light, but rather a way to spiritual darkness. It seemed to me a powerlessness in cognition when, the mind seeks to reach spiritual reality by an escape from ideas, which, indeed, the spirit does not actually reside, but through which it enters into human experience. And yet something attracted me toward the mystical strivings of humanity. This was the character of the inner experience of the mystics. They desire living contact with the sources of human existence, not merely a view of these, as something external, by means of ideal observation. And yet it was also clear to me that one arrives at the same kind of inner experience when one sinks down into the depths of the soul accompanied by the full and clear content of the ideal world, instead of stripping off this content when thus sinking into one's depths. I desired to carry the light of the ideal world into the warmth of the inner experience. The mystic seemed to me to be a man who cannot perceive the spirit in ideas and who is

therefore inwardly chilled by ideas. The coldness which he feels in ideas drives him to seek through an escape from ideas for the warmth of which the soul has need.

As for myself, the warmth of my soul's experience increased in proportion as I shaped into definite ideas the previously indefinite experience of the spiritual world. I often said to myself: " How these mystics fail to understand the warmth, the mental intimacy, which one experiences when one lives in association with ideas permeated by the spiritual ! " To me this living association had always been like a personal intercourse with the spiritual world.

The mystics seemed to me to strengthen the position of the materialistically minded observer of nature instead of weakening it. The latter objects to the observation of the spiritual world, either because he does not admit the existence of such a world, or else because he considers human understanding adapted to the physically visible one. He sets up boundaries of knowledge at that point where lie the boundaries of the physically perceptible. The ordinary mystic is of the same opinion as the materialist as regards human ideal knowledge. He maintains that ideas do not extend to the spiritual, and therefore that in ideal knowledge man must always remain outside the spiritual. Since, however, he desires to attain to the spirit, he turns to an inner experience void of ideas. He thus yields to the materialistic observer of nature in that he restricts ideal knowledge to the knowledge of the merely natural.

But if anyone enters into the interior of his own soul without taking ideas with him, he thus arrives at the inner region of mere feeling. Such a person then says that the spiritual cannot be reached by a way which is called in ordinary life a way of knowledge, but that one must sink down from the sphere of knowledge into the sphere of the feelings in order to experience the spiritual.

With such a view a materialistic observer of nature can declare himself in perfect agreement unless he considers all talk about the spirit as a fantastic playing with words which signifies nothing real whatever. He then sees in his system of ideas directed toward the things of sense the sole justifiable basis for knowledge, and in the mystical relation

ship of man to the spirit something purely personal, to which one is either inclined or not inclined according to one's temperament, but of which one can never speak in the same way as one speaks of the content of a " positive knowledge." Man's relation to the spiritual must be relegated entirely, he thinks, to sphere of " subjective feeling."

While I held this before my mind the forces within my soul which stood in opposition to the mystic grew steadily stronger. The perception of the spiritual in inner mental experience was to me far more certain than the perception of the things of sense; to place boundaries of knowledge before this mental experience was to me quite impossible. I objected with all positiveness to mere feeling as a way into the spiritual. And yet, when I thought of the nature of the mystic's experience, I felt once more a remote kinship between this and my own attitude toward the spiritual world. I sought association with the spirit by means of spirit-illuminated ideas, in the same way as the mystic seeks

this through association with the non-ideal. I also could say that my view rests upon "mystical " ideal experience.'

To achieve for this mental conflict within myself the clarification which at length came about was not a matter of great difficulty; for the real perception of the spiritual casts light upon the range of applicability of ideas, and this assigned proper limits to the personal. As an observer of the spiritual, one knows that the personal ceases to function in man when the very mind itself becomes an organ of perception of the spiritual world.

The difficulty, however, consisted in the fact that I had to find forms in which to express my perceptions in my writings. One can by no means easily find a new mode of expression for an observation which is unfamiliar to the reader. I had to choose between putting that which I found it needful to say either in those forms which are generally applied in the field of nature-observation, or in forms which are used by writers inclined toward mystical experiences. By the latter method the resultant difficulties seemed to me to be unavoidable.

I reached the conclusion that the form of expression in the

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sphere of the natural sciences consists in content-filled ideas, even though the content was materialistically thought out. I desired to form ideas which bore in the same way upon the spiritual as the natural-scientific ideas bore upon the physical. In this way I could preserve the ideal character for that which I had to say. This seemed to me impossible with the use of mystical forms; for these do not refer to the reality outside of man, but describe only subjective experiences within man. My purpose was, not to describe human experiences, but to show how a spiritual world is revealed in man through spiritual organs.

Out of such fundamental considerations I gave form to the ideas from which my \*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\* later evolved. I did not, in the forming of these ideas, permit any mystical rhapsodies to become dominant within me, in spite of the fact that I perceived clearly that the ultimate experience of that which would manifest itself in ideas must be of the same character within the soul as the inner awareness of the mystic. Yet there was the difference that in my presentation of the matter man surrenders himself and the external spiritual world comes to objective manifestation, whereas the mystic strengthens his own inner life and in this way effaces the true form of the objective spiritual.

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THE time that I consumed in the setting forth of Goethe's natural-scientific ideas for the introduction to Kÿrschner's \*Deutsche National-Literatur\* was very protracted. I began this task in the year 1880, and I had not finished even when I entered upon the second phase of my life with the removal from Vienna to Weimar. The reason for this lay in the difficulties I have described in connection with the natural scientific and the mystical form of expression.

While I was labouring to reduce to correct forms of thought Goethe's attitude to the natural sciences, I had to advance also in the formulation of that which had taken shape before my mind as spiritual experience in my perception of the world process. I was thus constantly driven from

Goethe to the representation of my own world-conception and back again to him, in order the better to interpret his thoughts by means of the thoughts to which I myself had attained. I felt that the most essential thing in Goethe was his refusal to be content with any sort of theoretically easily surveyed thought-pictures as contrasted with the knowledge of the illimitable richness of reality. Goethe becomes rationalistic when he wishes to describe the manifold forms of plants and animals. He struggles for ideas which manifest themselves as active in the evolution of the earth when he wishes to grasp the geologic building of the earth or the phenomena of meteorology. But his ideas are not abstract thoughts; they are images living in the form of thoughts within the mind.

When I grasped what he has set forth in such pictures in his natural-scientific works, I had before me something which satisfied me to the bottom of my soul. I looked upon a content of ideal images of which I could not but believe that this content-if followed further-represented a true reflection

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within the human spirit of that which happens in nature. It was clear to me that the form of thought in the natural sciences must be raised to this of Goethe's.

But at the same time, in this grasping of Goethe's knowledge of nature, there came the need for representing the content of ideal images in relation to spiritual reality itself. The ideal images are not justifiable unless they refer to a spiritual reality lying at the foundation of the things of sense. But Goethe, in his holy awe before the immeasurable richness of reality, refrains from entering upon a presentation of the spiritual world after having brought the sense-world to the form of a spiritual image in his mind.

I had now to show that Goethe really experienced the life of the soul in that he pressed forward from sense-nature to spirit-nature, but that anyone else can comprehend Goethe's soul-life only by going beyond him and carrying his own knowledge on to ideal conception of the spiritual world itself. When Goethe spoke of nature, he was standing within the spiritual. He feared that he would become abstract if he proceeded further beyond this vital standing-within to a living in thoughts concerning this standing-within. He desired the experience of being within the spirit; but he did not desire to think himself within the spirit.

I often felt that I should be false to Goethe's way of thinking if I only gave expression to thoughts concerning his world conception. And in regard to every detail which I had to interpret concerning Goethe I had again and again to master the method of speaking about Goethe in Goethe's own way. My setting forth of Goethe's ideas consisted in the struggle, lasting for years, gradually to achieve a better understanding of him with the help of his own ideas. When I look back upon this endeavour I have to say to myself that I owe to this in large measure the evolution of my spiritual experience of knowledge. This evolution proceeded far more slowly than would have been the case if the Goethe task had not been set by destiny on the pathway of my life. I should then have followed my spiritual experiences and have set these forth as they came to light. I should have broken through into the spiritual world more quickly; but I should have had no

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inducement to sink down by actual striving into my own inner self.

Thus by means of my Goethe task I experienced the difference between a state of soul in which the spiritual world manifests itself, so to speak, as an act of grace, and one in which step by step the soul first makes its own inner self like the spirit, in order that, when the soul experiences itself as true spirit, it may then stand within the spiritual of the world. But in this standing-within man first realizes that the human spirit and the spiritual world may come into union one with the other within the human soul.

During the time that I was working at my interpretation of Goethe, I had Goethe always beside me as an admonisher who called inaudibly to me: "Whoever too rashly moves forward on the spiritual way may attain to a narrowly restricted experience of the spirit, but he enters into a content of reality impoverished of all the richness of life."

In my relation to the Goethe work I could observe clearly "how Karma works in human life." Destiny is made of two forms of fact-complexes which grow into unity in human life. The one streams from the struggle of the soul outward; the other comes from the outer world into man. My own mental impulses moved toward the perception of the spiritual; the outer spiritual life of the world brought the Goethe work to me. I had to reduce to a harmony within my consciousness the two currents which there met. I occupied the last year of the first phase of my life in justifying myself alternately in the eyes of Goethe and then in my own eyes.

The task I set myself in my doctor's dissertation was an inner experience: that of bringing about an "understanding of man's consciousness with itself." For I saw that man can understand what the genuine reality in the outer world is only when he has perceived this genuine reality within himself.

This bringing together of the genuine reality of the outer world and the genuine reality of the inner life of the soul must be achieved for the knowing consciousness through tireless spiritual activity; for the willing and the acting consciousness it is always present when man in action experiences his own freedom.

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That freedom exists as a matter of fact for the unprejudiced consciousness and yet becomes a riddle for the understanding is due to the fundamental fact that man does not possess his own true being, his genuine self-consciousness, as something given from the beginning, but must first achieve this through an understanding of his consciousness with itself.

That which makes man of the highest worth-freedom can be won only after appropriate preparation.

My *\*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\** is based upon an experience which consists in the understanding of human consciousness with itself. In willing, freedom is practised; in feeling, it is experienced; in thinking, it is known. Only, in order to attain this last, one must not lose the life out of thinking.

While I was working at my *\*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\**, it was my constant endeavour in the statement of my thoughts to keep my inner experience fully awake within the very thoughts. This gives to thoughts the mystical character of inner perception, but makes the perception like the perception of the outer physical world. If one forces oneself through to such an inner experience, then one no longer finds any contradiction between knowledge of nature and knowledge of spirit. It

becomes clear to one that the second is only a metamorphosed continuation of the first. Since this appeared thus to me, I could later place on the title-page of my *\*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\** the motto: *Seelische Beobachtungsergebnisse nach naturwissenschaftlicher Methode*(1). For, when the natural-scientific methods are truly followed in the spiritual sphere, then these lead one in knowledge into this sphere.

There was great significance for me at that time in my thorough-going work upon Goethe's fairy-tale of *\*The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily\**, which forms the conclusion of his *\*Entertainments of the German Wanderers\**. These " riddle tales " have had many interpreters. I was not at all interested in the " interpretation " of the content. I wished simply to take that in its poetic, artistic form. I always had an

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1 The Results of Spiritual Observation According to the Methods of Natural Science.

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antipathy to shattering the dominant fantasy with intellectual interpretation.

I saw that these poems of Goethe's had arisen out of his spiritual intercourse with Schiller. When Schiller wrote his *\*Briefe für Förderung der ästhetischen Erziehung des Menschen\**(1), his mind was passing through the philosophical phase of its evolution. The " understanding of human consciousness with itself " was a mental task which occupied him most intensely. He saw the human mind on the one side wholly absorbed in intellectual activity. He felt that the mind dominant in the purely intellectual was not dependent upon the bodily and sensible. And yet he found in this form of supersensible activity something unsatisfying. The mind is "in the spirit " when it is given over to the " logical necessity " of the reason, but in this activity it is neither free nor inwardly spiritually alive. It is given over to an abstract shadow-image of the spirit, but is not weaving and ruling in the life and existence of the spirit. On the other side, Schiller observed that, in an opposite sort of activity, the mind is wholly given over to the bodily-the sense-perceptions and the instinctive impulses. Then the influence out of the spiritual shadow-images is lost from the mind, but it is given over to natural law, which does not constitute its being. Schiller came to the conclusion that man is not " true man " in either of these activities. But he can produce through himself that which is not given to him by nature or by the rational shadows of the spiritual coming to existence without his effort. He can take his reason into his sense-activities; and he can elevate the sensible into a higher realm of consciousness so that it acts like the spiritual. Thus he attains to a mood midway between the logical and the natural compulsion.

Schiller sees man in such a mood when he is living in the artistic. The aesthetic conception of the world directs its look upon the sensible, but in such a way that it perceives therein the spirit. It lives in shadows of the spirit, but in its creating or its enjoying it gives to the spirit a sensible form so that it loses the shadow existence.

Years before had this endeavour of Schiller's to reach a

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1 Letters on the Advancement of the Aesthetic Education of man.

conception of the " true man " attracted my attention; now, when Goethe's " riddle fairy-tale " became itself a riddle to me, Schiller's endeavour occurred to me again. I saw how Goethe had taken hold of Schiller's conception of the " true man." For him no less than for his friend this was a vital question: " How does the shadowy spiritual find in the mind the sensible-corporeal, and how does the natural in physical bodies work itself upward to the spiritual ? "

The correspondence between the two friends and all that can be learned otherwise about their spiritual relationship indicates that Schiller's solution was too abstract, too one sidedly philosophical for Goethe. He created the charming picture of the stream which separates two worlds; of the will-o'-the-wisps who seek the way from one world to the other; of the snake which must sacrifice itself in order to form a bridge between the two worlds; of the beautiful lily who can only be surmised as wandering in the spirit on the " far side " of the stream by those who live on " this side," and of much more. Over against Schiller's philosophical solution he places a poetic vision in fairy-tale form. He had the feeling that, if one attacked with philosophical conceptions the riddle of the soul which Schiller perceived, such a person impoverished himself while seeking for his true being. He desired to approach the riddle in all the wealth of the soul's experience.

The Goethe fairy-tale images hark back to imaginations which had often been set forth before the time of Goethe by seekers for the spiritual experience of the soul. The three kings of fairy-lore are found in some resemblance in the \*Chymische Hochzeit\*(1), by Christian Rosenkreutz. Other forms are revivals of those which had appeared earlier in pictures of the way of knowledge. Only in Goethe these pictures appear in a more beautiful, noble, artistic form of fantasy, whereas they had until his time borne a less artistic character.

In these fairy-tales Goethe carried this fanciful creation near to the point at which it passes over into the inner process of the soul which is a knowing experience of the real world

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1 Chemical Marriage.

of spirit. I felt that one could see to the utmost depths of Goethe's nature when one sank down into this poetry. Not the interpretation, but the stimulus to the experience of the soul, was the important result that came to me from my work upon the fairy-tales. This stimulus later influenced my mental life even in the shaping of the mystery dramas which I afterward wrote. As to that part of my work which related directly to Goethe, I could gain but little from these fairy-tales. For it seemed to me that Goethe in their composition had grown beyond himself in his world-conception, as if impelled by a half-conscious life of the soul. In this way there came about for me a serious difficulty. I could set forth my interpretation of Goethe for \*Kÿrschner's Deutsche National-Literatur\* only in the style in which I had commenced this; but this in itself did not suffice me at all. For I said to myself that, while Goethe was writing the " fairy-tales," he had, as it were, looked across the boundary and had seen into the spiritual world. But nevertheless what he wrote about natural processes gave no attention to this glimpse. Therefore he could not be interpreted on the basis of this insight.

But even though I obtained nothing at once for my Goethe writings from sinking down into the fairy-tale, yet I gained much mental stimulus from it. What came to me as mental content in connection with the fairy-tale became most important material for meditation. I returned to this again and again. By this activity I prepared myself beforehand for the temper of mind into which I entered later during my Weimar work.

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JUST at this time my outward life was altogether happy. I was frequently with my old friends. Few as were the opportunities I had to speak of the things I am here discussing, yet the spiritual and mental ties that bound me to these friends were none the less strong. How often must I think over again the conversations, sometimes unending, which occurred at that time in a well-known coffee house on Michaelerplatz in Vienna. I had cause to think of these especially during that period following the World War when old Austria went to pieces. For the causes of this crumbling to pieces were at that time already present everywhere. But no one was willing to recognize this. Everyone had thoughts that would be the means of a cure, always according to his own special national or cultural leanings. And if ideals which manifest themselves at times of the ebbing tide are stimulating, yet they are ideals born out of the decadence itself, out of the desire to prevent this-themselves being no less tragic. Such tragic ideals worked in the hearts of the best Viennese and Austrians.

I frequently caused misunderstandings with these idealists when I expressed a conviction which had been borne in upon me through my absorption in the period of Goethe. I said that a culmination in Occidental cultural evolution had been reached during that period. This had not been continued. The period of the natural sciences, with its effects upon the lives of men and of peoples, denoted a decadence. For any further advance there was needed an entirely new attack from the side of the spirit. There could be no further progress into the spiritual by those roads which had previously been laid out, except after a previous turning back.

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Goethe is a climax, but therefore not a point of departure; on the contrary, an end. He develops the results of an evolution which goes as far as himself and finds in him its most complete embodiment, but which cannot be further advanced without first resorting to far more primal springs of spiritual experience than exist in this evolution. In this mood I wrote the last part of my Goethe exposition.

It was in this mood that I first became acquainted with Nietzsche's writings. \*Jenseits von Gut und Böse\*(1) I was the first of his books that I read. I was fascinated by his way of viewing things and yet at the same time repelled. I found it hard to get a right attitude toward Nietzsche. I loved his style; I loved his keenness; but I did not love at all the way in which Nietzsche spoke of the most profound problems without immersing himself in these with fully conscious thought in spiritual experience. Only I then observed that he said many things with which I stood in the closest intimacy in my spiritual experience. And thus I felt myself close to his struggle and felt that I must find an expression for this proximity. Nietzsche seemed to me one of the most tragic figures of that time. And this tragedy, I believed, must be the effect of the spiritual attitude characterizing the natural- scientific age upon human souls of more than ordinary depth. I passed my last years in Vienna with such feelings as these.



Before the close of the first phase of my life, I had the opportunity of visiting also Budapest and Siebenburgen (Transylvania). The friend I have previously mentioned whose family belonged to Transylvania, who had remained bound to me with rare loyalty through all these years, had introduced me to a good many of the people from his district who were in Vienna. Thus it happened that, in addition to my other extensive social relationships, I had also this with persons from Transylvania. Among them were Herr and Frau Breitenstein, who became friends of mine at that time and who have remained such in the most heartfelt fashion. For a long time they have taken a leading part in the Anthroposophical Society in Vienna. This human relationship with " Siebenbürgers "

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1 Beyond Good and Evil.

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led me to make a journey to Budapest. The capital of Hungary, in character so entirely unlike Vienna, made a deep impression upon me. One went there from Vienna through a region brilliant in the beauty of its scenery, its highly temperamental humanity, and the intensity of its musical interest. When one looked from the windows of the train, one had the impression that nature herself had become poetic in a special way, and that human beings, paying little heed to the poetic nature so familiar to them, plunged down within themselves in an often profoundly inward music of the heart. And, when one reached Budapest, there came to expression a world which may be viewed with the greatest interest from the point of view of the relationships to other European peoples, but which can from this point of view never be wholly understood. A dark undertone over which gleams a light playing amid colours. This character seemed to me as if it were forced together into visible unity when I stood before the Franz Drak monument. In this head of the maker of that Hungary which existed from the year 1867 to 1918 there lived a strong, proud will which laid hold with all its might, which forced itself through without cunning but with elemental mercilessness. I felt how true subjectively for every Hungarian was the proverb I had often heard: " Outside of Hungary there is no life; and, if there is a life, it is by no means such as this."

As a child I had seen on the western borders of Hungary how Germans were made to feel this strong, proud will; now I learned in the midst of Hungary how this will brings the Magyar people into an isolation from humanity which clothes them, as they rather naively think, in a certain glamour obvious to themselves which values much the showing of itself to the hidden eyes of nature but not to the open eyes of men.

Half a year after this visit, my Transylvanian friends arranged for me to deliver a lecture at Hermanstadt. It was Christmas time. I travelled over the wide plains in the midst of which lies Arad. The melancholy poetry of Lenau sounded in my heart as I looked out over these plains where all is one expanse to which the eye can find no limit. I had to spend the night in a little border village between Hungary and Transylvania.

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I sat in a little guest-room half the night. Besides myself there was only a group of card-players sitting round a table. In this group there were all the nationalities to be found at that time in

Hungary and Transylvania. The men were playing with a vehemence which constantly broke loose at half-hour intervals, so that it took the form of soul-clouds which rose above the table, struggled together like demons, and wreathed the men about completely as if in the folds of serpents. What differences in vehement existence were there manifested by these different national types !

I reached Hermanstadt on Christmas Day. Here I was introduced into " Siebenburger Saxondom." This existed there in the midst of a Rumanian and Magyar environment. A noble folk which, in the midst of a decline that it could not perceive, desired to prove its gallantry. A Germanism which, like a memory of the transfer of its life centuries ago to the East, wished to show its loyalty to its origins, but which in this temper of soul showed a trait of alienation from the world manifesting itself as an elevated universal joy in life. I passed happy days among the German ministers of the Evangelical Church, among the teachers of the German schools, and among other German Siebenburgers. My heart warmed to these people who, in the concern for their folk life and in their duty to this, evolved a culture of the heart which spoke first of all likewise to the heart. This vital warmth filled my soul as I sat in a sleigh, wrapped close in heavy furs, and travelled with these old and new friends through icy-cold and crackling snow to the Carpathians (the Transylvanian Alps). A dark, forested mountain country when one moves toward it from the distance; a wild, precipitous, often frightful mountain landscape when one is close at hand.

The centre in all which I then experienced was my friend of many years. He was always thinking out something new whereby I might learn thoroughly Siebenburger Saxondom. He was still dividing his time between Vienna and Hermanstadt. At that time he owned a weekly paper at Hermanstadt founded for the purpose of fostering Siebenburger Saxondom. An undertaking it was which arose entirely out of idealism, utterly

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devoid of practical experience, but at which almost all representatives of Saxondom laboured together. After a few weeks it came to grief.

Such experiences as this journey were brought me by destiny; and through them I was enabled to educate my perception for the outer world, a thing which had not been easy for me, whereas in the element of the spiritual I lived as in something self-evident.

It was with sad memories that I made the journey back to Vienna. There fell into my hands just then a book of whose " spiritual richness " men of all sorts were speaking: \*Rembrandt als Erzieher\*(1). In conversations about this book, which were then going on wherever one went, one could hear about the coming of an entirely new spirit. I was forced to become aware, by reason of this very phenomenon, of the great loneliness in which I stood with my temper of mind amid the spiritual life of that period.

In regard to a book which was prized in the highest degree by all the world my own feeling was as if someone had sat for several months at a table in one of the better hotels and listened to what the " outstanding " personalities in the genealogical tables said by way of " brilliant " remarks, and had then written these down in the form of aphorisms. After this continuous " preliminary work " he could have thrown his slips of paper with these remarks into a vessel, shaken them thoroughly together, and then taken them out again. After drawing out the slips, he could have made a series of these and so produced a book. Of course, this criticism is exaggerated. But my inner vital mood forced me into such revulsion from that which the " spirit of the times " then praised as a work of

the highest merit. I considered \*Rembrandt as Teacher\* a book which dealt wholly with the surface of thoughts that have to do with the realm of the spiritual, and which did not harmonize in a single sentence with the real depths of the human soul. It grieved me to know that my contemporaries considered such a book as coming from a profound personality, whereas I was forced to believe that such dealers in the small change of thought moving in the

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1 Rembrandt as Teacher.

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shallows of the spirit would drive all that is deeply human out of man's soul.

When I was fourteen years old I had to begin tutoring; for fifteen years, up to the beginning of the second phase of my life, that spent at Weimar, my destiny kept me engaged in this work. The unfolding of the minds of many persons, both in childhood and in youth, was in this way bound up with my own evolution. Through this means I was able to observe how different were the ways in which the two sexes grow into life. For, along with the giving of instruction to boys and young men, it fell to my lot to teach also a number of young girls. Indeed, for a long time the mother of the boy whose instruction I had taken over because of his pathological condition was a pupil of mine in geometry; and at another time I taught this lady and her sister aesthetics.

In the family of these children I found for a number of years a sort of home, from which I went out to other families as tutor or instructor. Through the intimate friendship between the mother of the children and myself, it came about that I shared fully in the joys and sorrows of this family. In this woman I perceived a uniquely beautiful human soul. She was wholly devoted to the development of her four boys according to their destiny. In her one could study mother love in its larger manifestation. To co-operate with her in problems of education formed a beautiful content of life. For the musical part of the artistic she possessed both talent and enthusiasm. At times she took charge of the musical practice of her boys, as long as they were still young. She discussed intelligently with me the most varied life problems, sharing in everything with the deepest interest. She gave the greatest attention to my scientific and other tasks. There was a time when I had the greatest need to discuss with her everything which intimately concerned me. When I spoke of my spiritual experiences, she listened in a peculiar way. To her intelligence the thing was entirely congenial, but it maintained a certain marked reserve; yet her mind absorbed everything. At the same time she maintained in reference to man's being a certain naturalistic view. She believed the moral temper to be entirely bound up with the health or sickness

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of the bodily constitution. I mean to say that she thought instinctively about man in a medical fashion, whereby her thinking tended to be somewhat naturalistic. To discuss things in this way with her was in the highest degree stimulating. Besides, her attitude toward all outer life was that of a woman who attended with the strongest sense of duty to everything which fell to her lot, but who looked upon most inner things as not belonging to her sphere. She looked upon her fate in many aspects as something burdensome. But still she made no claims upon life; she accepted this as it took form so far as it did not concern her sons. In relation to these she felt every experience with the deepest emotion of her soul.

All this I shared vitally-the soul-life of a woman, her beautiful devotion to her sons, the life of the family within a wide circle of kinsmen and acquaintances. But for this reason things did not move without difficulty. The family was Jewish. In their views they were quite free from any sectarian or racial narrowness, but the head of the family, to whom I was deeply attached, felt a certain sensitiveness to any expression by a Gentile in regard to the Jews. The flame of anti-Semitism which had sprung up at that time had caused this feeling.

Now, I took an active part in the struggle which the Germans in Austria were then carrying on in behalf of their national existence. I was also led to occupy myself with the historical and the social position of the Jews. Especially earnest did this activity of mine become after the appearance of Hamerling's \*Humunculus\*. This eminent German poet was considered by a great part of the journalists as an anti-Semite on account of this work; indeed, he was claimed by the German national anti-Semites as one of their own. This disturbed me very little; but I wrote a paper on the \*Humunculus\* in which, as I thought, I expressed myself quite objectively in regard to the Jews. The man in whose home I lived, and who was my friend, took this to be a special form of anti-Semitism. Not in the least did his friendly feeling for me suffer on that account, but he was affected with a profound distress. When he had read the paper, he faced me, his heart torn by innermost sorrow, and said to me: " What you wrote in this in regard

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to the Jews cannot be explained in a friendly sense; but this is not what hurts me, but the fact that you could have had the experiences in regard to us which induced you to write thus only through your close relationship with us and our friends." He was mistaken: for I had formed my opinions altogether from a spiritual and historic survey; nothing personal had entered into my judgment. He could not see the thing in this way. His reply to my explanations was: " No, the man who teaches my children is, after this paper, no ' friend of the Jews.' " He could not be induced to change. Not for a moment did he think that my relation ship to the family ought to be altered. This he looked upon as something necessary. Still less could I make this matter the occasion for a change; for I looked upon the teaching of his sons as a task which destiny had brought to me. But neither of us could do otherwise than think that a tragic thread had been woven into this relationship. To all this was added the fact that many of my friends had taken on from their national struggle a tinge of anti-Semitism in their view of the Jews. They did not view sympathetically my holding a post in a Jewish family; and the head of this family saw in my friendly mingling with such persons only a confirmation of the impression which he had received from my paper.

To the family circle in which I so intimately shared belonged the composer of \*Das Goldene Kreuz\*, Ignatius Brÿll. A sensitive person he was, of whom I was extraordinarily fond. Ignatius Brÿll was something of an alien to the world, buried in himself. His interests were not exclusively musical; they were directed toward many aspects of the spiritual life. These interests he could enter into only as a " darling of destiny " against the background of a family circle which never permitted him to be disturbed by attention to everyday affairs but permitted his creative work to grow out of a certain prosperity. And thus he did not grow in life but only in music. To what degree his musical creations were or were not meritorious is not the question just here. But it was stimulating in the most beautiful sense to meet the man in the street and see him awaken out of his world of tones when

one addressed him. Generally he did not have his waistcoat buttons in the right button-holes. His eye spoke in a mild thoughtfulness; his walk was not fast but very expressive. One could talk with him about many things; for these he had a sensitive understanding; but one saw how the content of the conversation slipped, as it were, for him into the sphere of music.

In the family in which I thus lived I became acquainted also with the distinguished physician, Dr. Breuer, who was associated with Dr. Freud at the birth of psycho-analysis. Only in the beginning, however, did he share in this sort of view, and he was not in agreement with Freud in its later development. Dr. Breuer was to me a very attractive personality. I admired the way in which he was related to his medical profession. Besides, he was a man of many interests in other fields. He spoke of Shakespeare in such a way as to stimulate one very strongly. It was interesting also to hear him in his purely medical way of thinking speak of Ibsen or even of Tolstoi's \*Kreuzer Sonata\*. When he spoke with the friend I have here described, the mother of the children whom I had to teach, I was often present and deeply interested. Psycho-analysis was not yet born; but the problems which looked toward this goal were already there. The phenomena of hypnotism had given a special colouring to medical thought. My friend had been a friend of Dr. Breuer from her youth. There I faced a fact which gave me much food for thought. This woman thought in a certain direction more medically than the distinguished physician. They were once discussing a morphine addict. Dr. Breuer was treating him. The woman once said to me: " Think what Breuer has done! He has taken the promise of the morphine addict on his word of honour that he will take no more morphine. He expected to attain something by this, and he was deluded, since the patient did not keep his promise. He even said: ' How can I treat a man who does not keep his promise ? ' Would one have believed," she said, " that so distinguished a physician could be so na•ve ? How can one try to cure ' by a promise' something so deeply rooted ' in a man's nature ' ? " The woman may not, however, have been entirely right; the

opinion of the physician regarding the therapy of suggestion may have entered then into his attempt at a cure; but no one can deny that my friend's statement indicated the extraordinary energy with which she spoke in a noteworthy fashion out of the spirit which lived in the Viennese school of medicine up to the time when this new school blossomed forth.

This woman was in her own way a significant person; and she is a significant phenomenon in my life. She has long been dead; among the things which made it hard for me to leave Vienna was this also, that I had to part from her.

When I reflect in retrospect upon the content of the first phase of my life, while I seek to characterize it as if from without, the feeling forces itself upon me that destiny so led me that I was not fettered by any external "calling " during my first thirty years. I entered the Goethe and Schiller Institute in Weimar also, not to take a life position, but as a free collaborator in the edition of Goethe which would be published by the Institute under a commission from the Grand-duchess Sophie. In the report which the Director of the Institute published in the twelfth volume of the Goethe Year Book occurs this statement: " The permanent workers have associated with themselves since 1890 Rudolf Steiner from Vienna. To him has been assigned the general field of ' morphology ' (with the exception of the osteological part): five or probably six volumes of the ' second division,' to which important material is added from the manuscript, remains."

FOR an indeterminate length of time I again faced a task that was given me, not through any external circumstance, but through the inner processes of development of my views of life and the world. To the same cause was due the fact that I used for my doctor's examination at the University of Rostock my dissertation on the endeavour after " an understanding of human consciousness with itself." External circumstances merely prevented me from taking the examination in Vienna. I had official credit for the work of the Realschule, not of the Gymnasium, though I had completed privately the Gymnasium course of study, even tutoring also in these courses. This fact barred me from obtaining the doctor's degree in Austria. I had grounded myself thoroughly in philosophy, but I was credited officially with a course of study which excluded me from everything to which the study of philosophy gives a man access.

Now at the close of the first phase of my life a philosophical work had fallen into my hands which fascinated me extraordinarily-the \*Sieben Bucher Platonismus\*(1) of Heinrich von Stein, who was then teaching philosophy at Rostock. This fact led me to submit my dissertation to the lovable old philosopher, whom I valued highly because of his book, and whom I saw for the first time in connection with the examination.

The personality of Heinrich von Stein still lives in my memory-almost as if I had spent much of my life with him. For the \*Seven Books of Platonism\* is the expression of a sharply stamped philosophical individuality. Philosophy as thought-content is not taken in this work as something which stands upon its own feet. Plato is viewed from all

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1 Seven Books of Platonism.

angles as the philosopher who sought for such a self-supporting philosophy. What he found in this direction is carefully set forth by Heinrich von Stein. In the first chapters of the book one enters vitally and wholly into the Platonic world conception. Then, however, Stein passes on to the breaking into human evolution of the Christ revelation. This actual breaking in of the spiritual life he sets forth as something higher than the elaboration of thought-content through mere philosophy.

From Plato to Christ as to the fulfilment of that for which men have striven-such we may designate the exposition of von Stein. Then he traces further the influence of world conceptions of Platonism in the Christian evolution.

Stein is of the opinion that revelation gave content from without to human strivings after a world-conception. There I could not agree with him. I knew from experience that the human being, when he comes to an understanding with himself in vital spiritual consciousness, can possess the revelation, and that this revelation can then attain to an existence in the ideal experience of man. But I felt something in the book which drew me on. The real life of the spirit behind the ideal life, even though in a form which was not my own, had set in motion an impulse toward a comprehensive exposition of the history of philosophy. Plato, the great representative of an ideal world which was fixed through its fulfilment by the Christ impulse-it is the setting forth of this

which forms the content of Stein's book. In spite of the opposition I felt toward the book, it came closer to me than any of the philosophies which merely elaborate a content out of concepts and sense-experiences.

I missed in Stein also the consciousness that Plato's ideal world had its source in a primal revelation of the spiritual world. This (pre-Christian) revelation, which has been sympathetically set forth, for example, in Otto Willmann's *\*Geschichte des Idealismus\**(1) does not appear in Stein's view. He sets forth Platonism, not as the residue of ideas from the primal revelation, which then recovers in Christianity and on a higher level its lost spiritual form; he represents

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1 History of Idealism.

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the Platonic ideas as a content of concepts self-woven which then attained life through Christ.

Yet the book is one of those written with philosophical warmth, and its author a personality penetrated by a deep religious feeling who sought in philosophy the expression of the religious life. On every page of the three-volume work one is aware of the personality in the background. After I had read this book, and especially the parts dealing with the relation of Platonism to Christianity, over and over again, it was a significant experience to meet the author face to face.

A personality serene in his whole bearing, in advanced age, with mild eyes that looked as if they were made to survey kindly but penetratingly the process of evolution of his students; speech which in every sentence carried the reflection of the philosopher in the tone of the words—just so did Stein stand before me when I visited him before the examination. He said to me: "Your dissertation is not such as is required; one can perceive from it that you have not produced it under the guidance of a professor; but what it contains makes it possible that I can very gladly accept you." I should now have been extremely glad to be questioned orally on something which was related to the *\*Seven Books of Platonism\**; but no question related to this; all were drawn from the philosophy of Kant.

I have always kept the image of Heinrich von Stein deeply imprinted on my heart; and it would have given me immeasurable pleasure to have met the man again. Destiny never again brought us together. My doctor's examination is one of my pleasant memories, because the impression of Stein's personality shines out beyond everything else pertaining to it.

The mood in which I came to Weimar was tinged by previous thorough-going work in Platonism. I think that mood helped me greatly to take the right attitude toward my task on the Goethe and Schiller archives. How did Plato live in the ideal world, and how Goethe? This occupied my thoughts on my walk to and from the archives; it occupied me also as I went over the manuscripts of the Goethe legacy.

This question was in the background when at the beginning of 1891 I expressed in some such words as the following my

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impression of Goethe's knowledge of nature " It is impossible for the majority of men to grasp the fact that something for whose appearance subjective conditions are necessary may still have objective significance and being. And of this very sort is the ' archetypal plant.' It is the essential of all plants, objectively contained within them; but if it is to attain to phenomenal existence the human spirit must freely construct it." Or these other words: that a correct understanding of Goethe's way of thinking " admits of the possibility of asking whether it is in keeping with the conception of Goethe to identify the ' archetypal plant ' or ' archetypal animal ' with any physically real organic form which has appeared or will appear at any definite time. To this question the only possible answer is a decisive 'No.' The ' archetypal ' plant is contained in every plant; it may be won from the plant world by the constructive power of the spirit; but no single individual form can be said to be typical."

I now entered the Goethe-Schiller Institute as a collaborator. This was the place into which the philology of the end of the nineteenth century had taken over Goethe's literary remains. At the head of the Institute was Bernhard Suphan. With him also, I may say, I had a personal relationship from the very first day of the Weimar phase of my life. I had frequent opportunities to be in his home. That Bernhard Suphan had succeeded Erich Schmidt, the first director of the Institute, was due to his friendship with Herman Grimm.

The last descendant of Goethe, Walther von Goethe, had left Goethe's literary remains as a legacy to the Grand-duchess Sophie. She had founded the archives in order that the legacy might be introduced in appropriate manner into the spiritual life of the times. She naturally turned to those personalities of whom she had to assume that they might know what was to be done with the Goethe literary remains.

First of all, there was Herr von Loeper. He was, so to speak, foreordained to become the intermediary between

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1 In the essay on " The Gain to Our View of Goethe's Natural-Scientific Works through the Publications of the Goethe Institute," in the twelfth volume of the \*Goethe Year Book\*.

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Goethe scholars and the Court at Weimar to which the control of the Goethe legacy had been entrusted. For he had attained to high rank in the Prussian household administration, and thus stood in close relation with the Queen of Prussia, sister of the Grand-duchess of Saxe-Weimar; and, besides, he was a collaborator in the most famous edition of Goethe of that time, that of Hempel.

Loeper was an unique personality, a very congenial mixture of the man of the world and the recluse. As an amateur, not as a professional, had he come to be interested in " Goethe research." But he had attained to high distinction in this. In his opinions concerning Goethe, which appear in such beautiful form in his edition of Faust, he was entirely independent. What he advanced he had learned from Goethe himself. Since he had now to advise how Goethe's literary remains could best be administered, he had to turn to those with whom he had become familiar as Goethe scholars through his own work with Goethe.



The first to be considered was Herman Grimm. It was as an historian of art that Herman Grimm had become concerned with Goethe; as such he had delivered lectures on Goethe at the University of Berlin, which he then published as a book. But he might well look upon himself as a sort of spiritual descendant of Goethe. He was rooted in those circles of the German spiritual life which had always been conscious of a living tradition of Goethe, and which might in a sense consider themselves bound in a personal way with him. The wife of Herman Grimm was Gisela von Arnim, the daughter of Bettina, author of the book, Goethe's \*Correspondence with a Child\*.

Herman Grimm's judgments about Goethe were those of an historian of art. Moreover, as an historian of art he had grown into scholarship only so far as this was possible to him under the standards of a personally coloured relationship to art as a connoisseur.

I think that Herman Grimm could readily come to an understanding with Loeper, with whom he was naturally on friendly terms by reason of their common interest in Goethe I imagine that, when these two discussed Goethe, the human

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interest in the genius came strongly to the fore and scholarly considerations fell into the background.

This scholarly way of looking at Goethe was the vital thing in William Scherer, professor of German literature at the University of Berlin. In him both Loeper and Grimm had to recognize the official Goethe scholar. Loeper did so in a childlike, harmless fashion; Herman Grimm with a certain inner opposition. For to him the philological point of view which characterized Scherer was really uncongenial. With these three persons rested the actual direction in the administration of the Goethe legacy. But it nevertheless really slipped entirely into the hands of Scherer. Loeper really thought nothing about this further than to advise and to share from without as a collaborator in the task; he had his fixed social relationships through his position in the household of the Prussian King. Herman Grimm thought just as little about it. He could only contribute points of view and right directions for the work by reason of his position in the spiritual life; for the directing of details he could not take responsibility.

Quite different was the thing for William Scherer. For him Goethe was an important chapter in the history of German literature. In the Goethe archives new sources had come to light of immeasurable value for this chapter. Therefore, the work in the Goethe archives must be systematically united with the general work of the history of literature. The plan arose for an edition of Goethe which should take a philologically correct form. Scherer took over the intellectual supervision; the direction of the archives was left to his student Erich Schmidt, who then occupied the chair of modern German literature at Vienna.

Thus the work of the Goethe Institute received its stamp. Not only so, but also everything that happened at the Institute or by reason of this. All bore the mark of the contemporary philological character of thought and work.

In William Scherer literary-historical philology strove for an imitation of contemporary natural-scientific methods. Men took the current ideas of the natural sciences and sought to form philological and literary-historical ideas on these as

models. Whence had a poet derived something ? How had this something been modified in him ? These were the questions which were placed at the foundations of a history of the evolution of the spiritual life. The poetic personalities disappeared from view; instead there came forward views as to how " material " and " motif " were evolved by the personalities. The climax of this sort of view was reached in Erich Schmidt's extended monograph on Lessing. In this Lessing's personality is not the main fact but an extremely painstaking consideration of the motifs of \*Minna von Barnhelm\*, \*Nathan\*, and the like.

Scherer died young, shortly after the Goethe Institute was established. His students were numerous. Erich Schmidt was called from the Goethe Institute to Scherer's position in Berlin. Herman Grimm then arranged so that not one of the numerous students of Scherer should have the direction of the Institute, but instead Bernhard Suphan.

As to his post before this time, he had been teaching in a Gymnasium in Berlin. At the same time he had undertaken the editing of Herder's works. Through this he seemed marked as the person to take direction also of the edition of Goethe. Erich Schmidt still exercised a certain influence; through this fact Scherer's spirit still continued to rule over the Goethe task. But the ideas of Herman Grimm came forward in stronger fashion, if not in the manner of work yet in the personal relationships within the Goethe Institute.

When I came to Weimar, and entered into a close relationship with Bernhard Suphan, he was a man sorely tried in his personal life. His first and second wives, who were sisters, he had seen buried at an early age. He lived now with his two children in Weimar, grieving over those who had left him, and not feeling any happiness in life. His sole satisfaction lay in the good will which the Grand-duchess Sophie, his profoundly honoured lady, bore to him. In this respect for her there was nothing servile: Suphan loved and admired the Grand-duchess in an entirely personal way.

In loyal dependence was Suphan devoted to Herman Grimm. He had previously been honoured as a member of the household of Grimm in Berlin, and had breathed with

satisfaction the spiritual atmosphere of that home. But there was something in him which prevented him from getting adjusted to life. One could speak freely with him about the highest spiritual matters, yet something bitter would easily come into the conversation, something arising from his experiences. Most of all did this melancholy dominate in his own mind; then he would help himself past these experiences by means of a dry humour. So one could not feel warm in his company. He could in a moment grasp some great idea quite sympathetically, and then, without any transition, fall immediately into the petty and trivial. He always showed good will toward me. In the spiritual interests vital within my own soul he could take no part, and at times treated them from the viewpoint of his dry humour; but in the direction of my work in the Goethe Institute and in my personal life he felt the warmest interest. I cannot deny that I was often painfully disturbed by what Suphan did, the way in which he conducted himself in the management of the Institute, and the direction of the editing of Goethe; I never made any secret of this fact. Yet, when I look back upon the years which I passed with him, this is outweighed by a strong inner interest in the fate and the personality of the sorely tried man. He suffered in his life, and he suffered in himself. I saw how in a certain

way, with all the good aspects of his character and all his capacities, he sank more and more into a bottomless brooding which rose up in his soul. When the Goethe and Schiller archives were moved to the new building erected in Ilm, Suphan said that he looked upon himself in relation to the opening of this building like one of those human victims who in primitive times were walled up before the doors of sacred buildings to sanctify the thing. He had really come gradually to fancy himself altogether in the role of one sacrificed on behalf of something with which he did not feel that he was wholly united. He felt that he was a beast of burden working at this Goethe task with which others with higher intellectual gifts might have been occupied. In this mood I always found him later whenever I met him after I had left Weimar. He ended his life by suicide in a mood of depression.

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Besides Bernhard Suphan, there was engaged at the Goethe and Schiller Institute at the time of my entrance Julius Wahle. He was one of those called by Erich Schmidt. Wahle and I were intimates from the time of my first sojourn at Weimar; a heartfelt friendship grew up between us. Wahle was working at the editing of Goethe's journals. Eduard von der Hellen worked as Keeper of the Records, and also had the responsibility of editing Goethe's letters.

On Goethe's works a great part of the German " world of Germanists " was engaged. There was a constant coming and going of professors and instructors in philology. One was then much in company with them during their longer or shorter visits. One could get vitally into the circle of interests of these persons.

Besides these actual collaborators in the Goethe task the archives were visited by numbers of persons who were interested in one way or another in the rich collections of manuscripts of other German poets. For the Institute gradually became the place for collecting the literary remains of many poets. And other interested persons came also who at first were less interested in manuscripts than in simply studying in the library contained within the rooms of the Institute. There were, moreover, many visitors who merely wished to see the treasures there.

Everybody who worked at the Institute was happy when Loeper appeared. He entered with sympathetic and amiable remarks. He requested the material he needed for his work, sat down, and worked for hours with a concentration seldom to be seen in anyone. No matter what was going on around him, he did not look up. If I were seeking for a personification of amiability, I should choose Herr von Loeper. Amiable was his Goethe research, amiable every word he uttered to anyone. Especially amiable was the stamp his whole inner life had taken from the fact that he seemed to be thinking of one thing only: how to bring the world to a true understanding of Goethe. I once sat by him during the presentation of \*Faust\* in the theatre. I began to discuss the manner of presentation, the dramatic qualities. He did not hear at all what I said. But he replied: " Yes, this actor often uses words

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and phrases that do not agree with those of Goethe." Still more lovable did Loeper appear to me in his " absentmindedness." When in a pause I chanced to speak of something which required a reckoning of duration of time, Loeper said: " Therefore the hours to 100 minutes; the minutes to 100 seconds . . ." I stared at him, and said: " Your Excellency, 60." He took out his watch, tested it, laughed heartily, counted, and said: " Yes, yes, 60 minutes, 60 seconds." I often observed in him

such instances of absent-mindedness. But over such proofs of Loeper's unique temper of mind I myself could not laugh, for they seemed to me a significant by-product-and also charming in their effect -of the personality so utterly free from pose, unsentimental, I might say gracious, in its earnestness. He spoke in rather sprawling sentences, almost without modulation; but one heard through the colourless speech a firm articulation of thought.

Spiritual purpose entered the Institute when Herman Grimm appeared. From the standpoint from which I had read-while still in Vienna-his book on Goethe, I felt the deepest sympathy with his type of mind. And when I was able to meet him for the first time in the Institute, I had read almost everything that had come from his pen. Through Suphan I was soon afterwards brought into much more intimate acquaintance with him. Then, while Suphan was once absent from Weimar and he came for a visit to the Institute, he invited me to luncheon at his hotel. I was alone with him. It was plainly agreeable to him to see how I could enter into his way of viewing the world and life. He became communicative. He spoke to me of his idea of a \*Geschichte der Deutsche Phantasie\*(1) which he had in mind. I then received the impression that he would write such a book. This did not come to pass. But he explained to me beautifully how the contemporary stream of historic evolution has its impulse in the creative fantasy of the folk, which in its temper takes on the character of a living, working supersensible genius. During this luncheon I was wholly filled with the expositions of Herman Grimm. I believed that I knew how the supersensible

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1 History of the German Imagination.

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spiritual works through man. I had before me a man whose spiritual vision reached as far as the creative spiritual, but who would not lay hold upon the actual life of this spiritual, but remained in the region where the spiritual expresses its life in man in the form of fantasy.

Herman Grimm had a special gift for surveying greater or lesser epochs of the history of the mind and of setting forth the period surveyed in precise, brilliant, epigrammatic characterization. When he described a single personality--Michelangelo, Raphael, Goethe, Homer--his representation always appeared against the background of such a survey.

How often have I read his essays in which he characterized in his striking glances the Greek and Roman cultures and the Middle Ages. The whole man was the revelation of unified style. When he fashioned his beautiful sentences in oral speech I had the feeling: " This may appear just so in one of his essays "; and, when I read an essay of his after having become acquainted with him, I felt as if I were listening to him. He permitted himself no laxity in oral speech, but he had the feeling that in artistic or literary presentation one must remain the same person who moved about in everyday life. But Herman Grimm did not roam around like other men even in everyday life. It was inevitable for him to lead a life possessed of style. When Herman Grimm appeared in Weimar, and in the Institute, then one felt that the plan of the legacy was, so to speak, united with Goethe by secret spiritual threads. Not so when Erich Schmidt came. He was bound to these papers that were preserved in the Institute, not by ideas, but by the historic-philological methods. I could never attain to a human relation with Erich Schmidt. And so all the great respect shown him by all those who worked at the Institute as Scherer philologists made practically no impression upon me.

Those were always pleasant moments when the Grand-duke Karl Alexander appeared in the Institute. An inwardly true enthusiasm-though manifested in a fashionable bearing-for everything pertaining to Goethe was a part of the nature of this man. Because of his age, his long connection with much

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that was important in the spiritual life of Germany, and because of his attractive loveliness he made a satisfying impression. It was a pleasing thought to know that he was the protector of the Goethe work in the Institute.

The Grand-duchess Sophie, owner of the Institute, one saw there only on special festival occasions. When she had anything to say, she caused Suphan to be summoned. The collaborating workers were taken to her to be presented. But her solicitude for the Institute was extraordinary. She herself personally made all the preliminary preparations for the erection of a public building in which the poetic legacies might be worthily housed.

The heir of the Grand-duke also, Carl August, who died before he became Grand-duke, came often to the Institute. His interest in everything there going on was not profound, but he liked to mingle with us collaborators. This interesting himself in the requirements of the spiritual life he viewed rather as a duty. But the interest of the heiress, Pauline, was full of warmth. I was able many times to converse with her about things which pertained to Goethe, poetry, and the like. As regards its social intercourse the Institute was between the scientific and artistic circles and the courtly circle of Weimar. From both sides it received its own colouring. Scarcely would the door have closed after a professor when it would reopen to admit some princely personage who came for a visit. Many men of all social positions shared in what went on in the Institute. At bottom it was a stirring life, stimulating in many relationships.

Immediately beside the Institute was the Weimar library. In this resided as chief librarian a man of a childlike temperament and unlimited scholarship, Reinhold Kšhle. The collaborators at the Institute often had occasion to resort there. For what they had in the Institute as literary aid to their work was here greatly augmented. Reinhold Kšhle had roved around with unique comprehensiveness in the myths, fairy-tales, and sagas; his knowledge in the field of linguistic scholarship was of the most admirable universality. He knew where to turn for the most out-of-the-way literary material. His modesty was most touching, and he received

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one with great cordiality. He never permitted anyone to bring the books he needed from their resting-places into the work-room of the archives where we did our work. I came in once and asked for a book that Goethe used in connection with his studies in botany, in order to look into it. Reinhold Kšhle went to get the old book which had rested somewhere on the topmost shelves unused for decades. He did not come back for a long time. Someone went to see where he was. He had fallen from the ladder on which he had to climb to attend to the books. He had broken his thigh. The noble and lovable person never recovered from the effect of the accident. After a lingering illness this widely known man died. I grieved over the painful thought that his misfortune had happened while he was attending to a book for me.

Two lectures which I had to deliver shortly after the beginning of the Weimar phase of my life are associated for me with important memories. One took place in Weimar, and was entitled, "Fancy as the Creatress of Culture"; it preceded the conversation I have described with Herman Grimm concerning his views on the history of the evolution of fantasy.

Before I delivered the lecture, I summarized in my own mind what I could say on the basis of my spiritual experience concerning the streaming of the real spiritual world into the human fantasy. What lives in the imagination seemed to me to be stimulated by human sense-experiences only as regards its material form. That which is truly creative in the genuine forms of fantasy seemed to me a reflection of the spiritual world existing outside of man. I desired to show that fantasy is the gateway through which the Beings of the spiritual world work creatively indirectly through man in the evolution of civilizations.

Because I had arranged my ideas for such a lecture toward this objective, Herman Grimm's exposition made a deep impression upon me. He felt no need whatever to seek for the supersensible sources of fantasy; what enters the human mind as fantasy he took as matter of fact and proposed to observe this in the course of its evolution

I first set forth one pole of the fantasy-dream-life. I showed how external sense-experiences are perceived, because of the subdued life of the consciousness, not as in waking life, but transformed into symbolic pictures; how inner bodily processes are experienced through the same symbolization; how experiences rise in consciousness, not in sober memories, but in a way that indicates a powerful elaboration of the thing experienced in the depths of the soul-life.

In dreams consciousness is subdued; it sinks down into the sensible physical reality and perceives the control within the sensible existence of something spiritual which during ordinary awareness remains concealed, and which even to the half-sleeping consciousness appears only as a play of colours from the shallows of the sensible.

In fantasy the mind rises as far above the ordinary state of consciousness as it sinks below this in dream-life. The spiritual which is concealed within the sense-existence does not appear, yet the spiritual influences man; but he cannot grasp this in its very own form but pictures it unconsciously to himself by means of a soul-content which he borrows from the sense-world. The consciousness does not penetrate all the way to the perception of the spiritual; but it experiences this in pictures which draw their material from the sense-world. In this way the genuine creations of fantasy are evidences of the spiritual world even though this does not penetrate into human consciousness.

By means of this lecture I wished to show one of the ways in which the Beings of the spiritual world influence the evolution of life. It was thus that I strove to discover means by which I might bring to expression the spiritual world I experienced and yet in some way connect it with what is adapted to the ordinary consciousness. I was of the opinion that it was necessary to speak of the spirit, but that the forms in which one is accustomed to express oneself in this scientific age must be respected.

The other lecture I gave in Vienna at the invitation of the Scientific Club. It dealt with the possibility of a monistic conception of the world on the basis of a real knowledge of the spiritual. There I set forth that man by means of his senses grasps the physical side of reality " from without " and by means of his spiritual awareness grasps its spiritual side " from within," so that all which is experienced appears as an unified world in which the sensible manifests the spirit and the spirit reveals itself creatively in the sensible.

This occurred at the time when Haeckel had formulated his own monistic philosophy through his lecture on

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\*Monismus als Band Zwischen Religion und Wissenschaft\*(1). Haeckel, who knew of my being in Weimar, sent me a copy of his speech. I reciprocated his courtesy by sending him the issue of the newspaper in which my lecture at Vienna was printed. Whoever reads this lecture must see how opposed I then was to the monism advanced by Haeckel when occasion rose for me to express what a man has to say about this monism for whom the spiritual world is something into which he sees.

But there was at that time another occasion for me to give thought to monism in the colouring given it by Haeckel. He seemed to me a phenomenon of the scientific age. Philosophers saw in Haeckel the philosophical dilettante, who really knew nothing except the forms of living creatures to which he applied the ideas of Darwin in the order in which he had rightly arranged them, and who explained boldly that nothing further is required for the forming of a world-conception than what can be grasped by a Darwinian observer of nature. Students of nature saw in Haeckel a fantastic person who drew from natural-scientific observations conclusions which were arbitrary.

Since my work required that I should realize what was the inner temper of thought about the world and man, about nature and spirit, as this had been dominant a hundred years earlier in Jena, when Goethe interjected his natural-scientific ideas into this thought, I saw in Haeckel an illustration of what was then thought in this direction. Goethe's relation to the views of nature belonging to his period I had to visualize inwardly in all its details during my work. At the place in Jena from which came the important stimulations to Goethe to formulate his ideas on natural phenomena and the being of nature, Haeckel was at work a century later with the assertion that he could draw from a knowledge of nature the standard for a conception of the world.

In addition it happened that, at one of the first meetings of the Goethe Society in which I participated during my work at Weimar, Helmholtz read a paper on \*Goethes Vorahnungen kommenden naturwissenschaftlichen Ideen\*(2). I was then informed

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1 Monism as a Bond between Religion and Science.  
2 Goethe's Previsions of Coming Scientific Ideas.

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of much in later natural-scientific ideas which Goethe had " previsioned " by reason of fortunate inspirations; but it was also pointed out how Goethe's errors in this field bore upon his theory of colour.

When I turned my attention to Haeckel, I wished always to set before my mind Goethe's own judgment of the evolution of natural-scientific views in the century following that which saw the development of his own; as I listened to Helmholtz I had before my mind the judgment of Goethe by this evolution.

I could not then do otherwise than say to myself that, if one thought of the being of nature in the dominant spiritual temper of that time, that must necessarily result which Haeckel thought in utter philosophical naïveté; those who opposed him showed everywhere that they restricted themselves to mere sense-perception and would avoid the further evolution of this perception by means of thinking.

I had at first no occasion to become personally acquainted with Haeckel, about whom I was impelled to think very much. Then his sixtieth birthday came. I was invited to share in the brilliant festival which was being arranged in Jena. The human element in this festival attracted me. During the banquet Haeckel's son, whom I had come to know at Weimar, where he was attending the school of painting, came to me and said that his father wished to have me presented to him. The son then did this.

Thus I became personally acquainted with Haeckel. He was a fascinating personality. A pair of eyes which looked naïvely into the world, so mild that one had the feeling that this look must break when the sharpness of thought penetrated through. This look could endure only sense-impressions, not thoughts which reveal themselves in things and occurrences. Every movement of Haeckel's was directed to the purpose of admitting what the senses expressed, not to permit the ruling thoughts to reveal themselves in the senses. I understood why Haeckel liked so much to paint. He surrendered himself to physical vision. Where he ought to have begun to think, there he ceased to unfold the activity of his mind and preferred to fix by means of his brush what he had seen.

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Such was the very being of Haeckel. Had he merely unfolded this, something human unusually stimulating would have been thus revealed.

But in one corner of his soul something stirred which was wilfully determined to enforce itself as a definite thought content—something derived from quite another attitude toward the world than his sense for nature. The tendency of a previous earthly life, with a fanatical turn directed toward something quite other than nature, craved the satisfaction of its passion. Religious politics vitally manifested itself from the lower part of the soul and made use of ideas of nature for its self-expression.

In such contradictory fashion lived two beings in Haeckel. A man with mild love-filled sense for nature and in the background something like a shadowy being with incompletely thought-out, narrowly limited ideas breathing out fanaticism. When Haeckel spoke, it was with difficulty that he permitted the fanaticism to pour forth into his words; it was as if the softness which he naturally desired blunted in speech a hidden demonic something. A human riddle which one could but love when one beheld it, but about which one could often speak in wrath when it expressed opinions. Thus I saw Haeckel before me as he was then preparing in the nineties of the last century what led later to the furious spiritual battle that raged over his tendency of thought at the turning-point between the centuries.



Among the visitors to Weimar was Heinrich von Treitschke. I had the opportunity of meeting him when Suphan included me among the guests invited to meet Treitschke at luncheon. I received a deep impression from this very comprehensive personality. Treitschke was quite deaf. Others conversed with him by writing whatever they wished to say on a little tablet which Treitschke would hand them. The effect of this was that in any company where he chanced to be his person became the central point. When one had written down something, he then talked about this without the development of a real conversation. He was present in a far more intensive way for the others than were these for him. This had passed over into his whole attitude of mind. He spoke without

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having to reckon upon objections such as meet another when imparting his thoughts in a group of men. It could clearly be seen how this fact had fixed its roots in his self-consciousness. Since he could not hear any opposition to his thoughts, he was strongly impressed with the worth of what he himself thought.

The first question that Treitschke addressed to me was to ask where I came from. I replied that I was an Austrian. Treitschke responded: "The Austrians are either entirely good and gifted men, or else rascals." He said such things as this, and one became aware that the loneliness in which his mind dwelt because of the deafness drove him to paradoxes, and found in these a satisfaction. Luncheon guests usually remained at Suphan's the whole afternoon. So it was this time also when Treitschke was among them. One could see this personality unfold itself. The broad-shouldered man had something in his spiritual personality also through which he impressed himself upon a wide circle of his fellow-men. One could not say that Treitschke lectured. For everything he said bore a personal character. An earnest craving to express himself was manifest in every word. How commanding was his tone even when he was only narrating something! He wished his words to lay hold upon the emotions of the other person also. An unusual fire which sparkled from his eyes accompanied his assertions. The conversation touched upon Moltke's conception of the world as this had found expression in his memoirs. Treitschke objected to the impersonal way-suggestive of mathematical thinking-in which Moltke conceived world-phenomena. He could not judge things otherwise than with a ground-tone of strongly personal sympathies and antipathies. Men like Treitschke, who stick so fast in their own personalities, can make an impression on other men only when the personal element is at the same time both significant and also interwoven deeply with the things they are setting forth. This was true of Treitschke. When he spoke of something historical, he discoursed as if everything were in the present and he were at hand with all his pleasure and all his displeasure. One listened to the man, one received the impression of the personal in unmitigated

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strength; but one gained no relation to the content of what he said.

With another visitor to Weimar I came into a friendly intimacy. This was Ludwig Laistner. A fine personality he was, in harmony with himself, living in the spiritual in the most beautiful way. He was at the time literary adviser to the Cotta publishing house, and as such he had to work at the Goethe Institute. I was able to spend with him almost all the leisure time we had. His chief work, *\*Das Ratzel des Sphinx\**(1) was then already before the world. It is a sort of history of myths. He follows his own road in the interpretation of myths. Our conversation dealt very much with the

field which is treated in that very important book. Laistner rejected all interpretation of fairy-lore, of the mythical, which maintains the more or less consciously symbolizing fantasy. He sees in dreams, and especially in nightmares, the original source of the myth-making conception of nature formed by the folk. The oppressive nightmare which appears to the dreamer as a tormenting questioning spirit becomes the incubus, the elf, the demonic tormentor; the whole troop of the spirits arise for Ludwig Laistner out of the dreaming man. The riddling sphinx is only another metamorphosed form of the simple midday-woman who appears to the sleeper in the fields at midday and puts questions to him which he has to answer. All that the dream creates by way of strange and fanciful and meaningful, tormenting and delightful shapes -all this Ludwig Laistner traces out in order to point to it again in the images of fairy-lore and myths. In every conversation I had the feeling: " The man could so easily find the way from the creative subconscious in man, which works in the dream-world, to the super-conscious which touches the real world of spirit." He listened to my explanations of this sort with the utmost good will; opposed nothing against these, but gained no inner relationship to them. In this matter he, too, was hindered by the fear belonging to that time of losing the " scientific " ground from under him the moment he should enter into the spiritual as such. But Ludwig Laistner stood in a special relationship to art and poetry by

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1 The Riddle of the Sphinx.

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reason of the fact that he traced the mythical into the real experiences of dreams and not into the abstraction-creating imagination. Everything creative in man thus took on, according to his view, a world-significance. In his rare inner serenity and mental self-sufficiency he was a discriminating poetic personality. His utterances in regard to every sort of thing had a certain poetic quality. Conceptions which are unpoetic he simply did not know at all. In Weimar, and later during a visit in Stuttgart, when I had the pleasure of living near him, I spent the most delightful hours in his company. Beside him stood his wife, who entered completely into his spiritual nature. For her Ludwig Laistner was really all that bound her to the world. He lived only a short while after his sojourn at Weimar. The wife followed her vanished husband after an exceedingly brief interval; the world was empty for her when Ludwig Laistner was no longer in it. An altogether lovable woman, in the true sense of that word. She always knew how to be absent when she feared she might disturb; she never failed when there was anything requiring her care. Like a mother she stood by the side of Ludwig Laistner, whose refined spirituality was contained in a very delicate body.

With Ludwig Laistner I could talk as with few other persons regarding the idealism of the German philosophers-Fichte, Hegel, Schelling. He had a vital sense for the reality of the ideal that lived in these philosophers. When I spoke to him once of my solicitude regarding the one-sidedness of the natural-scientific world-conception, he said: " Those people have no sense of the significance of the creative in the human soul. They do not know that in this creative within man there lives a cosmic content just as in the phenomena of nature."

In dealing with the literary and the artistic, Ludwig Laistner did not lose touch with the directly human. Very distinctive were his bearing and approach; whoever possessed an understanding for such things felt the significant element in his personality very quickly after forming his acquaintance. The official researchers in mythology were opposed to his view; they scarcely paid any attention to it. Thus there remained

scarcely observed at all in the spiritual life of the time a man to whom by reason of his inner worth belonged the very first place. From his book *\*The Riddle of the Sphinx\** the science of mythology might have received entirely fresh impulses; it remained almost wholly without influence. Ludwig Laistner had at that time to undertake for the Cotta *\*Bibliothek der Weltliteratur\** editions of the complete works of Schopenhauer and of selections from Jean Paul. He entrusted both of these to me. And thus I had to unite with my Weimar tasks the thorough working through of the pessimistic philosopher and of the paradoxical genius, Jean Paul. I devoted myself to both undertakings with the deepest interest, because I loved to transplant myself into attitudes of mind utterly opposed to my own. Ludwig Laistner had no ulterior motive in making me the editor of Schopenhauer and of Jean Paul; the assignment was due entirely to the conversations we had held about the two persons. Indeed, the thought of entrusting these tasks to me came to him during a conversation.

There were then living in Weimar Hans Olden and Frau Grete Olden. They gathered about them a special group of those who desired to live in "the present" in contrast with everything which considered the very central point in a spiritual existence to consist in the furtherance, through the Goethe Institute and the Goethe Society, of a life that was past. Into this group I was admitted; and I look back upon all that I experienced there with great appreciation. However fixed one's idea might have become in the Institute through association with the "philological method," they must again become free and fluid when one entered the home of the Oldens, where every one was received with interest who had the idea in his head that a new way of thinking must find place among men, but likewise every one who in the depths of his soul found painful many an old cultural prejudice and was thinking about future ideals. Hans Olden was known to the world as the author of slight theatrical pieces such as *\*Die Offizielle Frau\**(1); in his Weimar circle at that time his life expressed itself quite otherwise.

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1 The Official Wife.

He had a heart receptive to the highest interests which were manifest in the spiritual life of that time. What lived in the plays of Ibsen, in what thundered in the spirit of Nietzsche- in regard to these things there were endless discussions in his house, but always stimulating.

Gabrielle Reuter, who was then writing the novel, *\*Aus guter Familie\**(1) which soon afterward won for her by storm her literary place, was a member of Olden's circle, and filled it with earnest questions of all sorts which were then stirring men in reference to the life of woman.

Hans Olden could be captivating when, with his rather sceptical way of thinking, he instantly put an end to a conversation which was about to lose itself in sentimentality; but he himself could become sentimental when others fell into easy-going ways. The desire in this circle was to evolve the deepest "understanding" for everything "human"; but criticism was unsparing of whatever did not suit one in this or that human thing. Hans Olden was penetrated through and through with the idea that it was the only sensible course for a man to apply himself through literature or art to the great ideals about which there was a good deal of talk in his circle; but he was too scornful of men to realize his ideals in his own productions. He thought that ideals could live in a social circle of select

men, but that any one would be " childish " who should think that he could bring forth such ideals before a greater public. At that very time he was making a beginning toward the artistic realization of wider interests by means of his \*Klÿge Kšte\*(2). This play had only a moderate success in Weimar. This confirmed him in the view that one should give to the public that to which it has now attained, and should keep one's higher interests for the small circle which has an understanding for these.

To a far greater degree than Hans Olden was Frau Grete Olden filled with this idea. She was the most complete feminine sceptic in her estimation of the world's capacity for receiving things spiritual. What she wrote was plainly derived from a certain form of misanthropy.

What Hans Olden and Grete Olden offered to their circle

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1 Of a Good Family.

2 Clever Kate.

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out of such a temper of mind breathed in the atmosphere of an aestheticizing world-feeling, which was capable of reaching up to the most earnest matters, but which did not hesitate to pass by many of the most serious questions with a vein of light humour.

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I MUST number among the happiest hours of my life those which I passed with Gabrielle Reuter, with whom I had the privilege of intimate friendship by reason of this circle. A personality she was who bore within her profound quest of humanity, and who laid hold of them with a certain radicalism of the heart and the sensibilities. In regard to everything which seemed to her a contradiction in the social life she stood with her whole soul half-way between traditional prejudices and the primal claims of human nature. She looked upon woman, who both by life and by education is forced from without into subjection to this traditional prejudice, and who must experience in sorrow that which from the depths of the soul would fain come forth in life as " truth ". Radicalism of the heart expressed in a manner serene and sagacious suffused with artistic feeling and marked by an impressive gift for form-this revealed itself as some thing great in Gabrielle Reuter. Extraordinarily delightful were the conversations one could have with her while she was working at her book \*Of a Good Family\*. As I reflect upon the past I see myself standing with her at a street corner, in the blazing heat of the sun, discussing for more than an hour questions by which she was stirred. Gabrielle Reuter could talk in the finest manner, never for a moment losing her serene bearing, about things over which other persons become at once visibly excited. " Exulting to heaven, grieved even to death "-this, indeed, was her feeling within, but it remained in the soul and did not find its way into her words. Gabrielle Reuter laid strong emphasis upon what ever she had to say, but she did so not by means of the voice but only through the soul. I believe that this art of keeping

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the articulation entirely a matter of the soul, while the audible conversation flows evenly along, was peculiar to her, and it seems to me that in writing she has developed this unique art into her very charming style.

The admiration felt for Gabrielle Reuter in the Olden circle was something inexpressibly beautiful. Hans Olden said to me many times very solemnly: " This woman is great. Would that I also," he added, " could rise to such a height and place before the outer world that which moves in the depths of my soul ! "

This circle shared in its own way in the Weimar Goethe affairs. It was in a tone of irony, but never of frivolous scoffing, and yet often aesthetically angry, that the " present " here passed judgment on the " past." A whole day long would Olden work at his typewriter after a Goethe gathering in order to write an account of the experience, which, according to his feeling, would give the judgment of a man of the world concerning the Goethe prophets.

Into this tone soon fell also the one other man of the world, Otto Erich Hartleben. He seldom ever missed a Goethe meeting. Yet at first I could never discover why he came.

It was in the circle of journalists, theatre people, and writers who gathered on the evenings of the Goethe festivals at the Hotel Chemnitz, apart from the learned celebrities, that I became acquainted with Otto Erich Hartleben. Why he was sitting there I could at once perceive. For he was in his element when he could live himself out in conversations such as were then customary. There he would remain for a long while. He could not go away. In this way I once chanced to be with him and others. The rest of us were " of necessity " the next morning at the Goethe meeting; Hartleben was not there. But I had already become fond of him and was concerned at his absence. So at the close of the meeting I looked for him at his hotel room. He was still sleeping. I woke him, and told him that the principal meeting of the Goethe Society was already at an end. I did not understand why he had wished to participate in the Goethe festival in this fashion. But he answered in such a way that I saw it was entirely natural to him to come to Weimar to attend a Goethe

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gathering in order to sleep during the programme-for he slept away the chief thing for which the others had come.

I got close to Otto Erich Hartleben in a peculiar fashion. At one of the suppers to which I have referred there was a prolonged conversation regarding Schopenhauer. Many words of admiration and of disapproval had been uttered concerning the philosopher. Hartleben had for a long while been silent. Then he entered into the tumultuous revelations of the conversation: " People are aroused by him, but he means nothing for life." Meanwhile he was looking at me with a childish helplessness; he wished me to say something, for he had heard that I was then occupied with Schopenhauer. I said " Schopenhauer I must consider a narrow-minded genius'

Hartleben's eyes sparkled; he became restless; he emptied his glass and filled another. In this moment he had locked me up in his heart; his friendship for me was fixed. " Narrow minded genius ! "-that suited him. I might just as well have used the expression about some other personality, and it would have been the same thing to him. It interested him deeply to think that one could hold the opinion that even a genius could be narrow-minded.

For me the Goethe gatherings were fatiguing. For most persons in Weimar during these meetings were either in one circle or the other according to their interests-either in that of the discoursing or dining philologists or in that of the Olden and Hartleben colouring. I had to take part in both.

My interests impelled me in both directions. That went very well since the sessions of one came at night and of the other during the day. But I was not privileged to live after the manner of Otto Erich. I could not sleep during the day sessions. I loved the many-sidedness of life, and was really just as happy at midday in the Institute circle with Suphan, with whom Hartleben had never become acquainted-since this did not appeal to him-as I was in the evenings with Hartleben and his like-minded companions.

The philosophical tendencies of a succession of men revealed themselves to my mind during my Weimar days. For in the case of each one with whom it was possible to converse about questions of the world and of life, such conversations developed

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in the intimate relationships of that time. And many persons interested in such discussions came through Weimar.

I passed through these experiences during that period of life in which the soul is inclined to turn strongly to the outer life; when it must find its firm union with that life. To me the philosophies there expressing themselves were a fragment of the outer world. And I was forced to realize that even until that time I had really lived but very little in touch with an external world. When I withdrew from some living intercourse, then I always became aware at once that up to that time the only trustworthy world for me had been the spiritual world, which I saw in inner vision. With that world I could readily unite myself. So my thoughts often took the direction of saying to myself how hard had been the way for me through the senses to the outer world during all my childhood and youth. It was always difficult for me to fix in my memory such external data, for example, as one must assimilate in the realm of science. I had to look at a natural object again and again in order to know what it was called, in what scientific class of objects it was listed, and the like. I might even say that the sense-world was for me somewhat like a shadow or a picture. It passed before my soul in pictures, whereas my relationship to the spiritual bore always the character of reality.

All this I experienced in the highest degree during the 'nineties in Weimar. I was then giving the final touches to my \*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\*. I wrote down-so it seemed to me-the thoughts which the spiritual world had given me up to my thirtieth year. All that had come to me from the outer world was only in the nature of a stimulus.

This I experienced especially when in vital intercourse with men in Weimar. I discussed questions of philosophy. I had to enter into them, into their way of thinking and emotional inclinations; they by no means entered into that which I had inwardly experienced and was still experiencing. I entered with vital intensity into that which others perceived and thought; but I could not cause my own inner spiritual activity to flow over into this world of experience. In my own being I had always to remain behind, within myself. Indeed, my

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world was separated, as if by a thin partition, from all the outer world.

In my own soul I lived in a world that bordered on the outer world, but it was always necessary for me to step across a boundary if I wished to have anything to do with the outer world. I was in the most vital intercourse with others, but in every instance I had to pass from my world, as if through a door, in order to engage in this intercourse. This made it seem to me as if each time that I entered into the outer world I was making a visit. Yet this did not hinder me from giving myself up to the most vital participation with one whom I was thus visiting; indeed, I felt entirely at home while on such a visit.

Thus it was with persons, and thus also with world-concepts. I liked to go to Suphan; I liked to go to Hartleben. Suphan never went to Hartleben; Hartleben never went to Suphan. Neither could enter into the characteristic ways of thinking and feeling of the other. With Suphan, and equally with Hartleben, I was as if at home. But neither Suphan nor Hartleben really came to me. Even when they came to me, they still remained by themselves. To my spiritual world they could, in actual experience, make no visit. I perceived the most varied world-concepts before my mind—the natural-scientific, the idealistic, and many shades of each. I felt the impulse to enter into these, to move about in them; but into my spiritual world they cast no light. To me they were phenomena standing before me, not realities in which I could truly have lived.

Thus it was in my soul when life thrust me into immediate contact with such world-concepts as those of Haeckel and Nietzsche. I realized their relative correctness. With my attitude of mind I could never so deal with them as to say " This is right; that is wrong." In that case I should have felt what was vital in them to be something alien to me. But I found one no more alien than the other; for I felt at home only in the spiritual world of my perception, and I could feel as if at home in every other.

When I describe the thing thus it may seem as if everything were to me fundamentally a matter of indifference.

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But such was by no means the case. In this matter I had an entirely different feeling. I was conscious of a full participation in the other because I did not alienate myself from it by reason of the fact that I bore my own along with me both in judgment and feeling.

I had, for instance, innumerable conversations with Otto Harnach, the gifted author of *\*Goethe in der Epoch seiner Vollendung\**(1) who often came at that time to Weimar as he was working at Goethe's art studies. This man, who later became involved in a terrible tragedy, I really loved. I could be wholly Otto Harnach while I was talking with him. I received his thoughts, entered into them as a visitor—in the sense I have indicated—and yet as if at home. It did not even occur to me to invite him to visit me. He could only live alone. He was so woven into his own thought that he felt as something alien to himself everything that was not his own. He would have been able to listen to talk about my world only in such a way that he would have treated it as the Kantian " thing in itself " which lies on the other side of human consciousness. I felt spiritually obliged to deal with his world as such that I did not have to relate myself to it in Kantian fashion but must carry my consciousness over into it.

I lived thus not without spiritual perils and difficulties. Whoever turns away from everything that does not accord with his way of thinking will not be imposed upon by the relative correctness of the various world-concepts. He can without reserve experience the fascination of that which is thought out in a certain direction. Indeed, this fascination of intellectualism is now in the life of very many persons. They easily adapt themselves to thought which is quite unlike their own. But whoever possesses a world of vision, such as the spiritual world must be, such a person sees the correctness of various "standpoints"; and he must be constantly on guard within his soul not to be too strongly drawn to the one side or the other.

But one becomes conscious of the "being of the outer world" if one can with love yield oneself up to it and yet

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1 Goethe at the Time of His Maturity.

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must always turn back to the inner world of the spirit. But one also learns in this process really to live in the spiritual. The various intellectual "standpoints" repudiate one another; spiritual vision sees in them simply "standpoints." Seen from each of these the world appears differently. It is as if one should photograph a house from various sides. The pictures are different; the house is the same. If one walks around the actual house one receives a comprehensive impression. If one stands really within the spiritual world one allows for the "correctness" of a standpoint. One looks upon a photographic impression from one "standpoint" as some thing "correct." Then one asks about the correctness and the significance of the standpoint.

It was in this way that I had to approach Nietzsche, and likewise Haeckel. Nietzsche, I felt, photographs the world from one standpoint to which a profound human personality was driven in the second half of the nineteenth century if he had to live upon the spiritual content of that age alone, if the perception of the spiritual would not break into his consciousness, and yet his will in the subconscious strove with unusual force toward the spiritual. Such was the picture of Nietzsche that lived in my soul; it showed me the personality that did not perceive the spiritual but in which the spirit battled against the unspiritual views of the time.

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AT this time there was established in Germany a branch of the Ethical Culture Society which had originated in America. It seems obvious that in a materialistic age one ought only to approve an effort in the direction of a deepening of ethical life. But this effort arose from a fundamental conception that aroused in me the profoundest objections.

The leader of this movement said to himself: "One stands to-day in the midst of the many opposing conceptions of the world and of life as regards the life of thought and the religious and social feelings. In the realm of these conceptions men cannot be brought to understand one another. It is a bad thing when the moral feelings which men ought to have for one another are drawn into the sphere of these opposing opinions. Where will it lead if those who feel differently in matters religious and social, or who differ from one another in the life of thought, shall also express their diversity in such a way as thus to determine also their moral relationships with respect to those who



think and feel differently. Therefore one must seek for a foundation for purely human ethics which shall be independent of every world-concept, which each one can recognize no matter how he may think in reference to the various spheres of existence."

This ethical movement made upon me a profound impression. It had to do with views of mine which I held to be most important. For I saw before me the deep abyss which the way of thinking characteristic of the most recent times had created between that which occurs in nature and the content of the moral and spiritual world.

Men have come to a conception of nature which would represent the evolution of the world as being without moral or spiritual content. They think hypothetically of a purely

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material primal state of the world. They seek for the laws according to which from this primal state there could gradually have been formed the living, that which is endued with soul, that which is permeated with spirit in the form characteristic of this present age. If one is logical in such a way of thinking-so I then said to myself-then the spiritual and moral cannot be conceived as anything other than a result of the work of nature. Then one faces facts of nature which are from the spiritual and moral point of view quite indifferent, which in their own process of evolution have brought forth the moral as a by-product, and which finally with moral indifference likewise bury it.

I could, of course, perceive clearly that the sagacious thinkers did not draw these conclusions; that they simply accepted what the facts of nature seemed to say to them, and thought in regard to these matters that one ought simply to allow the world-significance of the spiritual and moral to rest upon its own foundation. But this view seemed to me of little force. It made no difference to me that people said: " In the field of natural occurrences one must think in a way that has no relation to morality, and what one thus thinks constitutes hypotheses; but in regard to the moral each man may form his own ideas." I said to myself that whoever thinks in regard to nature even in the least detail in the manner then customary, such a person cannot ascribe to the spiritual-moral any self-existent, self-supporting reality. If physics, chemistry, biology remain as they are-and to all they seem to be unassailable- then the entities which men in these spheres consider to be reality will absorb all reality; and the spiritual-moral could be nothing more than the foam arising from this reality.

I looked into another reality-a reality which is spiritual and moral as well as natural. It seemed to me a weakness in the effort to attain knowledge not to be willing to press through to that reality. I was forced to say to myself according to my spiritual perception: " Above the natural occurrences, and also the spiritual-moral, there is a veritable reality, which reveals itself morally but which in moral activity has at the same time the power to embody itself as an occurrence which attains to equal validity with an occurrence in nature." I

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thought that this seemed indifferent to the spiritual-moral only because the latter had lost its original unity of being with this reality, as the corpse of a man has lost its unity of being with that in man which is endued with soul and with life. To me this was certain; for I did not merely think it: I perceived it as truth in the spiritual facts and beings of the world. In the so-called " ethicists " there seemed to me to have been born men to whom such an insight appeared to be a matter of

indifference; they revealed more or less unconsciously the opinion that one can do nothing with conflicting philosophies; let us save the principles of ethics, in regard to which there is no need to inquire how they are rooted in the world-reality. Undisguised scepticism as to all endeavour after a world-concept seemed to me to manifest itself in this phenomenon of the times. Unconsciously frivolous did any one seem to me who maintained that, if we let world-concepts rest on their own foundations, we shall thus be able to spread morality again among men. I took many a walk with Hans and Grete Olden through the Weimar parks, during which I expressed myself in radical fashion on the theme of this frivolity. "Whoever presses forward with his perception as far as is possible for man," I said, "will find a world-event out of which there appears before him the reality of the moral just as of the natural." In the recently founded \*Zukunft\* I wrote a trenchant article against what I called ethics uprooted from all world-reality, which could not possess any force. The article met with a distinctly unfriendly reception. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, when these "ethicists" themselves had been obliged to come forward as the saviours of civilization?

To me this matter was of immeasurable importance. I wished to do battle at a critical point for the confirmation of a world-concept which revealed ethics as firmly rooted along with all other reality. Therefore, I was forced to battle against this ethics which had no philosophical basis. I went from Weimar to Berlin in order to seek for opportunities to present my view through the press.

I called on Herman Grimm, whom I held in high honour. I was received with the greatest possible friendliness. But it

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seemed to Herman Grimm very strange that I, who was full of zeal for my cause, should bring this zeal into his house. He listened to me rather unresponsively, as I talked to him of my view regarding the ethicists. I thought I could interest him in this matter which to me seemed so vital. But I did not in the least succeed. When, however, he heard me say "I wish to do something," he replied, "Well, go to these people; I am more or less acquainted with the majority of them; they are all quite amiable men." I felt as if cold water had been thrown over me. The man whom I so highly honoured felt nothing of what I desired; he thought I would "think quite sensibly" when I had convinced myself by a call on the "ethicists" that they were all quite congenial persons. I found in others no greater interest than in Herman Grimm. So it was at that time for me. In all that pertained to my perceptions of the spiritual I had to work entirely alone. I lived in the spiritual world; no one in my circle of acquaintances followed me there. My intercourse consisted in excursions into the worlds of others. I loved these excursions. Moreover, my reverence for Herman Grimm was not in the least diminished. But I had a good schooling in the art of understanding in love that which made no move toward understanding what I carried in my own soul.

This was then the nature of my loneliness in Weimar, where I had such an extensive social relationship. But I did not ascribe to these persons the fact that they condemned me to such loneliness. Indeed, I perceived that unconsciously striving in many people was the impulse toward a world-concept which would penetrate to the very roots of existence. I perceived how a manner of thinking which could move securely while it had to do only with that which lies immediately at hand yet weighed heavily upon their souls. "Nature is the whole world"-such was that manner of thinking. In regard to this way of thinking men believed that they must find it to be correct, and they suppressed in their souls everything which seemed to say one could not find this to be correct. It was in this light that much revealed itself to me in my spiritual surroundings at that time. It was the time in

which my \*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\*, whose essential content I had long borne within me, was receiving its final form.

As soon as it was off the press, I sent a copy to Eduard von Hartmann. He read it with close attention, for I soon received back his copy of the book with his detailed marginal comments from beginning to end. Besides, he wrote me, among other things, that the book ought to bear the title: Erkenntnistheoretischer Phänomenalismus und ethischer Individualismus\*(1). I had utterly misunderstood the sources of the ideas and my objective. He thought of the sense-world after the Kantian fashion even though he modified this. He considered this world to be the effect produced by reality upon the soul through the senses. This reality, according to his view, can never enter into the field of perception which the soul embraces through consciousness. It must remain beyond consciousness. Only by means of logical inferences can man form hypothetical conceptions regarding it. The sense-world, therefore, does not constitute in itself an objective existence, but is merely a subjective phenomenon existing in the soul only so long as this embraces the phenomenon within consciousness.

I had sought to prove in my book that no unknown lies behind the sense-world, but that within it lies the spiritual. And concerning the world of human ideas, I sought to show that these have their existence in that spiritual world. Therefore the reality of the sense-world is hidden from human consciousness only so long as the soul perceives by means of the senses alone. When, in addition to the sense-perceptions, the ideas are also experienced, then the sense-world in its objective reality is embraced within consciousness. Knowing does not consist in a copying of a real but the soul's living entrance into that real. Within the consciousness occurs that advance from the still unreal sense-world to the reality of this world.

In truth is the sense-world also a spiritual world; and the soul lives together with this known spiritual world while it extends its consciousness over it. The goal of the process of

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1 Phenomenalism in the Theory of Knowledge and Individualism in Ethics.

consciousness is the conscious experience of the spiritual world, in the visible presence of which everything is resolved into spirit. I placed the world of spiritual reality over against phenomenalism. Eduard von Hartmann thought that I intended to remain within the phenomena and abandon the thought of arriving from these at any sort of objective reality. He conceived the thing as if by my way of thinking I were condemning the human mind to permanent incapacity to reach any sort of reality, to the necessity of moving always within a world of appearances having existence only in the conception of the mind (as a phenomenon).

Thus my endeavour to reach the spirit through the expansion of consciousness was set over against the view that " spirit " exists solely in the human conception and apart from this can only be " thought." This was fundamentally the view of the age to which I had to introduce my \*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\*. The experience of the spiritual had in this view of the matter shrivelled up to

a mere experience of human conceptions, and from these no way could be discovered to a real (objective) spiritual world. I desired to show how in that which is subjectively experienced the objective spiritual shines and becomes the true content of consciousness; Eduard von Hartmann opposed me with the opinion that whoever maintains this view remains fixed in the sensibly apparent and is not dealing at all with an objective reality. It was inevitable, therefore, that Eduard von Hartmann must consider my "ethical individualism" dubious.

For what was this based upon in my \*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\* ? I saw at the centre of the soul's life its complete union with the spiritual world. I sought so to express this fact that an imaginary difficulty which disturbed many persons might resolve itself into nothing. That is, it is supposed that, in order to know, the soul-or the ego-must differentiate itself from that which is known, and therefore must not merge itself with this. But this differentiation is also possible when the soul swings, like a pendulum, as it were, between the union of itself with the spiritual real on the one hand and the sense

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of itself on the other. The soul becomes "unconscious" in sinking down into the objective spirit, but with the sense of itself it brings the completely spiritual into consciousness. If, now, it is possible that the personal individuality of men can sink down into the spiritual reality of the world, then in this reality it is possible to experience also the world of moral impulses. Morality becomes a content which reveals itself out of the spiritual world within the human individuality; and the consciousness expanded into the spiritual presses forward to the perception of this revelation. What impels man to moral behaviour is a revelation of the spiritual world in the experiencing of the spiritual world through the soul. And this experience takes place within the individuality of man. If man perceives himself in moral behaviour as acting in reciprocal relation with the spiritual world, he is then experiencing his freedom. For the spiritual world works within the soul, not by way of compulsion, but in such a way that man must develop freely the activity which enables him to receive the spiritual.

In pointing out that the sense-world is in reality a world of spiritual being and that man, as a soul, by means of a true knowledge of the sense-world is weaving and living in a world of spirit -herein lies the first objective of my \*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\*. In characterizing the moral world as one whose being shines into the world of spirit experienced by the soul and thereby enables man to arrive at this moral world freely- herein lies the second objective. The moral being of man is thus sought in its completely individual unity with the ethical impulses of the spiritual world. I had the feeling that the first part of \*The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\* and the second part form a spiritual organism, a genuine unity. Eduard von Hartmann was forced, however, to feel that they were coupled together quite arbitrarily as phenomenalism in the theory of knowledge and individualism in ethics.

The form taken by the ideas of the book was determined by my own state of soul at that time. Through my experience of the spiritual world in direct perception, nature revealed itself to me as spirit; I desired to create a spiritual natural science. In the self-knowledge of the human soul through

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direct perception, the moral world entered into the soul as its entirely individual experience.

In the experience of spirit lay the source of the form which I gave to my book. It is, first of all, the presentation of an anthroposophy which receives its direction from nature and from the place of man in nature with his own individual moral being.

In a certain sense \*The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\* released from me and introduced into the external world that which the first period of my life had brought before me in the form of ideas through the destiny which led me to experience the natural-scientific riddles of existence. The further way could now consist in nothing else than a struggle to arrive at ideal forms for the spiritual world itself. The forms of knowledge which man receives through sense-perception I represented as inner anthroposophical experience of the spirit on the part of the human soul. The fact that I had not yet used the term anthroposophic was done to the circumstance that my mind was always striving first to attain perception and scarcely at all after a terminology. My task was to form ideas which could express the human soul's experience of the spiritual world.

An inner wrestling after the formation of such ideas comprises the content of that episode of my life which I passed through between my thirtieth and fortieth years of age. At that time fate placed me usually in an outer life-activity which did not so correspond with my inner life that it could have served to bring this to expression.

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To this time belongs my entrance into that circle of spiritual experience in which Nietzsche lingered.

My first acquaintance with Nietzsche's writings belongs to the year 1889. Previous to that I had never read a line of his. Upon the substance of my ideas as these find expression in \*The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\*, Nietzsche's thought had not the least influence. I read what he had written with the feeling of being drawn on by the style which he had developed out of his relation to life. I felt that his soul was a being that was impelled by reason of inheritance and attraction to give attention to everything which the spiritual life of his age had brought forth, but which always felt within: "What has this spiritual life to do with me? There must be another world in which I can live; so much does life in this world jar upon me." This feeling made him a spiritually incensed critic of his time; but a critic who was by his own criticism reduced to illness—who had to experience illness and could only dream of health-of his own health. At first he sought for means to make his dream of health the content of his own life; and thus he sought with Richard Wagner, with Schopenhauer, with modern positivism to dream as if he wished to make the dream in his soul into a reality. One day he discovered that he had only dreamed. Then he began with every power belonging to his spirit to seek for realities-realities which must lie "somewhere or other." He found no roads to these realities, but only yearnings. Then these yearnings became to him realities. He dreamed again, but the mighty power of his soul created out of these dreams realities of the inner man which, without that heaviness which had so long characterized the ideas of humanity, floated within him in a mood of soul joyful but resting upon foundations contrary to the spirit of the age, the "Zeitgeist."

It was thus that I viewed Nietzsche. The freely floating weightless character of his ideas attracted me. I found that this free-floating element in him had brought to maturity many thoughts that bore a resemblance to those which had shaped themselves in me by ways quite unlike those of Nietzsche's mind.

Thus it was possible for me to write in 1895 in the preface to my book *\*Nietzsche in Kampf gegen seiner Zeit\**(1), " As early as 1886 in my little volume, *\*The Theory of Knowledge in Goethe's World-Conception\**, the same sentiment is expressed"- that is, the same as appears in certain works of Nietzsche. But what attracted me particularly was that one could read Nietzsche without coming upon anything which strove to make the reader a " dependant " of Nietzsche's. One could gladly experience without reserve his spiritual illumination; in this experience one felt oneself to be wholly free; for one had the impression that his words began to laugh if one had attributed to them the intention of being assented to, as is the case when one reads Haeckel or Spencer.

Thus I ventured to explain my relationship to Nietzsche in the book mentioned above by using the words which he himself had used in his book on Schopenhauer: " I belong among those readers of Nietzsche, who, after having read their first page from him, know for a certainty that they will read every page and listen to every word which he has ever uttered. My confidence in him continued from that time on...I understood him as if he had written for me, in order to express me intelligibly, but immodestly, foolishly." Shortly before I began the actual writing of that book, Nietzsche's sister, Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche, appeared one day at the Goethe and Schiller Institute. She was taking the preliminary steps toward the establishment of a Nietzsche Institute, and wished to learn how the Goethe and Schiller Institute was managed. Soon afterward there came to Weimar the editor of Nietzsche's works, Fritz Koegel, and I made his acquaintance.

Later I got into a serious disagreement with Frau Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche. Her emotional and lovable spirit claimed at that time my deepest sympathy. I suffered inexpressibly

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1 Nietzsche as the Adversary of His Age.

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by reason of the disagreement. A complicated situation had brought this to pass; I was compelled to defend myself against accusations; I know that it was all necessary, that the happy hours I was permitted to spend among the Nietzsche archives in Naumburg and Weimar should now lie under a veil of bitter memories; yet I am grateful to Frau Förster Nietzsche for having taken me, on the first of many visits I made to her, into the chamber of Friedrich Nietzsche. There he lay on a lounge enveloped in darkness, with his beautiful forehead-artist's and thinker's forehead in one. It was early afternoon. Those eyes which in their blindness yet revealed the soul, now merely mirrored a reflection of the surroundings which could find no longer any way to reach the soul. One stood there and Nietzsche knew it not. And yet one could have believed, looking upon that brow permeated by the spirit, that this was the expression of a soul which had all the forenoon long been shaping thoughts within, and which now would fain rest a while. An inner shudder which seized my soul may have signified that this also underwent a change in sympathy with the genius whose gaze was directed toward me and yet failed to rest upon me. The passivity of my gaze so long fixed won in return a comprehension of his own gaze: his longing always in vain to enable the soul-forces of the eye to work.

And so there appeared before my soul the soul of Nietzsche, hovering above his head, boundless in its spiritual light; surrendered wholly to the spiritual worlds, longing after its environment but failing to discover it; and yet chained to the body, which would have to do with the soul only so long as the soul longed for this present world. Nietzsche's soul was still there, but only from without could it hold to the body, that body which so long as the soul remained within it had offered resistance to the full unfolding of its light.

I had ere this read the Nietzsche who had written; now I perceived the Nietzsche who bore within his body ideas drawn from widely extended spiritual regions-ideas which still sparkled in their beauty even though they had lost on the way their primal illuminating powers. A soul which from previous earthly lives bore rich wealth of light, but which

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could not in this life cause all its light to shine. I had admired what Nietzsche wrote; but now I saw a luminous form behind that which I had admired.

In my thoughts I could only stammer over what I then beheld; and this stammering is in effect my book, \*Nietzsche as the Adversary of His Age\*. That the book is no more than a stammering conceals what is none the less true, that the form of Nietzsche I beheld inspired the book. Frau Fšrster-Nietzsche then requested me to set Nietzsche's library in order. In this way I was enabled to spend several weeks in the Nietzsche archives at Naumburg. In this way also I formed an intimate friendship with Fritz Koegel. It was a beautiful task which placed before my eyes the books in which Nietzsche himself had read. His spirit lived in the impressions which these volumes made upon me-a volume of Emerson's filled throughout with marginal comments showing all the signs of an absorbing study; Guyau's writing bearing the same indications; books containing violent critical comments from his hand-a great number of marginal comments in which one could see his ideas in germinal form. A penetrating conception of Nietzsche's final creative period shone clearly before me as I read his marginal comments on Eugen Dŷhring's chief philosophical work. Dŷhring there develops the thought that one can conceive the cosmos at a single moment as a combination of elementary parts. Thus the history of the world would be the series of all such possible combinations. When once these should have been formed, then the first would have to return, and the whole series would be repeated. If anything thus exists in reality, it must have occurred innumerable times in the past, and must occur again innumerable times in future. Thus we should arrive at the conception of the eternal repetition of similar states of the cosmos. Dŷhring rejects this thought as an impossibility Nietzsche reads this; he receives from it an impression, which works further in the depths of his soul and finally take form within him as " the return of the similar," which, together with the idea of the " superman," dominates his final creative period.

I was profoundly impressed--indeed shocked--by the

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impression which I received from thus following Nietzsche in his reading. For I saw what an opposition there was between the character of Nietzsche's spirit and that of his contemporaries. Dŷhring, the extreme positivist, who rejects everything which is not the result of a system of reasoning directed with cold and mathematical regularity, considers" the eternal repetition of the

similar " as an absurdity, and sets up the idea only to show its impossibility; but Nietzsche must take this up as his solution of the world-riddle, as an intuition . ' arising from the depths of his own soul.

Thus Nietzsche stands in absolute opposition to much which pressed in upon him as the content of the thought and feeling of his age. This driving pressure he so receives that it pains him deeply, and it is in grief, in inexpressible sorrow of spirit, that he shapes the content of his own soul. This was the tragedy of his creative work.

This reached its climax while he was sketching the outlines for his last work, \*Willen zur Macht, eine Umwertung aller Werte\*(1). Nietzsche was impelled to bring up in purely spiritual fashion everything which he thought or experienced in the depth of his soul. To create a world-concept from the spiritual events in which the soul itself participates-this was the tendency of his thought. But the positivistic world conception of his age, the age of natural science, swept in upon him. In this conception there was nothing but the purely materialistic world, void of spirit. What remained of the spiritual way of thought in the conception was only the remains of ancient ways of thinking, and these no longer found him. Nietzsche's unlimited sense for truth would expunge all this. In this way he came to think as an extreme positivist. A spiritual world behind the material became to him a lie. But he could create only out of his own soul-so create that true creation seemed to him to have meaning only when it holds before itself in idea the content of the spiritual world. Yet this content he rejected. The natural-scientific world-content had so firmly gripped his soul he would create this as if in spiritual fashion. Lyrically, in dionysiac rush of soul, does his mind soar aloft in \*Zarathustra\*. In wonderful

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1 The Will to Power, a Transvaluation of all Values.

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fashion does the spiritual hover there, but it is a wonderful spiritual dream woven out of the stuff of material reality. The spirit strews this about in its effort to escape because it does not find itself but can only live in a seeming reality in that dream reflected from the material.

In my own mind I dwelt much during those Weimar days in the contemplation of Nietzsche's type of mind. In my own spiritual experience this type of mind had also its place. My spiritual experience could enter sympathetically into Nietzsche's struggles, into his tragedy. What had this to do with the positivistic forms in which Nietzsche proclaimed the conclusions of his thought?

Others looked upon me as a " Nietzschean," merely because I could unreservedly admire what was entirely opposed to my own way of thinking. I was impressed by the way in which Nietzsche's mind revealed itself; in just this aspect I felt myself close to him, for in the content of his thought he was close to no one; as to the experience of the spiritual way of thought he felt himself isolated both from men and from his age.

For a long time I was in frequent intercourse with the editor of Nietzsche's works, Fritz Koegel. We discussed in detail many things pertaining to the publication of Nietzsche's works. I never had any official relation to the Nietzsche archives or the publication of his works. When Frau Förster Nietzsche wished to offer me such a relationship, this led to a conflict with Fritz Koegel which at once rendered it impossible that I should have any share in the Nietzsche archives. My connection



with the Nietzsche archives constituted a very stimulating episode in my life at Weimar, and the final rupture of this relationship caused me deep regret. Out of the various activities in connection with Nietzsche, there remained with me a view of his personality-that of one whose fate it was to share tragically in the life of the age of natural science covering the latter half of the nineteenth century and finally to be shattered by his impact with that age. He sought in that age, but nothing could he find. As to myself, I was only confirmed by my experience with him in the conviction that all seeking for reality in the data of

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natural science would be vain except as it directed its view, not within these data, but through them into the world of spirit.

It was thus that Nietzsche's work brought the problem of natural science before my mind in a new form. Goethe and Nietzsche stood in perspective before me. Goethe's strong sense for reality directed him toward the essential being and processes of nature. He desired to remain within nature. He restricted himself to pure perceptions of the plant, animal, and human forms. But, while he kept his mind moving among these forms, he came everywhere upon spirit. For within the material he found everywhere dominant the spirit. All the way to the actual perception of the spirit living and controlling he would not advance. A spiritual sort of natural science was what he constructed, but he paused before arriving at the knowledge of pure spirit lest he should lose his hold upon reality.

Nietzsche proceeded from the vision of the spiritual after the manner of myths. Apollo and Dionysos were spiritual forms which he experienced in vital fashion. The history of the human spiritual seemed to him to have been a history of co-operation and also of conflict between Dionysos and Apollo. But he got only as far as the mythical conception of such spiritual forms. He did not press forward to the perception of real spiritual being. Beginning with the spiritual in myth, he made a path for himself to nature. In Nietzsche's thought Apollo had to represent the material after the manner of natural science; Dionysos had to be conceived as symbolizing the forces of nature. But thus was Apollo's beauty dimmed; thus was the world-emotion of Dionysos paralysed into the regularity of natural law.

Goethe found the spirit in the reality of nature; Nietzsche lost the spirit-myth in the dream of nature in which he lived.

I stood between these two opposites. The experiences of soul through which I had passed in writing my book *\*Nietzsche as the Adversary of His Age\** could at first make no advance; on the contrary, in the last period of my life in Weimar, Goethe became once more dominant in my reflections. I wished to indicate the road by which the life of humanity had expressed itself in philosophy up to the time of

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Goethe, in order to conceive the philosophy of Goethe as proceeding out of this life. This endeavour I made in the book *\*Goethes Weltanschauung\**(1) which was published in 1897. In this book it was my purpose to bring to light how Goethe, wherever he directed his eyes to the understanding of nature, saw shining forth everywhere the spiritual; but I did not touch upon the

manner in which Goethe related himself to spirit as such. My purpose was to characterize that part of Goethe's philosophy which expressed itself vitally in a spiritual view of nature.

Nietzsche's ideas of the " eternal repetition " and of " supermen " remained long in my mind. For in these was reflected that which a personality must feel concerning the evolution and essential being of humanity when this personality is kept back from grasping the spiritual world by the restricted thought in the philosophy of nature characterizing the end of the nineteenth century. Nietzsche perceived the evolution of humanity in such a way that whatever happened at any moment has already happened innumerable times in precisely the same form, and will happen again innumerable times in future. The atomistic conception of the cosmos makes the present moment seem a certain definite combination of the smallest entities; this must be followed by another, and this in turn by yet another-until, when all possible combinations have been formed, the first must again appear. A human life with all its individual details has been present innumerable times; it will return with all its details in innumerable times.

The " repeated earth-lives " of humanity shone darkly in Nietzsche's subconsciousness. These lead the individual human life through human evolution to life-stages at which overruling destiny causes men to pass, not to a repetition of the earth-life, but by ways spiritually determined to a traversing in many forms through the course of the world. Nietzsche was fettered by the natural-scientific conception. What this conception could make of repeated earth-lives-this exercised a fascination upon his mind. This he vitally experienced; for he felt his own life to be a tragedy filled with the bitterest

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1 Goethe's World-Conception.

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experiences, weighed down by grief. To live such a life countless times--this was what he dwelt upon instead of the liberating experience which is to follow upon such a tragedy in the further unfolding of future lives.

Nietzsche felt also that in the man who is living through one earthly existence another man is revealed, a superman, who is able to form but a fragment of his whole life in a bodily existence on earth. The natural-scientific conception of evolution caused him to view this superman, not as the spirit dominant within the sense-physical, but as that which is shaping itself through a merely natural process of evolution. As man has evolved out of the animal, so will the " superman " evolve out of man. The natural scientific view drew Nietzsche's eyes away from the spiritual man to the natural man, and dazzled him with the thought of a higher " natural man."

What Nietzsche had experienced in this way of thought was present in the utmost vividness in my mind during the summer of 1896. At that time Fritz Koegel gave me his collection of Nietzsche's aphorisms concerning the " eternal repetition " to look through. The opinions I formed at that time of this process of Nietzsche's thought were expressed in an article published in 1900 in the \*Magazin fŷr Literatur\*. Certain statements occurring in that article fix definitely my reactions at that time to Nietzsche and to natural science. I will transcribe those thoughts of mine here, freed from the polemics with which they were there associated.

" There is no doubt that Nietzsche wrote these single aphorisms in a series without any order... I still maintain the conviction I then expressed, that Nietzsche grasped this idea when reading \*Eugen Dühring's Kursus der Philosophie als streng Wissenschaftlicher Weltanschauung und Lebensgestaltung\*(1) (Leipzig, 1875) and under the influence of this book. On page 84 of this work the thought is quite clearly expressed; but it is there as energetically opposed as Nietzsche defends it. This book is in Nietzsche's library. It was read very eagerly by Nietzsche, as is evident from numerous pencil marks on the margins.... Dühring says: ' The profound'

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1 The Course of Philosophy as a Strictly Scientific World-Conception and Shaping of Life.

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logical basis of all conscious life demands in the strongest sense of the word an \*inexhaustibleness\* of forms. Is this endlessness, by virtue of which ever new forms will appear, a possibility ? The mere number of the parts and of the force elements would in itself preclude the unending multiplication of combinations but for the fact that the perpetual medium of space and time promises a limitlessness in variations. Moreover, of that which can be counted only a limited number of combinations is possible. But from that which cannot according to its nature be conceived as enumerable it must be possible for a limitless number of states and relationships to come to pass. This limitlessness, which we are considering with reference to the destiny of forms in the universe, is compatible with any sort of change and even with intervals of approximation to fixity or \*precise repetitions\* (italics are mine), but not with the cessation of all variation. Whoever would cherish the conception of an existence which contradicts the primal state of things ought to reflect that the evolution in time has but a single true tendency, and that causality is always in line with this tendency. It is easier to abandon the distinction than to maintain it, and it then requires but little effort to leap over the chasm and imagine the end as analogous with the beginning. But we ought to guard against such superficial haste; for the once given existence of the universe is not merely an unimportant episode between two states of night, but rather the sole firm and illuminated ground from which we may infer the past and forecast the future....' Dühring feels also that an everlasting repetition of states holds no incentive for living. He says: ' Now it is self-evident that the principle of an incentive for living is incompatible with the eternal repetition of the same form... ' "

Nietzsche was forced by the logic of the natural-scientific conception to a conclusion from which Dühring turned back because of mathematical considerations and the repellent prospect which these represented for human life.

To quote further from my article: "...if we set up the postulate that with the material parts and the force-elements a limited number of combinations is possible, then we have the Nietzschean ideal of the 'return of the similar.'

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Nothing less than a defence of a contradictory idea taken from Dühring's view of the matter occurs in Aphorism 203 (Vol. XII in Koegel's edition, and Aphorism in Horneffer's work, \*Nietzsche's Lehre von der ewigen Wiederkunft\*(1) ). The amount of the all-force is definite, not something endless: we must beware of such prodigality in conceptions ! Accordingly the number of stages,

modifications, combinations, and evolutions of this force, though vast and practically immeasurable, is yet always definite and not endless: that is, the force is eternally the same and eternally active-even to this very moment already an endlessness has passed, which means that all possible evolutions must already have occurred. Therefore, the momentary evolution must be a repetition, and likewise that which brought it forth and that which arises from it, and so on both forwards and backwards ! Everything has been innumerable times insofar as the sum total of the stages of all forces is repeated....' And Nietzsche's feeling in regard to these thoughts is precisely the opposite of that which DŶhring experienced. To Nietzsche this thought is the loftiest formula in which life can be affirmed. Aphorism 43 (in Horneffer; 234 in Koegel's edition) runs: ' Future history will ever more combat this thought, and never believe it, for according to its nature it must die forever ! Only he remains who considers his existence capable of endless repetitions: among such, however, a state is possible to which no Utopian has ever attained.' It can be proven that many of Nietzsche's thoughts originated in a manner similar to that of the eternal repetition. Nietzsche formed an idea opposite to any idea then present before him. At length this same tendency led to the production of his masterpiece, "Umwertung aller Werte."(2)

It was then clear to me that in certain of his thoughts which strove to reach the world of spirit Nietzsche was a prisoner of his conception of nature. For this reason I was strongly opposed to the mystical interpretation of his thought of repetition. I agreed with Peter Gast, who wrote in his edition of Nietzsche's work: " The doctrine-to be understood in a

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- 1 Nietzsche's Doctrine of the Eternal Repetition.
- 2 The Will to Power, a Transvaluation of all Values.

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purely mechanical sense-of limitedness and consequent repetition in cosmic molecular combinations." Nietzsche believed that a lofty thought must be brought up from the foundations of natural science. That was the way in which he had to sorrow because of his age. Thus in my glimpse of Nietzsche's soul in 1896 there appeared before me what one who looked toward the spirit had to suffer from the conception of nature prevailing at the end of the nineteenth century.

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THE loneliness I then experienced in respect to that which I bore in silence within me as my world-conception, while my thoughts were linked to Goethe on one side and to Nietzsche on the other-this loneliness was my experience also in relation to many other personalities with whom I felt myself united by bonds of friendship but who none the less energetically opposed my spiritual life.

The friend whom I had gained in early years but whose ideas and my own had become mutually so divergent that I had to say to him: " Were that true which you think concerning the essential reality of life, then I had rather be the block of wood under my feet than a man "-this friend still continued bound to me in love and loyalty. His welcome letters from Vienna always carried me back to the place which was so dear to me, especially because of the human relationships in which I was there privileged to live.

But if this friend undertook in his letters to speak about my spiritual life, a gulf then opened between us. He often wrote me that I was alienating myself from what is primal in human nature, that I was "rationalizing the impulses of my soul." He had the feeling that in me the life of feeling was changed into a life of mere thought, and this he sensed as a certain coldness proceeding from me. Nothing which I could bring to bear against this view of his could do any good. I could not avoid seeing that the warmth of his friendship gradually diminished because he could not free himself of the belief that I must grow cold as to what was human since I passed my soul-life in the region of thought.

That, instead of being chilled in this life of thought, I had

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to take with me into this life my full humanity in order by this means to lay hold upon reality in the spiritual sphere- this he would never grasp.

He failed to see that the purely human persists, even when it is raised to the realm of the spirit; nor could he see how it is possible to live in the sphere of thought; it was his opinion that one can there merely think and must lose oneself in the cold region of abstractions.

Thus he made me out a "rationalist." In this view of his I felt there was the grossest misunderstanding of what was reached by my spiritual paths. All thinking which turns away from reality and spends itself in the abstract-for this I felt the innermost antipathy. I was in a condition of mind in which I would develop thought drawn from the sense world only to that stage at which thought tends to veer off into the abstract; at that point, I said to myself, it ought to lay hold upon the spirit. My friend saw that I moved in thought out of the physical world; but he failed to realize that in that very moment I stepped over into the spiritual. Therefore, when I spoke of the really spiritual, this was to him quite non-existent, and he received from my words merely a web of abstract thoughts.

I was deeply grieved by the fact that, when I was really uttering that which had for me the profoundest import, yet to my friend I was talking of a "nothing." Such was my relationship to many persons.

What so entered into my life I had to perceive also in my conception of the understanding of nature. I could recognize as right only that method of nature-research in which one applies one's thought to the task of looking through the objective relationships of sense-phenomena; but I could not admit that one should by means of thought elaborate concerning the region of sense-perception hypotheses which then are to be referred to a supersensible reality but which, in fact, constitute a mere web of abstract thoughts. At that moment in which thought has completed its work in fixing that which is rendered clear by the sense-phenomena themselves, when rightly viewed, I did not desire to begin with the framing of hypotheses, but in perception, in the experiencing

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of the spiritual which in reality lives, not behind the sense world, but within it.

What I then held firmly as my own view in the middle of the 'nineties I later set down briefly as follows in an article I published in 1900 in No. 16 of the Magazin fŷr Literatur: " A scientific analysis of our activity in cognition leads... to the conviction that the questions which we have to address to nature are a result of the peculiar relationship in which we stand to the world. We are limited individualities, and for this reason we can become aware of the world only in fragments. Each piece, of and for itself, is a riddle; or, otherwise expressed, it is a problem for our understanding. But the more we come to know the details, the clearer does the world become to us. One act of becoming aware makes clear the others. Questions which the world puts to us and which cannot be answered with the means which the world gives us-these do not exist. For monism, therefore, there are on general principles no limits to knowledge. At one time this or that may not be clarified, because we are not yet in position, as to either space or time, to find the things which are there concerned. But what is not found to-day may be found to-morrow. Limits determined in this manner are only accidental, such as will vanish with the progress of experience and of thought. In such cases the formation of hypotheses legitimately comes into play. Hypotheses should not be formed in regard to anything which by its nature is inaccessible to our understanding. The atomic hypothesis is utterly without foundation when it is considered, not merely as an aid to abstract thought, but as a declaration regarding real being beyond the reach of our qualitative experience. A hypothesis must be merely an opinion regarding a group of facts which, for accidental reasons, is inaccessible to us but which belongs by nature to the world given to us."

I stated this view regarding the forming of hypotheses because I wished to show that " limitations of knowledge " were not proven, and that the limitations of natural science were a necessity. At that time I did this as to the understanding of nature only in a side reference. But this way of forming thoughts had always laid down the road for me

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to advance farther by means of the knowledge of spirit beyond that point at which one dependent upon the knowledge of nature reached the inevitable " limitation." A contentment of soul and profound inner satisfaction were mine at Weimar by reason of the artistic element brought into the city by the art school and the theatre, and the musical people associated with these.

In the teachers and students of painting in the art school there was revealed what was then struggling out of the ancient traditions toward a new and direct perception and reflection of nature and life. A good many among these painters might properly have been considered " seekers." How that which the painter had as colour on his palette or in his colour-pot could be applied to the surface in such a way that what the artist created should bear a right relationship to Nature as she lives and becomes visible to man's eyes in creating-this was the question which was constantly heard in the most varied forms, in a manner stimulating, often pleasantly fanciful, and from the artistic experience of which there originated the numerous paintings that were displayed by Weimar artists in the frequent art exhibitions.

My artistic experience was not then so broad as my relation to experiences in the realm of knowledge. Yet I sought in the stimulating intercourse with the Weimar artists for a spiritual conception of the artistic. To retrospective memory, that which I then experienced in my own mind seems very chaotic-when the modern painter who sensed the mood of light and atmosphere and wished to give these back took up arms against the " ancients " who knew from tradition how this or that was handled. There was in many of them a spiritualized striving-derived from the most primitive forces of the soul-to be " true " in the reproduction of nature.

Not thus chaotic, however, but in most significant forms appeared to my mind the life of a young painter whose artistic way of revealing himself harmonized with my own evolution in the direction of artistic fantasy. This artist, then in the bloom of youth, was for some time in the closest intimacy with me. Him also life has borne far away from

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me; but I have often recalled in memory the hours we spent together. The soul-life of this young man was all light and colour.

What others expressed in ideas he uttered by means of "colours in light." Indeed, his understanding worked in such a way that he combined things and events of life as one combines colours, not as mere thoughts combine which the ordinary man shapes from the world.

This young artist was once at a wedding festival to which I also had been invited. The usual festival speeches were being made. The pastor took as content of his talk the meaning of the words bride and groom. I endeavoured to discharge the duty of speaking-which rested upon me because I was a frequent visitor at the friendly home from which the bride came-by talking of the delightful experiences which the guests were permitted to enjoy at that home. I spoke because I was expected to speak. And I was expected to make the sort of speech "belonging to" a wedding feast. So I took little pleasure in "the role" I had to play. After me arose the young painter, who also had long been a friend of the family. From him no one expected anything; for everybody knew that such ideas as are embodied in toasts simply did not belong to him. He began somewhat as follows: "Over the glimmering red crest of the hill the glance of the sun poured lovingly. Clouds breathing above the hill and in the gleam of the sun; glowing red slopes facing the sunlight, blending into triumphal arches of spiritual colours giving a pathway to earth for the downward striving light. Flower surfaces far and wide; above these the air, gleaming yellow, slips into the flowers awakening the life in them..." He spoke in this way for a long while. He had suddenly forgotten all the wedding merriment about him and begun "in the spirit" to paint. I do not know why he ceased thus to speak in painter fashion; I suppose his coat-tail was pulled by someone who was very fond of him, but who also wished equally that the guests should come to a peaceful enjoyment of the wedding roast meat.

The young painter's name was Otto Fröhlich. He often sat with me in my room, and we took walks and excursions

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together. While Otto Fröhlich was with me, he was always painting "in the spirit." In his company one could forget that the world has any other content than light and colour. Such was my feeling about this young friend. I know that whatever I had to say to him I placed before his mind clothed in colours in order to make myself intelligible to him. And the young painter really succeeded in so guiding his brush and so laying on the colours that his pictures were in a high degree a reflection of his own luxuriant, living colour fantasies. When he painted the trunk of a tree, there appeared on the canvas, not the delineated shapes of a picture, but rather that which light and colour reveal from within themselves when the tree-trunk gives them the opportunity to manifest their life.

In my own way I was seeking for the spiritual substance of colour in light. In him I was forced to see the secret of the being of colour. In Otto Fröhlich there stood beside me a man who individually bore instinctively within him as his experience that which I was seeking for the taking up of the colour-world through the human soul.

It gave me pleasure to be able through this very search of mine to give the young friend many a stimulus. The following was an instance. I myself experienced in a high degree the intensive colours which Nietzsche describes in the \*Zarathustra\* chapter on "the most hateful man." This "Valley of Death," described like a painting by Nietzsche, held for me much of the secret of the life of colour.

I gave Otto Fröhlich the advice to paint poetically the picture done by Nietzsche in word colours of Zarathustra and the most hateful man. He did this. And now something really remarkable came to pass. The colours concentrated themselves, glowing and very expressive, in the figure of Zarathustra. But this figure as such did not come out fully, since in Fröhlich the colours themselves could not yet unfold themselves to the extent of creating Zarathustra. But so much the more living did the colour variations boil up into the "green snakes" in the valley of the most hateful man. In this part of the picture all of Fröhlich lived. But now the "most hateful man." There it would have required the line,

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the characteristic of painting. This Fröhlich refused. He did not yet know how there actually lives in colour the secret of causing the spiritual to take on form through the very handling of the colour itself. So "the most hateful man" became a reproduction of the model called by the Weimar painters "Fyllsack." I do not know whether this was really the name of the man always used by the painters when they wished to deal with the characteristically hateful; but I know that "Fyllsack's" hatefulness was no longer merely conventional, but had something of genius in it. But to place him thus unchanged as a copy in the picture where Zarathustra's soul revealed itself shining in countenance and in apparel, when the light conjures forth true colour-being out of its intercourse with the green snakes-this ruined the painting of Fröhlich. Thus the picture failed to become what I had hoped might come to pass through Otto Fröhlich.

Although I could not but realize the sociability in my nature, yet at Weimar I never felt in overwhelming measure the impulse to betake myself where the artists, and all who felt socially bound up with them, spent the evenings.

This was in a romantic "Artists' Club" remodelled out of an old smithy opposite the theatre. There, united together in a dim-coloured light, sat the teachers and students of the Academy of Painting; there sat actors and musicians. Whoever sought for sociability must feel himself impelled to go to this place in the evenings. And I did not feel so impelled just for the reason that I did not seek companionship, but thankfully accepted it when circumstances brought it to me.

In this way I became acquainted with individual artists in other social groups, but did not come to know the artistic world.

To know certain artists at Weimar in those days was of vital value. For the tradition of the Court and the extraordinarily sympathetic personality of the Grand-duke Carl Alexander gave to the city



an artistic standing which drew to Weimar, in one relation or another, everything artistic which was active in that period.

There, first of all, was the theatre with the good old traditions--disinclined in its leading representatives to allow a

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naturalistic flavour to come into evidence. And where the modern would fain show itself and expunge many a pedantry, which nevertheless was always associated with good traditions, there modernity was kept far away from that which Brahms propagated on the stage and Paul Schellner through the press as the "modern conception." Among these "Weimar moderns" the chief of all was that wholly artistic noble firespirit, Paul Wiecke. To see such men take in Weimar the first steps of their artistic career gave one an ineradicable impression, and was a comprehensive school of life. Paul Wiecke used the basement of a theatre which, because of its traditions, annoyed the elemental artist. Very stimulating hours have I spent at the home of Paul Wiecke. He was on terms of intimate friendship with my friend Julius Wahle, and because of this I came very close to him. It was often delightful to hear Wiecke grumbling over almost everything that he must endure when he had to do the dress rehearsals for a new performance. Then, with this in mind, to see him play the role that he had so abused, and which nevertheless, through his noble endeavour after style and through his beautiful spiritualizing fire, afforded one a rare enjoyment.

Richard Strauss was then making his beginning in Weimar. He was second director along with Lassen. The first compositions of Richard Strauss were performed in Weimar. The musical craving of this personality revealed itself as a piece of the very spiritual life of Weimar. Such a joyful unreserved acceptance of something which in the act of its acceptance became an exciting problem of art was then possible at Weimar alone. Round about one the peace of the traditional—a highly prized and worthy mood; now enters amid this Richard Strauss with his \*Zarathustra Symphony\* or even his music for the buffoon. Everything wakes up in tradition, reverence, worth; but it wakes up in such a way that the assent is lovable, the dissent harmless—and the artist can find in the most beautiful way the reaction to his own creation.

How many hours long we sat at the first performance of Richard Strauss's music drama \*Guntram\*, in which the lovable and humanly so distinguished Heinrich Zeller played the leading role and almost sang himself out of voice!

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Indeed, this profoundly sympathetic man, Heinrich Zeller— even he had to leave Weimar in order to become what he did become. He had the most beautiful elemental gift of song. He needed for his unfolding an environment which, with the utmost patience, permitted that such a gift should in developing itself experiment over and over again. And so the evolution of Heinrich Zeller is to be numbered among the most human and beautiful things which one could ever experience. Besides, Zeller was such a lovable personality that one must count the hours one could spend with him among the most stimulating possible. And thus it came about that, although I did not often think of going in the evening to the Artists' Club, yet, if Heinrich Zeller met me and said I must go with him, I always yielded gladly to this demand.

The state of things at Weimar had also its dark side. That which is traditional and peace-loving often held the artist back as if in a sort of seclusion. Heinrich Zeller became very little known to the world outside of Weimar. What was at first suited to enable him to spread his wings later crippled these wings. And so it was always with my dear friend Otto Fröhlich. He needed, like Zeller, the artistic soil of Weimar, but the dim spiritual atmosphere absorbed him too much in its artistic comfort.

And one felt this "artistic comfort" in the pressure of Ibsen's spirit and that of other moderns. There one shared with everything-the battle waged by the dramatist, for example, in order to find the style for a \*Nora\*. Such a seeking as one could there observe occurs only where, through the propagation of the old stage traditions, one meets with difficulties in the effort to represent what comes from poets who have begun, not like Schiller with the stage, but like Ibsen with life.

But one also shares in this reflection of this modernism out of the "artistic comfort" of the theatrical public. One ought to find a middle way between the two circumstances: first, that one is a dweller in "classical Weimar," and, on the other hand, that what has made Weimar great has been its constant understanding for the new.

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It is with great happiness that I remember the productions of Wagner's music dramas at which I was present in Weimar. The Director von Bronsart developed a specially understanding devotion to this type of theatrical productions.

Heinrich Zeller's voice then reached its most exquisite value. A remarkable gift as a singer belonged to Frau Agnes Stavenhagen, wife of the pianist Bernhard Stavenhagen, who was also for a long time director at the theatre. Frequent music festivals brought the representative artists of the time and their works to Weimar. One saw there, for example, Mahler as director at a music festival when he was just getting his start. Ineradicable was the impression of the way in which he used the baton-not aiding music in the flood of forms, but as the experience of a supersensible hidden something visibly pointing amid the forms.

What came before my mind from these Weimar events- seemingly quite unrelated to me-is really deeply united with my life. For these were excitations and states which I experienced as pertaining in the deepest manner to me. Often afterwards, when I have encountered a person, or the work of a person, with whom I have shared experiences at his beginning at Weimar, I have recalled with gratitude this Weimar period through which so much became intelligible because so much had gathered from elsewhere there to pass through its germinal stage. Thus I then experienced in Weimar the artistic strivings in such a way that in regard to most of these I had my own opinion, often very little in harmony with those of other persons. But at the same time I was just as intensely interested in everything which others felt as in my own feelings. Here also there came to pass within me a twofold mental life.

This was a genuine discipline of the mind, brought to me by life itself in the course of destiny, in order that I might find my way out from the "either or" of abstract intellectual judgment. This sort of judgment erects barriers separating the mind from the spiritual world. In this there are not beings and occurrences which admit of such an "either or" judgment. In the presence of the supersensible one must become many-sided. One must not merely learn theoretically,

but must take everything to dwell in the innermost emotions of the soul's life, in order to view everything from the most manifold points of view. Such standpoints as materialism, realism, idealism, spiritualism, as these have been elaborated in the physical world by personalities with abstract ways of thinking into comprehensive theories in order that they may signify something for things in themselves,-these lose all interest for one who knows the supersensible. He knows, for example, that materialism cannot be anything else but the view of the world from that point from which it reveals itself in material phenomena.

It is a practical training in this direction when one finds oneself in the midst of an existence which brings the life whose waves beat outside of one's own so inward as to become as close as one's own judgments and feelings. But for me this was true of much in Weimar. It seems to me that at the close of the century this ceased to be true there. Until then the spirit of Goethe and of Schiller still rested upon everything. And the lovable old Grand-duke, who moved about with such distinction in Weimar and its vicinity, had as a boy seen Goethe. He truly felt very strongly his " Your Highness," but he always showed that he felt himself a second time ennobled through the work that Goethe did for Weimar.

It was the spirit of Goethe which worked so powerfully from all directions at Weimar that to me a certain side of the experience of what was happening there became the practical mental discipline in the right conception of the supersensible worlds.

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THE hospitable welcome I met in the family of the Keeper of the Records at the Goethe-Schiller Institute, Eduard von der Hellen, was of the most delightful character. This man stood in a peculiar relationship to the other collaborators at the archives. He had an extraordinary reputation among the philological specialists because of his remarkably successful initial work on Goethe's *\*Anteil an Lavaters Physiognomischen Fragmenten\**(1). Von der Hellen had in this work produced something which every contemporary philologist accepted forthwith as " complete." Only the author himself did not think so. He looked upon the work as a methodical achievement whose principles " could be learned " by anyone, whereas his own endeavour was to fill himself with inner spiritual content.

When there were no visitors, we sat for long spells together in the old collaborators' room of the Institute while this was still at the castle: three of us-von der Hellen, who was working at an edition of Goethe's letters; Julius Wahle, occupied with the journals; and I, with the natural-scientific writings. But the very requirements of von der Hellen's mental life gave rise to conversations in the midst of the work touching upon the most manifold aspects of public life, spiritual or other. In this connection, however, those interests which are bound up with Goethe always received their due. The notes written by Goethe in his journals, and letters of Goethe's revealing a standpoint so elevated and such comprehensive vision,-these gave rise to reflections which led into the very depths of existence and the breadth of life. Eduard von der Hellen was friendly enough to introduce me into his family, in order further to develop the relationship

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1 Goethe's Share in Lavater's Physiognomic Fragments.

growing out of these meetings in the Institute, often so stimulating. A still further extension of the delightful companionship came about by reason of the fact that von der Hellen's family likewise mingled in the circles I have already described-such as those grouped about Olden, Gabrielle Reuter, and others.

Especially has the profoundly congenial personality of Frau von der Hellen always remained fixed in my memory. Hers was a nature wholly artistic. One of those persons who, but for other duties intervening in her life, possessed the capacity for achieving something beautiful in art. Such was her destiny that, so far as I am aware, the artistic side of this woman came to expression only in the early part of her life. But every word about art that one could exchange with her was a satisfaction. She showed a basic quality, as it were, of reserve; always cautious in judgment, and yet profoundly sympathetic in a purely human way. I seldom went away from such a conversation without carrying with me in long continued reflection what Frau von der Hellen had suggested rather than spoken.

Very lovable also were the father of Frau von der Hellen and his two daughters-the father a lieutenant-general who had fought through the war of the 'seventies as a major. While one was in this group of persons, one experienced vitally the most beautiful aspect of German spiritual life: that spiritual life which had flowed into all circles of the social life out of those religious, aesthetic, or popular-scientific impulses that for so long constituted the real nature of German spirituality.

Eduard von der Hellen's interests for some time brought me into touch with the political life of the times. Discontent with things philological drove von der Hellen into the lively political affairs of Weimar. There he seemed to find a broader perspective of life. And my friendly personal interest in him led me also-although without active participation in politics- to become interested in the movements of public life.

Much of that which has been found to be impracticable in our present-day life, or else, in a terrible metamorphosis, has given rise to absurd social forms,-much of this was to be seen at that time in its genesis, associated with all the hopes

of a working class taught by trained and forceful leaders to believe that a new time must come for men in the forms of social life. The cautious and the altogether radical elements among the workers were enforcing their views. To observe them was all the more impressive since what there appeared was like a boiling up of the lower levels of the social life. In the upper levels there was something vital which could have expressed itself only in a worthy sort of conservatism bound up with a hope for everything that is human-a hope marked by capable and profound thinking and by vigorous activity. In the atmosphere then present there sprang up a reactionary party which considered itself as indispensable, and in addition the so-called National-Liberty Party.

So to adjust himself to all this that he might gain effective leadership and bring men out of this chaos-such was the interpretation one had to place upon the feeling of Eduard von der Hellen at that time. And one had to share in the experience through which he passed in this respect. He discussed among his circle of friends every detail of a brochure he was preparing. One was forced to take as deep an interest as Eduard von der Hellen himself in the conceptions-at that time

accompanied by feelings quite unlike those of the present -of the materialistic interpretation of history, 'the class struggle, " surplus value." One could not refrain from attending the numerous gatherings at which he appeared as lecturer. Over against the theoretically formulated Marxian programme he proposed to set up another which should grow out of a good will toward social progress on the part of all friendly working men of every party. He was thinking of a sort of revival of the middle parties by the incorporation into their platforms of those impulses which would enable them to solve the social problem.

The effort proved futile. Only I am confident that I could not have participated in the public life of that period so intensely as I did had I not shared in this struggle of von der Hellen's.

Yet public life had its influence upon me from another direction also, though far less intensely. Indeed, it always seemed that a mild repugnance arose within me--which was

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not true in relation to von der Hellen-in the very proximity of anything political. There lived in Weimar at that time Dr. Heinrich Frankel, a liberal politician, an adherent of Eugen Richter and also active in politics in the same spirit. We became acquainted. A brief acquaintance which was later brought to an end by reason of a misunderstanding, but to which I often look back with pleasure; for the man was, in his way, extraordinarily lovable, had a strong political will, and was led by his good purpose and far-sighted - views to the belief that it was necessary to create an enthusiasm among men on behalf of a right way of progress in public affairs. His life became a succession of disillusionments. Unluckily, I myself had to be the occasion of one of those for him. He was working just at the time that I knew him at a brochure which he hoped to circulate in very great numbers. What concerned him was the desire to oppose the establishment of a combination between big industry and the agrarians, which was already beginning to take form in Germany and which, according to his view, would certainly bring devastating results in the train of its later development. His brochure bore the title, \*Kaiser werde hart\*(1) He thought he could dissuade the entourage of the Kaiser from what he believed to be harmful. The man accomplished not the slightest result by this effort. He saw that the party to which he belonged and for which he laboured could not bring to birth those forces which were needed to lay down a foundation for the policies thought out by him.

This led him to conceive the idea of exerting himself to revive the \*Deutsche Wochenschrift\*, which I had edited for a short time a few years before in Vienna. By means of this he wished to set up a political current which would have enabled him to move forward from the " liberalism " of that time into a more national-liberal activity. It occurred to him that I could do something along with him in this direction. That was impossible; even for the mere revival of the \*Deutsche Wochenschrift\* I could do nothing. The manner in which I informed him of this led to misunderstandings which in a short time put an end to our friendship.

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1 Kaiser, Be Stern!

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But another friendship grew out of this one. The man had a very dear wife and a dear sister-in-law, and he had introduced me into his family. This in turn brought me in touch with another family. And then something came to pass that seemed like a repetition of the remarkable relationship which destiny had brought me once in Vienna. I was intimately associated with a family there, but in such a way that the head of the family remained always unseen, and yet he came so close to me in soul and spirit that after his death I delivered the address at his funeral as if he had been my best friend. The whole spiritual being of this man stood before my mind by means of his family.

And now I entered into almost the same relationship with the head of the family into which I was brought in a roundabout way by the liberal politician. The head of this family had died a short while before; the widow's life was filled with pious thoughts about her dead husband. It came about that I left the home in Weimar in which I had lived till then, and took up my residence with the family. There was the library of the dead man. A man of interesting spirit in many ways, but living just like that one in Vienna, refusing all relationships with men; living like that one in his own " mental world "; considered by the world to be a recluse, as the other had been.

I felt this man like that one-though I had never met him in the flesh-entering into my destiny " from behind the veils of existence." In Vienna there came about a beautiful relationship between the family of the " unknown " thus known and myself; and in Weimar there came about between the second " unknown " and myself a relationship even more significant.

When I must speak in this way of the two " unknown known " I am aware that what I have to say will be called by most men " mad fantasy." For this has to do with the way in which I was able to draw near to the two men in that sphere of the world in which they were after they had passed through the portal of death.

Everyone has the inner right to exclude from the group of subjects which interest him all statements in regard to

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this sphere; but to characterize such statements as merely fantastic is something quite different. When anyone does this, then I must emphasize the fact that I have always sought in such exact branches of science as mathematics and analytical mechanics for the sources of that temper of soul which qualifies one to make assertions concerning things spiritual. When, therefore, I assert what here follows I cannot justly be accused of mere careless talk unsupported by the requisite knowledge.

The power of the spiritual vision which I then bore in my soul made it possible for me to enter into a close union with these two souls after their earthly death. They were unlike other dead persons. These immediately after their earthly death go through a life which, in essence, is in close relationship with the earthly life, and which only gradually comes to resemble the life one experiences in that purely spiritual world where one's existence continues till the next earthly life.

The two " unknown known " had been rather familiar with the thinking of this materialistic age. They had elaborated in concepts within themselves the natural-scientific way of thinking. The second, whom Weimar brought to me, was indeed well acquainted with Billroth and other natural scientific thinkers. On the other hand, during their earthly lives both had remained aloof from a spiritual conception of the world. The spiritual conception which they might have encountered at

that time would have repelled them, since they were forced to believe that " natural-scientific thinking," according to the habits of thought of the time, was demanded by the facts.

But this union with the materialism of the time remained wholly in the world of ideas of the two persons. They did not share in the habits of life which followed from the materialism of this thinking, and which were predominant in the case of all other men. They became " recluses from the world "; lived in more primitive ways than were then customary and would have been natural to men of their means. Thus they did not carry over into the spiritual world that which a union with the materialistic " will-evaluations "

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would have given to their individualities, but only that which the materialistic " thought-evaluations " had planted in these individualities. Naturally this worked itself out for the souls mostly in the unconscious. And now I could see how these materialistic thought-evaluations are not something which alienates man after death from the world of the divine and spiritual, but that this alienation comes about only through materialistic will-evaluations. Both the soul which had come close to me in Vienna and also the one which I came to know spiritually in Weimar were, after death, noble shining spiritual forms whose soul-content was filled with conceptions of those spiritual beings who are at the foundation of the world. And the only result of their acquaintance with those ideas by means of which they mastered the material in thought during their previous earthly life was that after death also they were able to develop such a relationship with the world as included a capacity for judgment. This would not have been the case if the corresponding ideas had remained unknown to them.

In these two souls there had crossed my predestined path beings through whom the significance of the natural-scientific way of thought was revealed to me directly from the spiritual world. I could see that this way of thought in itself need not lead away from a spiritual perception. In the case of these two personalities this had happened during their earthly life because they found no opportunity there to elevate the natural-scientific way of thinking into the sphere where spiritual experience begins. After death they accomplished this in the most complete fashion. I saw that one can achieve this elevation of thought if one brings inner mood and force to the task during the earthly life. I saw also, through my participation in that which is significant in the spiritual world, that humanity had of necessity to evolve to the scientific way of thinking. Earlier ways of thinking could unite humanity with the supersensible world; they could lead man, especially if he entered into self-knowledge (the foundation of all knowledge), to know himself as a copy, or even a member, of the spiritual world; but they could not bring him to the point where he could feel himself to be a self-sufficient,

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self-enclosed spiritual being. Therefore the advance had to be made to the grasp of an ideal world which is not kindled from the spirit itself, but is stimulated out of matter-which is, indeed, spiritual, but not derived from the spirit.

Such a world of ideas cannot be generated in man in that spiritual world where he has his vital relationships after death and before a new birth, but only in the earthly existence, because only there does he stand face to face with materialist forms.

I could realize, therefore, through these two human souls what man wins for the totality of his life, including his spiritual life after death, by reason of his being woven into the natural-scientific way of thinking. But in the case of others who had taken into themselves during their earthly lives the effects of the crass natural-scientific way of thinking upon the will, could see that these estranged themselves from the spiritual world; that they had, so to speak, arrived at a totality of life in which man is less man in his full humanity with the natural-scientific way of thinking than without it.

Both these souls had been recluses from the world because they did not wish to lose their humanity during the earthly life; they had accepted the natural-scientific way of thinking in its full comprehensiveness because they wished to reach that stage of the spiritual man which cannot be attained without this.

It might well have been impossible for me to attain to these perceptions in the case of these two souls if I had encountered them within the earthly existence as physical personalities. In order to perceive the two individualities in the spiritual world in which they were to reveal to me their being, and through this also many other things, I needed that sensitiveness of the soul's perception in relationship to them which is easily lost when that which has been experienced in the physical world conceals what is to be experienced spiritually, or at least interferes with this.

I was forced, therefore, to perceive that the manner in which both souls entered into my earthly life was something ordained by way of destiny along my path to knowledge. But nothing whatever of a spiritistic sort can be associated

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with this way of relating oneself to souls in the spiritual world. Nothing could ever count with me in the relationship to the spiritual world except the genuine spiritual perception which later discussed publicly in my anthroposophic writings. Moreover, the Viennese family and all its members, as well as that of Weimar, were far too sane for a communion with the dead by the help of mediums.

Wherever such things have been under discussion, I have always taken an interest also in such a seeking on the part of human souls as is manifested in spiritualism. Modern spiritualism is a way toward the spirit for such souls as would seek for the spirit in external--almost experimental--ways because they cannot any longer experience the real, the true, the genuine in a spiritual manner. It is just the sort of person who interests himself in an entirely objective manner in spiritualism, without himself having the desire to investigate something by means of it, who can see through to correct conceptions of the purpose and the errors of spiritualism. My own research moves always by a different path from that of spiritualism in any of its forms. Indeed, there were opportunities in Weimar for interesting intercourse with spiritualists; for there was an intense interest for a long time among the artists in this way of seeking to relate oneself to the spiritual. But there came to me from my intercourse with the two souls--he of Weimar was named Eunicke--an access of strength for the writing of my *\*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\**. What I aspired to do in that book was this: First, the book is the product of my way of philosophical thinking during the eighties; in the second place, it is the product also of my general concrete perception in the spiritual world; but in the third place, it was reinforced through my participation in the spiritual experiences of those two souls. In these I had before me the ascent which man owes to this natural-scientific world-conception. But I



had in them also the fear which noble souls feel of entering vitally into the will-element of this world-conception. These souls shrank back from the moral effects of such a world-conception.

Now I sought in my \*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\* for that force which leads from the ethically neutral ideal world of

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natural science into the world of moral impulse. I sought to show how the man who knows himself as a self-enclosed being of a spiritual sort because he lives in ideas which are no longer streaming out from the spirit but are stimulated by material being, can nevertheless evolve out of his own being an intuition for the moral. In this way the moral shines in the individuality now made free as individual impulsion toward the moral, just as ideas arise from the perception of nature.

The two souls had not pressed on to this moral intuition. Hence they shrank back (unconsciously) from life because this could have been maintained only in the sense of natural- scientific ideas not as yet extended further. I spoke at that time of " moral fantasy " as the source of the moral in the isolated human individuality. I was far from any intention of referring to this source as to something not wholly real. On the contrary, I wished to point out in fantasy the force which helps the spiritual world in all its aspects to break through into the individual man. Of course, if one is to attain to a real experience of the spiritual, then it is necessary that the spiritual forces of knowledge should enter into one-imagination, inspiration, intuition. But to a man conscious of himself as an individual the first ray of a spiritual revelation comes by means of fantasy; and we observe, indeed, in Goethe the way in which fantasy holds aloof from everything fantastic, and becomes a picture of the spiritually real.

In the family left behind by the Weimar " unknown known," I lived for much the greater part of the time that I remained in Weimar. I had a part of the house for myself; Frau Anna Eunicke, with whom I was soon on terms of intimate friendship, watched over all my needs in the most devoted fashion. She valued greatly the fact that I stood beside her in her heavy responsibilities for the education of the children. She had been left after Eunicke's death a widow with four daughters and a son.

The children I saw only when there was some occasion for me to do so. That happened frequently, since I was looked upon just as if I belonged to the family. My meals,

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however, except the morning coffee and supper, I took elsewhere(1).

In this place where I had formed so delightful a family connection it was not only I who felt at home. When young visitors from Berlin who had formed intimate ties with me, attending the meetings of the Goethe Society, wished for once to be quite " cozy " together, they came to me at the Eunicke home. And I have every reason to assume from the way in which they acted that they felt very much at ease there.

Otto Erich Hartleben also was happy to be there whenever he was in Weimar. The \*Goethe Breviary\* that he published was there put together by us two in the space of a few days. Of my own

larger works, \*The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\* and \*Nietzsche as the Adversary of His Age\* there took form.

And I think that numbers of Weimar friends also spent many a happy hour-or several hours-with me at the Eunicke home. In this connection I think most of all about the man to whom I was bound in intimate love and friendship-Dr. August Fresenius. He had become a permanent collaborator at the Museum. Before that he had been editor of the \*Deutsche Literaturzeit\*(2) His editorial work was universally considered as the standard of excellence. I had many things in my heart against philology, especially as the science was then pursued by the adherents of Scherer. August Fresenius armed me over and over again by the way in which he was a philologist. And he never for a moment made any secret of the fact that he wished to be a philologist, and only a true philologist. But with him philology was really the love of words, which filled the whole man with its vital force; and the word was to him that human revelation in which all the laws of the universe are mirrored. Whoever wishes to see into the mysteries of words must possess an insight into all the mysteries of existence. The philologist, therefore, must do nothing less than pursue an universal knowledge. True philological methods rightly applied can move outward from

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1 In Germany the midday meal is the principal occasion for the whole family to be together.

2 German Literary News.

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the utterly simple until they cast a powerful illumination upon extensive and important spheres of life. Fresenius showed this at that time in an example which took a strong hold upon my interest. We had discussed the matter a great deal before he published it in a brief but weighty article in the \*Goethe Year Book\*.

Until the discovery by Fresenius, everyone who had busied himself with the interpretation of Goethe's Faust had misunderstood a statement made by Goethe five days before his death to Wilhelm von Humboldt. Goethe made this statement: " Es sind Ÿber sechzig Jahre, dass die Konzeption des Faust bei mir, jugendlich von vornherein klar, die weitere Reibenfolge hingegen weniger ausfŸhrlich, vorlag.": The commentators had understood \*von vornherein\* to mean that from the beginning Goethe had had an idea, a plan, of the entire Faust drama in which he had at that time more or less elaborated the details. Even my beloved teacher and friend, Karl Julius SchrŸer, was of this opinion. Consider: If this were correct, then we should have in Goethe's Faust a work which Goethe had conceived in main outline as a young man. We should have to assume that it was possible for such a temper of soul as Goethe's so to work outward from a general idea that the work of elaboration could go on for sixty years and yet the idea remain fixed. That this is not so was proved irrefutably by Fresenius's discovery. He maintained that Goethe never used the expression \*von vornherein\* in the way ascribed to him by the commentators. He said, for example, that he had read a book " von vornherein, das weitere nicht mehr."(2) He used the expression \*von vornherein\* only in a spatial sense. It was thus shown that all Faust commentators were wrong, and that Goethe had said nothing about a plan of the Faust existing von vornherein-from the first-but only that the first parts were clear to him as a young man, and that here and there he had developed something in the latter parts.

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1 "For more than sixty years the conception of Faust has been present to my mind-the earlier parts clear in my youth, the latter parts less fully developed."

2 "As to the earlier parts but not the latter."

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Thus an important light was cast upon the whole psychology of Goethe by the correct application of the philological method. At that time I only marvelled that something which ought to have had the most far-reaching effects upon the conception of Goethe's mind really produced very little impression, after it was published in the \*Goethe Year Book\*, among those who ought to have been chiefly interested in it.

But other things than mere philology were the topics of conversations with August Fresenius. Everything that stirred the men of that time, everything interesting to us which happened in Weimar or elsewhere, became the subject of long conversations between us; for we spent much time together. At times we grew excited in conversations about many things; but they all ended in complete harmony, for we were convinced of the earnestness with which our respective views were held even though opposed. So much the more distressing must it be to me to reflect upon the fact that even my friendship with August Fresenius sustained a rupture in connection with the misunderstandings associated with my relationship to the Nietzsche Archives and to Frau Dr. Forster-Nietzsche. These friends could form no conception of that which really had happened. I could do nothing to satisfy them. For the truth is that nothing at all had happened. Everything rested upon misconceptions and illusions which had become fixed in the Nietzsche Archives. What I was able to say is contained in my article published later in the \*Magazin für Literatur\*. I felt this misunderstanding deeply, for the friendship with August Fresenius was firmly rooted in my heart.

Another friendship to which I have often looked back was that which I formed with Franz Ferdinand Heitmüller, who had just then-later than Wahle, von der Hellen, and I become a collaborator at the Institute. Heitmüller's life was that of a fine soul with the sensibilities of an artist. He made all his discriminations through his artistic sense. Intellectualism was remote from him. Through him something artistic entered into the whole tone of our conversations in the Institute. He had already published stories marked by a delicate refinement. He was by no means

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a bad philologist, and he did no worse than others in what he had to work at as a philologist for the Institute. But he always maintained a sort of inner opposition to what was worked out in the Institute-especially to the way in which this work was conceived. Through him it came about that for a long time we felt very deeply the fact that Weimar had once been the place giving birth to the most inspired and famous productions but that men now contented themselves with going back to the things once produced, "fixing the readings," and giving the best interpretations with superstitious care. Heitmüller published anonymously what he had to say about this in S. Fischer's \*Neue Deutsche Rundschau\* in the form of a story-\*Die Versunkene Vineta\*(1). How men then tried to discover who had made of the once spiritually flourishing Weimar a drowned city! Heitmüller lived in Weimar with his mother, a wonderfully lovable woman. She became a friend of Frau Anna Eunicke, and enjoyed coming to her home. And so I then had the happiness of frequently seeing the Heitmüllers also in the house in which I lived.

One friend I have to recall who came into my circle rather early during my stay in Weimar, and with whom I was associated in intimate friendship until I left, and, indeed, even after that, when I went backwards and forwards on visits to Weimar. This was the painter Joseph Rolletscheck. He was a German Bohemian, and had been attracted to Weimar by the art school. A personality he was who impressed one as altogether lovable, and to whom one gladly laid open one's heart. Rolletscheck was sentimental and slightly cynical at the same time; he was a pessimist on one side, and inclined on the other side to value life so little that it did not seem to him worth the trouble to lay so much stress upon those things which give ground for pessimism. When he was present, the talk had to deal much with the injustices of life; and he could storm endlessly over the injustice which the world had done to poor Schiller in contrast with Goethe, the chosen of destiny before his birth.

Although daily contact with such persons kept up a constant

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1 Venice Submerged.

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and stimulating exchange of thought and feeling, yet it was impossible for me to speak directly during this Weimar period about my experience of the spiritual world even to those with whom I was otherwise on terms of intimacy. I maintained that men must come to see that the true way into the spiritual world must lead first to the experience of pure ideas. The thing for which I argued in every sort of form was this: that, just as man can have in his conscious experience colour, tone, and heat qualities, so also he can experience pure ideas uninfluenced by any perception of the external, but appearing with the fulness of man's experience of himself. And in these ideas there is real and living spirit. All other experience of the spirit in man, so I then said, must spring up within consciousness as the result of this experience of ideas.

The fact that I sought for the experience of the spirit first in the experience of ideas led to the misunderstanding of which I have already spoken—that even intimate friends did not see the living reality in ideas, and considered me a rationalist, or intellectualist.

Firmer in maintaining an understanding of the living reality of the ideal world was a young man who came frequently to Weimar—Max Christlieb. It was rather early after the beginning of my stay in Weimar that I saw him, a seeker after the knowledge of the spirit. He had completed his preparation for the evangelical ministry, was just then taking his doctor's examination, and was getting ready to go to Japan to engage in some sort of missionary work, as he soon afterward did.

This man saw—inspired, I dare say—that man is living in the spirit when he lives in pure ideas, and that, since all of nature must shine forth before the understanding in the world of pure ideas, therefore in everything material we have only appearance (illusions); that all physical being is revealed by means of ideas as spirit. It was profoundly satisfying to me to find a person who possessed an almost complete understanding of spiritual being. It was an understanding of the spiritual being within the idea. There, of course, the spirit so lives that feeling and creative spiritual

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individualities do not yet separate themselves for the conscious vision from the sea of general ideal spirit-being. Of these spirit individualities I could not yet speak to Max Christlieb This would have shocked too much his beautiful idealism. But genuine spirit-being-of this one could speak with him.

He had read with thorough understanding everything that I had written up to that time. And I had the impression at the beginning of the 'nineties: " Max Christlieb has the gift of entering into the spiritual world through the spirituality of the ideal in the way that I must consider the most suitable."

The fact that he did not later wholly maintain this direction of mind, but took a somewhat different course-of this there is now no occasion to speak.

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THROUGH the liberal politician of whom I have spoken I became acquainted with the owner of a book-shop. This book business had seen better days than those it was passing through during my stay in Weimar. This was still true when the shop belonged to the father of the young man whom I came to know as the owner. The important thing for me was the fact that this book-shop published a paper which carried sketchy articles dealing with contemporary spiritual life and whatever was then appearing in the fields of poetry, science, and art. This paper also was in a decline; its circulation had fallen off. But it afforded me the opportunity to write about much which then lay within the scope of my thinking or had a relation to this. Although the numerous essays and book reviews which I thus wrote were read by very few, it was an important thing to me to have a paper in which I could publish whatever I pleased to write. There was a stimulus in this which bore fruit later, when I edited the \*Magazin fŸr Literatur\* and was therefore compelled to share intensely in thought and feeling in contemporary spiritual life.

In this way Weimar became for me the place to which my thoughts had often to turn back in later years. The narrow limits within which my life had been restricted in Vienna were now expanded, and I had spiritual and human experiences the results of which appeared later on.

Most important of all, however, were the relationships with men which were then formed. When in later years I have recalled to memory Weimar and my life there, my mental gaze has often been directed to a house which had become dear to me in very special measure.

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I became acquainted with the actor Neuffer while he was still engaged at the Weimar theatre. I appreciated in him at first his earnest and austere conception of his profession. Into his judgment concerning the art of the stage he allowed nothing of the dilettante to enter. This was satisfying for the reason that people are not always aware that dramatic art must fulfil genuinely artistic requirements in the same way as does, for instance, music.

Neuffer married the sister of the pianist and composer Bernhard Stavenhagen. I was introduced into his home. One was in this way received at the same time in friendly fashion in the home of the parents of Frau Neuffer and Bernhard Stavenhagen. Frau Neuffer is a woman who radiates a spiritual atmosphere over everything about her. Her sentiments, deeply rooted in the soul, shone

with wonderful beauty in the free and informal talk in which one shared while in her home. She brought forward whatever she had to say thoughtfully and yet graciously. Every moment that I spent with the Neuffers I had the feeling: " Frau Neuffer strives to reach truth in all the relationships of life in a way that is very rare." That I was welcomed there was evidenced in the most varied incidents. I will choose one example. One Christmas Eve Herr Neuffer came to my home, and--as I was not in--left the request that I must without fail come to his home for the ceremony of Christmas gifts. This was not easy, for in Weimar I always had to share in several such festivities. But I managed somehow to do this. Then I found, beside the gifts for the children, a special Christmas gift for me all nicely wrapped up, the value of which can be seen only from its history.

I had been one day in the studio of a sculptor. The sculptor wanted to show me his work. Very little that I saw there interested me. Only a single bust which lay out of sight in a corner attracted my attention. It was a bust of Hegel. In the studio, which belonged to the home of an old lady very prominent in Weimar, there was to be seen every possible sort of sculpture. Sculptors always rented the room for only a short time; and each tenant would leave there many things which he did not care to take with him.

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But there were also some things which had lain there for a long time unobserved, such as the Hegel bust.

The interest I had conceived in this bust led from that time on to my mentioning it here or there. So this happened once also in the Neuffer home; there also I added a casual remark to the effect that I should like to have the bust in my possession.

Then on the following Christmas Eve it was given to me as a present at Neuffer's. At lunch on the following day, to which I was invited, Neuffer told how he had procured the bust. He first went to the lady to whom the studio belonged. He told her that some one had seen the bust in her studio, and that it would have a special value for him if he could procure it. The lady said that such things had been in her house for a long time past, but whether a " Hegel " bust was there--as to that she knew nothing. She appeared quite willing, however, to guide Neuffer around in order that he might look for it. Everything was " thoroughly searched "; not the most hidden corner was left uninspected; nowhere was the Hegel bust discovered. Neuffer was quite sad, for there had been something very satisfying to him in the thought of giving me pleasure by means of the Hegel bust. He was already standing at the door with the lady. The maid-servant came along. She heard the words of Neuffer's: " Yes, it is a pity that we have not found the Hegel bust ! " " Hegel ! " interjected the maid: " Is this perhaps that head with the tip of the nose broken off which is under my bed in the servant's room ? " Forthwith the final act of the expedition was carried out, and Neuffer actually succeeded in procuring the bust; before Christmas there was still time to supplement the defective nose.

So it was that I came by the Hegel bust which is one of the few things that later accompanied me to many different places. I always liked to look again and again at this head of Hegel (by Wassmann, the year 1826) when I was deeply immersed in the world of Hegel's ideas. And this, as a matter of fact, happened very often. This countenance, whose features are the most human expression of the purest thought, constitutes a life-companion wielding a manifold influence.

So it was with the Neuffers. They spared no pains when they wished to give someone pleasure by means of something that had a special relation to him. The children that came one by one into the Neuffer home had a model mother. Frau Neuffer brought them up less by what she did than by what she is--by her whole being. I had the happiness of being godfather to one of the sons. Every visit to this house was the occasion of an inner satisfaction. I was privileged to make such visits also in later years after I had left Weimar but returned to and fro to deliver lectures. Unfortunately this has not been possible now for a long while. It thus happens that I have not been able to see the Neuffers during the years in which a painful fate has broken in upon them; for this family is one of those most sorely put to the test by the World War.

A charming personality was the father of Frau Neuffer, the elder Stavenhagen. Before this time he had been engaged in a practical occupation, but he had then settled down to rest. He now lived wholly in the contents of the library he had acquired for himself; and it was a thoroughly congenial picture to others--the way in which he lived there. Nothing self-satisfied or toplofty had entered into the lovable old man, but rather something that revealed in every word the sincere craving for knowledge.

The relationships in Weimar were then of such a character that souls which felt elsewhere unsatisfied would turn up here. So it was with those who made a permanent home there, but so also with those who loved to come again and again as visitors. One had this feeling about many persons: "Visits to Weimar are different for them from visits to other places." I had this feeling in a very special way about the Danish poet, Rudolf Schmidt. He came first for the production of his play, \*Der verwandelte König\*(1). During this very first visit I made his acquaintance. Later, however, he appeared on many occasions which brought visitors from elsewhere to Weimar. The fine figure of a man with those wavy locks was often among these visitors. The way in which a man "is" in Weimar had in it something that drew his soul. He

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1 The King Transformed.

was a very sharply marked personality. In philosophy he was an adherent of Rasmers Nielson. Through this man, who derived his thought from Hegel, Rudolf Schmidt had the most beautiful understanding of the German idealistic philosophy.

And if Schmidt's opinions were thus clearly stamped on the positive side, they were no less so on the negative. Thus he became biting, satirical, utterly adverse when he spoke of Georg Brandes. There was something artistic in seeing a person revealing an entire expansive field of experience poured out before you in his antipathy. Upon me these revelations could never make any impression except an artistic one; for I had read much from Georg Brandes. I had been especially interested in what he had written, in a manner rich in spiritual wealth and out of a wide range of observations and knowledge, about the spiritual currents of the European peoples. But what Rudolf Schmidt brought forward was subjectively honest, and because of the character of the poet himself it was really captivating.

At length I came to feel the deepest and most heartfelt love for Rudolf Schmidt; I rejoiced on the days when he came to Weimar. It was interesting to hear him talk about his northern homeland, and to perceive what significant capacities had sprung up in him from the fountain-head of his northern experiences. It was no less interesting to talk with him about Goethe, Schiller, Byron. Then he spoke very differently from Georg Brandes. The latter is always in his judgments the international personality, but in Rudolf Schmidt there spoke the Dane. For this very reason he talked about many things and in many connections in a more interesting way than Georg Brandes.

During the latter part of my stay in Weimar, I became an intimate friend of Conrad Ansorge and his brother-in-law, von Crompton. Conrad Ansorge later developed in a brilliant way his great artistic powers. Here I need speak only of what he was to me in a beautiful friendship at the close of the 'nineties, and how he then impressed me. The wives of Ansorge and von Crompton were sisters. Because of this relationship, our gatherings took place either at von Crompton's home or at the hotel Russischer Hof.

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Ansorge was an energetically artistic man. He was active both as pianist and as composer. During the time of our Weimar acquaintance he set to music poems of Nietzsche and of Dehmel. It was always a delightful occasion when the friends who were gradually drawn into the Ansorge-Crompton circle were permitted to hear a new composition. To this group belonged also a Weimar editor, Paul Bohler. He edited the \*Deutschland\*, which had a more independent existence side by side with the official journal, the Weimarische Zeitung. Many other Weimar friends besides these appeared in this circle: Fresenius, Hartmüller, Fritz Koegel, too, and others. When Otto Erich Hartleben came to Weimar, he also always appeared in this circle, after it had been formed. Conrad Ansorge had grown out of the Liszt circle. Indeed, I speak nothing but the truth when I assert that he considered himself one of the pupils of the master who understood him in an artistic sense most truly of all. But it was through Conrad Ansorge that what had come in living form from Liszt was brought before one's mind in the most beautiful way.

For everything musical which came from Ansorge arose out of an entirely original, individual human being. This humanity in him might be inspired by Liszt, but what was delightful in it was its originality. I express these things just as I then experienced them; how I was afterward related to them or am now related is not here under discussion.

Through Liszt, Ansorge had once at an earlier period been bound to Weimar; at the time of which I am here speaking, his soul was freed from this state of belonging to Weimar. Indeed, the characteristic of this Ansorge-Crompton circle was that it was in a very different relationship to Weimar from that of the great majority of persons of whom I have hitherto been able to state that they came into close touch with me.

Those persons were at Weimar in the way I have described in the preceding chapter. The interests of this circle reached outward from Weimar, and so it came about that at the time when my Weimar work was ended and I had to think about leaving the city of Goethe, I had formed the friendship of

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persons for whom the life in Weimar was not especially characteristic. In a certain sense one "lived oneself" out of Weimar while among these friends. Ansorge, who felt that Weimar put fetters upon his artistic development, moved at nearly the same time as I did to Berlin.

Paul Bohler, although editor of the most widely read paper in Weimar, did not write in the contemporary "spirit of Weimar," but expressed many a sharp criticism, drawn from a broader range of view, against that spirit. It was he who always raised his voice when dealing with this theme to place in the true light what was born of opportunism and littleness of soul. And in this way it happened that, just at the time when he was a member of this circle, he lost his place.

Von Crompton was the most lovable personality one could imagine. In his house the circle passed the most delightful hours. Frau von Crompton was there the central figure, a richly spiritual and gracious personality like sunlight to those who were privileged to be about her.

The whole group stood, so to speak, in the sign of Nietzsche. They looked upon Nietzsche's view as possessing greater interest than all others; they surrendered themselves to that mood of soul which manifested itself in Nietzsche, considering it as representing in a certain way the flowering of a genuine and free humanity. In both these aspects von Crompton especially was a representative of the Nietzsche followers in the 'nineties. My own attitude toward Nietzsche did not change at all within this circle. But the fact that I was the one who was questioned when any one wished to know something about Nietzsche brought it about that the relation in which the others stood to Nietzsche was assumed to be my own relation also.

But I must say that this circle looked up in a more understanding fashion to that which Nietzsche believed that he knew, and that they sought to express in their lives what lay in the Nietzsche ideals of life with greater understanding than was present in many other cases where \*Superman\* and \*Beyond Good and Evil\* did not always bring forth the most satisfying blossoms. For me the circle was important because of a strong and

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vital energy that bore one along with it. On the other hand, however, I found there the most responsive understanding for everything which I thought it possible to introduce into this circle.

The evenings, made brilliant by Ansorge's musical compositions, its hours filled with interesting talk about Nietzsche in which all shared, when far-reaching and weighty questions concerning the world and life formed, so to speak, a satisfying converse, -these evenings were, indeed, something to which I can look back with contentment as having given a beautiful character to the last part of my stay at Weimar. Since everything which had a living expression in this circle was derived from a direct and serious artistic experience and sought to permeate itself with a world-conception which held to the true human being as its central point, one could not cherish any sense of dissatisfaction if there was manifested something opposed to the Weimar of that time. The tone was different from that which I had experienced previously in the Olden circle. There much irony found expression; one looked upon Weimar also as "human, all too human" as one would have seen other places if one had been in these. In the Ansorge-Crompton circle there was present rather- I mean to say-the earnest feeling: "How can the evolution of German culture progress further if a place like Weimar does so little to fulfil its foreordained tasks?" Against the background of this social intercourse my book \*Goethe's World-Conception\* came into being, with which I ended my work at Weimar. Some time ago, when I was preparing a new edition of this book, I sensed in the way in which I

then shaped my thoughts for the volume an echo of the inner nature of the friendly gatherings of the circle I have here described.

In this book there is somewhat more of the personal than would have been the case had there not re-vibrated in my mind while I was writing it what had over and over resounded in this circle with strong and avowed enthusiasm about the "nature of Personality." It is the only one of my books of which I would say just this. All of them I can assert to have been personally experienced in the truest sense of the

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word; not, however, in this way, when one's own personality so strongly enters into the experiences of the personalities about one. But this concerns only the general bearing of the book.

The philosophy of Goethe, as revealed in relation to the realm of nature, is there set forth as this had already been done in my Goethe writings of the 'eighties. Only in regard to details my views had been broadened, deepened, or confirmed by manuscripts first discovered among the Goethe archives. In everything which I have published in connection with Goethe the thing that I have striven to do has been to set Goethe's " world-conception " before the world in its content and its tendency. From this was to appear, as a result, how that in Goethe which is comprehensive and spiritually penetrating into the thing leads to detailed discoveries in the most varied fields of nature. I was not concerned to point out these single discoveries as such, but to show that they were the flowers of the plant of a spiritual view of nature.

To characterize this view of nature as a part of what Goethe gave to the world-such was my purpose in writing descriptions of this portion of Goethe's work as a thinker and researcher. But I aimed at the same objective in arranging Goethe's papers in the two editions in which I collaborated, that in \*Kÿrschner's Deutsche National-Literatur\* and, also the Weimar Sophie edition. I never considered it a task which could fall to my lot because of the entire work of Goethe to bring to light what Goethe had achieved as botanist, zoologist, geologist, colour-theorist, in the manner in which one passes judgment upon such an achievement before the forum of competent scientists. Moreover, it seemed to me inappropriate to do anything in this direction while arranging the papers for the two editions. So that part also of the writings of Goethe which I edited for the Weimar edition became nothing more than a document for the world-conception of Goethe as revealed in his researches in nature. How this world-conception cast its special light upon things botanical, geological, etc., this must be brought to the fore. It has been felt, for instance, that I ought to have arranged the geological-mineralogical writings differently in

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order that " Goethe's relationship to geology " might be seen from the contents of these. But it is only necessary to read what I said about the arrangement of the writings of Goethe in this field in the introductions to my publications in \*Kÿrschner's Deutsche National-Literatur\*, and there could be no doubt that I would never have agreed to the point of view urged by my critics. In Weimar this could have been known when the editing was entrusted to me. For in the Kÿrschner edition everything had already appeared which had become fixed in my point of view before the idea had ever arisen of entrusting to me a task in Weimar. The task was entrusted to me with full knowledge of this circumstance. I will by no means deny that what I have done in many single details in

working up the Weimar edition may be pointed out as " errors " by specialists. This may be rightly maintained. But the thing ought not to be so presented as if the nature of the edition rested upon my competence or lack of competence, and not upon my fundamental postulates. Especially should this not be done by those who admit that they possess no organ for perceiving what I have maintained in regard to Goethe. When the question concerns individual errors of fact here and there, I might point out to those who criticize me in this respect many much worse errors in the papers I wrote as a student in the Higher Technical Institute. I have made it very clear in this account of the course of my life that, even in childhood, I lived in the spiritual world as in that which was self-evident to me, but that I had to strive earnestly for everything which pertained to a knowledge of the outer world. For this reason I am a man slow in development as to all the aspects of the physical world. The results of this fact appear in details of my Goethe editions.

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AT the end of the Weimar period of my life I had passed my thirty-sixth year. One year previously a profound revolution had already begun in my mind. With my departure from Weimar this became a decisive experience. It was quite independent of the change in the external relationships of my life, even though this also was very great. The realization of that which can be experienced in the spiritual world had always been to me something self-evident; to grasp the sense world in full awareness had always caused me the greatest difficulty. It was as if I had not been able to pour the soul's experience deeply enough into the sense-organs to bring the soul into union with the full content of what was experienced by the senses.

This changed entirely from the beginning of my thirty sixth year. My capacities for observing things and events in the physical world took form both in the direction of adequacy and of depth of penetration. This was true both in the matter of science and also of the external life. Whereas before this time the conditions had been such that large scientific combinations which must be grasped in a spiritual fashion were appropriated by me without mental effort, and that sense-perceptions, and especially the holding of such facts in memory, required the greatest effort on my part, everything now became quite different. An attentiveness not previously present to that which appeals to sense-perception now awakened in me. Details became important; I had the feeling that the sense-world had something to reveal which it alone could reveal. I came to think one's ideal should be to learn to know this world solely through that which it has to say, without man's interjecting himself into this by means of his thought, or by some other soul-content arising within him.

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I became aware that I was experiencing a human revolution at a far later period of life than other persons. But I saw also that this fact carried very special consequences for the soul's life. I learned that, because men pass early out of the soul's weaving in the spiritual world to an experience of the physical, they attain to no pure conception of either the spiritual or the physical world. They mingle permanently in a wholly instinctive way that which things say to their senses with that which the mind experiences through the spirit and which it then uses in combination in order to " conceive " things. For me the enhancement and deepening of the powers of sense-observation meant that I was given an entirely new world. The placing of oneself objectively, quite free from everything subjective in the mind, over against the sense-world revealed something concerning which a spiritual perception had nothing to say.

But this also cast its light back upon the world of spirit. For, while the sense-world revealed its being through the very act of sense-perception, there was thus present to knowledge the opposite pole also, to enable one to appreciate the spiritual in the fulness of its own character unmingled with the physical.

Especially was this decisive in its vital effect upon the soul in that it bore also upon the sphere of human life. The task for my observation took this form: to take in quite objectively and purely by way of perception that which lives in a human being. I took pains to refrain from applying any criticism to what men did, not to give way to either sympathy or antipathy in my relation to them; I desired simply to allow " man as he is to work upon me."

I soon learned that such an observation of the world leads truly into the world of spirit. In observing the physical world one goes quite outside oneself; and just by reason of this one comes again, with an intensified capacity for spiritual observation, into the spiritual world. Thus the spiritual world and the sense-world had come before my mind in all their opposition. But I felt opposition to be not something which must be brought into harmony by means of some sort of philosophical thought-

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perhaps to a " monism." Rather I felt that to stand thus with one's soul wholly within this opposition meant " to have an understanding for life." Where the opposition seems to have been reduced to harmony, there the lifeless holds sway- the dead. Where there is life, there works the unharmonized opposition; and life itself is the continuous overcoming, but also the recreating, of oppositions.

From all this there penetrated into my life of feeling a most intense absorption, not in theoretical comprehension by means of thought, but in an experiencing of whatever the world contains which is in the nature of a riddle.

Over and over again, in order that I might through meditation attain to a right relationship to the world, I held these things before my mind: " There is the world full of riddles. Knowledge would draw near to these. But for the most part it seeks to produce a thought-content as the solution of a riddle. But the riddles " -so I had to say to myself- " are not solved by means of thoughts. These bring the soul along the path toward the solutions, but they do not contain the solutions. In the real world arises a riddle; it is there as a phenomenon; its solution arises also in reality. Something appears which is being or event, and this represents the solution of the other."

So I said also to myself: " The whole world except man is a riddle, the real world-riddle; and \*man himself\* is its solution!."

In this way I arrived at the thought: " Man is able at every moment to say something about the world-riddle. What he says, however, can always give only so much of content toward the solution as he has understood of himself as man." Thus knowledge also becomes an event in reality. Questions come to light in the world; answers come to light as realities; knowledge in man is his participation in that which the beings and events in the spiritual and physical world have to say. All this, to be sure, is contained both in its general significance and in certain passages quite distinctly in the writings I published during the period I am here describing. Only it became at this time the most intense mental experience, filling the hours in which understanding

sought through meditation to look into the foundations of the world, and-which is the fact of chief importance-this mental experience in its strength came at that time out of my objective absorption in pure, undisturbed sense-observation. In this observation a new world was given to me; from what had until this time been present to knowledge in my mind, I had to seek for that which was the counterpart in mental experience in order to strike a balance with the new. The moment I did not \*think\* the whole reality of the sense-world, but contemplated this world through the senses, there was brought before me a riddle as a reality; and in man himself lies its solution.

In my whole mental being there was a living inspiration for that which I later called " knowledge by way of reality." And especially was it clear to me that man possessed of such a " knowledge by way of reality " could not stand in some corner of the world while being and becoming should be taking their course outside of him. Understanding became to me something that belongs, not to man alone, but to the being and becoming of the world. Just as the roots and trunk of a tree are not complete if they do not send their life into the flower, so are the being and becoming of the world nothing truly existing if they do not live again as the content of understanding. Having reached this insight, I said to myself on every occasion at which this came up: " Man is not a being who creates for himself the content of understanding, but he provides in his soul the stage on which for the first time the world partly experiences its existence and its becoming." Were it not for understanding, the world would remain incomplete. In thus knowingly living in the reality of the world I found more and more the possibility of creating a defence for human knowledge against the view that in this knowledge man is making a copy, or some such thing, of the world.

For my idea of knowledge he actually partakes in the creation of the world instead of merely making afterwards a copy which could be omitted from the world without thereby leaving the world incomplete.

But this led also to an ever increasing clarity of understanding

with reference to the " mystical." The participation of human experience in the world-event was removed from the sphere of indeterminate mystical feeling and transferred to the light in which ideas reveal themselves. The sense-world, seen purely in its own nature, is at first void of idea, as the root and trunk of the tree are void of blossoms. But just as the blossom is not a disappearance and eclipse of the plant's existence, but a transformation of that very existence, so the ideal world in man as related to the sense-world is a transformation of the sense-existence, and not a darkly mystical interjection of something indefinite from the human soul world. Clear as things physical become in their way in the light of the sun, so spiritually clear must that appear which lives in the human soul as knowledge.

What was then present in me in this orientation was an altogether clear experience of the soul. Yet in passing on to find a form of expression for this experience the difficulties were extraordinary.

It was at the close of my Weimar period that I wrote my book \*Goethe's World-Conception\*, and the introduction to the last volume that I edited for \*Kurschner's Deutsche National Literatur\*. I am thinking especially of what I then wrote as an introduction to my edition of Goethe's \*Sprŷchen in Prosa\*(1), and compare this with the formulation of contents in the book \*Goethe's World-

Conception\*. If the matter is considered only superficially, this or that contradiction can be made out between the one and the other of these expositions, which I wrote at almost the same time. But, if one looks to what is vital beneath the surface--to that which, in the mere shaping and formulating of the surface, would reveal itself as perception of the depths of life, of the soul, of the spirit--then one will find no contradictions, but, indeed, in my writings of that period, a striving after means of expression. A striving to bring into philosophical concepts just that which I have here described as experience of knowledge, of the relation of man to the world, of the riddle-becoming and riddle-solving within the truly real.

When I wrote, about three and a half years later, my book

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1 Aphorisms in Prose.

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\*Welt und Lebensanschauungen im neunzehnten Jahrhundert\*(1) I had made still further progress in many things; and I could draw upon my experience in knowledge here set forth in describing the individual world-conceptions as they have appeared in the course of history. Whoever rejects writings because the life of the mind knowingly strives within these--that is, because, in the light of the exposition here given, the world-life in its striving unfolds itself still further on the stage of the human mind--such a person cannot, according to my view, submerge himself with knowing mind into the truly real. This is something which at that time became confirmed within me as perception, although it had long before been vitally present in my conceptual world. In connection with the revolution in my mental life stand inner experiences of grave import for me. I came to know in my mental experience the nature of meditation and its importance for insight into the spiritual world. Even before this time I had lived a life of meditation; but the impulse to this had come from a knowledge through ideas as to its value for a spiritual world-conception. Now, however, there arose within me something which demanded meditation as a necessity of existence for my mental life. The striving life of the mind needed meditation just as an organism at a certain stage in its evolution needs to breathe by means of lungs.

How the ordinary conceptual knowledge, which is attained through sense-observation, is related to perception of the spiritual, became for me, at this period of my life, not only an experience through ideas as it had been, but one in which the whole man participated. The experience through ideas--which, however, takes up within itself the real spiritual--has given birth to my book \*The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\*. Experience by means of the whole man attains to the spiritual world in its very being far more than does experience through ideas. And yet this latter is a higher stage as compared with the conceptual grasp upon the sense-world.

In the experience through ideas one grasps, not the

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1 \*Conception: of the World and of Life in the Nineteenth Century\*.

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sense-world, but a spiritual world which to a certain extent rests immediately upon this.

While all this was seeking for experience and expression in my soul, three sorts of knowledge were inwardly present before me. The first sort is the conceptual knowledge attained in sense-observation. This is acquired by the soul, and then sustained within in proportion to the powers of thought there existent. Repetitions of the acquired content have no other significance than that this may be well sustained. The second sort of knowledge is that which is not woven of concepts taken from sense-observation but experienced inwardly, independently of the senses. Then experience, by reason of its very nature, becomes the guarantor of the fact that these concepts are grounded in reality. To this realization that concepts contain the guarantee of spiritual reality one attains with certitude by reason of the nature of experience, just as one experiences in connection with knowledge through the senses a certainty that one is not in the presence of illusions but of reality.

In the case of this ideal-spiritual knowledge one is not content-as in the case of the sense-knowledge-with the acquisition of the knowledge, with the result that one then possesses this in one's thought. One must make this process of acquisition a continuous process. Just as it is not sufficient for an organism to have breathed for a certain length of time in order then to metamorphose what has been acquired through breathing into further life processes, so also an acquiring like that of sense-knowledge does not suffice for the ideal-spiritual knowledge. For this it is necessary that the mind should remain in a continuous interchange with that world into which one has entered through knowledge. This takes place by means of meditation, which-as above indicated-arises out of one's ideal insight into the value of meditating. This interchange I had sought long before this revolution in my thirty-fifth year.

What now came about was meditation as a necessity for the mental life; and with this there stood before my mind the third form of knowledge. This not only led to greater depths of the spiritual world, but also permitted an intimate

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living communion with this world. By force of an inner necessity I was compelled to set up again and again at the very central point of my consciousness an absolutely definite sort of conception.

It was this: If in my mind I live in conceptions which rest upon the sense-world, then, in my direct experience, I am in position to speak of the reality of what is experienced only so long as I confront with sense-observation a thing or an event. My sense assures me of the reality of what is observed so long as I observe it.

Not so when I unite myself through ideal-spiritual knowledge with beings or events of the spiritual world. Here there enters into the single perception the direct experience of the status of the thing of which I am aware continuing beyond the duration of observation. For instance, if one experiences the human ego as the inner being most fundamentally one's own, then one knows in the perceiving experience that this ego was before the life in the physical body and will be after this. What one experiences thus in the ego reveals this directly, just as the rose reveals its redness in the act of our becoming aware.

In such meditation, practised because of inner spiritual necessity, there was gradually evolved the consciousness of an " inner spiritual man " who, through a more complete release from the physical organism, can live, perceive, and move in the spiritual. This self-sufficing spiritual man entered into my experience under the influence of meditation. The experience of the spiritual thereby

underwent an essential deepening. That sense-observation arises by means of the organism can be sufficiently proven by the sort of self observation possible in the case of this knowledge. But neither is the ideal-spiritual knowledge yet independent of the organism. Self-comprehension shows the following as to this: For sense-observation the single act of knowing is bound up with the organism. For the ideal-spiritual knowing the single act is entirely independent of the physical organism; but the possibility that such knowledge may be unfolded at all by man requires that in general the life within the organism shall be existent. In the case of the third form of knowing

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the situation is this: it can come into being in the spiritual man only when he can make himself as free from the physical organism as if this were not there at all.

A consciousness of all this evolved under the influence of the life of meditation. I was able truly to refute for myself the opinion that in such meditation one becomes subject to a form of auto-suggestion whose product is the resulting spiritual experience. For the very first ideal-spiritual knowledge had been enough to convince me of the reality of spiritual experience: not only the experience sustained in its life by meditation, but indeed the very first of all, that whose life thus merely began. As one establishes absolutely exact truth in a discriminating consciousness, so I had already done for what is here brought forward before there could have been any question of auto-suggestion. Therefore, in the case of what was attained by meditation, the question could have to do only with something whose reality I was in a position to test prior to the experience.

All this, bound up with my mental revolution, appeared in connection with the result of a practicable self-observation which, like that described, came to have a momentous significance for me.

I felt that the ideal element in the ongoing life retired in a certain aspect, and the element of will took its place. If this is to be possible, the will during the unfolding of knowledge must succeed in ridding itself of everything arbitrary and subjective. The will increased as the ideal diminished. And the will also took over the spiritual knowledge which hitherto had been controlled almost wholly by the ideal. I had, indeed, already known that the separation of the soul's life into thinking, feeling, and willing has only limited significance. In truth there is a feeling and a willing contained in thinking; only thinking predominates over the others. In feeling there lives thinking and willing; in willing, likewise, thinking and feeling. Now it became to me a matter of experience that the willing took more from thinking; thinking more from willing.

As meditation leads on the one side to a knowledge of the spiritual, on another side there follows as a result of such

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self-observation the inner strengthening of the spiritual man, independent of the organism, and the establishment of his being in the spiritual world, just as the physical man has his establishment in the physical world. Only one becomes aware that the establishment of the spiritual man in the spiritual world increases immeasurably when the physical organism does not cramp this process of establishment; whereas the establishment of the physical organism in the physical world yields to destruction-at death-when the spiritual man no longer sustains this establishment from itself



outward. For such an experiential knowledge, that form of theory of cognition is inapplicable which represents human knowledge as limited to a certain field, and considers the "beyond" the "primal bases," the "thing in itself" as unattainable by human knowledge. That "unattainable" I felt to be such only "for the present"; it can continue unattainable only until man has evolved within himself that element of his being which is allied to the hitherto unknown, and can henceforth grow into one with this in experiential knowledge. This capacity of man to grow into every form of being became for me something that must be recognized by the person who desires to see the place of man in relation to the world in its true light. Whoever cannot penetrate to this recognition, to him knowledge cannot give something which really belongs to the world, but only a copy of some part of the world-content, something to which the world itself is indifferent. But through such a merely reproducing knowledge man cannot grasp a being within himself, which gives to him as a fully conscious individuality an inner experience of the truth that he stands fast within the cosmos.

What I wished to do was to speak of knowledge in such a way that the spiritual should be not merely recognized, but so recognized that man may reach it with his perception. And it seemed to me more important to hold fast to the fact that the "primal basis" of existence lies within that which man is able to reach in his totality of experience than to recognize in thought an unknown spiritual in some sort of "beyond" region.

For this reason my view rejected that form of thinking which

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considers the content of sense-experience (colour, heat, tone, etc.) to be something which an unknown external world calls up within man by means of his sense-perception while this external world itself can be conceived only hypothetically. The theoretical ideas which lie at the foundation of the thinking in physics and physiology in this direction seemed to my experiential knowledge as being in very special degree harmful. This feeling increased to the utmost intensity at the period of my life which I am here describing. All that was designated in physics and physiology as "lying behind subjective experience" caused me-if I may use such an expression-discomfort in knowledge.

On the other hand I saw in the form of thinking of Lyell, Darwin, Haeckel something which, although incomplete as it issued from them, was nevertheless suitable to a sound mind according to the order of evolution.

Lyell's basic principle-to explain by means of ideas which result from present observation of the earth's nature those phenomena which escape from sense-observation because they belong to past ages-this seemed to me fruitful in the direction indicated. To seek for an understanding of the physical structure of man by tracing his form from the animal forms, as Haeckel does in comprehensive fashion in his *\*Anthropogenie\**(1) appeared to me a good foundation for the further evolution of knowledge.

I said to myself: "If man places before himself a boundary of knowledge beyond which is supposed to lie 'the thing in itself,' he thus bars himself from any access to the spiritual world; if he relates himself to the sense-world in such a way that one thing explains another within that world (the present stage in the earth's becoming thus explaining past geological ages; animal forms explaining that of man), he may thus prepare himself to extend this intelligibility of beings and events also to the spiritual."

As to my experience in this field also I can say: " This is something which was just at that time confirmed in me as perception, whereas it had long before been vitally present in my conceptual world."

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1 The Evolution of Man.

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WITH the mental revolution thus described must I bring to a close the second main division of my life. The paths of destiny now took a different bearing from what had preceded , During both my Vienna and also my Weimar period, the outward indications of destiny manifested themselves in such directions as fell in line with the content of my inner mental strivings. In all my writings there is vitally present the basic character of my spiritual world-conception, even though an inner necessity required that my reflections should be less extended into spiritual spheres. In my work as a teacher in Vienna the goals set up were solely those which resulted from the insights of my own mind. At Weimar, as regards my work in connection with Goethe, there was active only what I considered to be the responsibility attaching to such a piece of work. I never had to overcome difficulties in order to bring the tendencies coming from the outer world into harmony with my own.

It was just from this course of my life that I was able to perceive the idea of freedom in a form shining clearly within me, and thus to set it forth. I do not think that the great significance which this idea had for my own life has caused me to view it in a one-sided way. The idea corresponds with an objective reality, and what one actually experiences of such a thing cannot alter this reality through a conscientious striving for knowledge, but can only enable one to see into it in greater or lesser degree.

With this view of the idea of freedom there was united the " ethical individualism " of my philosophy, which has been misunderstood by so many persons. This also at the beginning of the third division of my life was changed from an element

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in my conceptual world living within the mind to something which had now laid hold upon the entire man.

Both in physics and in physiology the world-conception of that period, to whose forms of thinking I was opposed, as also the world-conception of biology, which, in spite of its incompleteness, I could look upon as a bridge leading to a spiritual conception, required of me that I should continually improve the formulation of my own conceptions in all these aspects of the world. I must answer for myself the question: Can impulses for action reveal themselves to man from the external world ? What I found was this: The divine spiritual forces, which are the inner soul of man's will, have no way of access from the outer world to the inner man. A right way of thinking both in physics and physiology, as well as biology, seemed to me to arrive at this result. A way in nature which gives access from without to the will cannot be discovered. Therefore no divine spiritual moral impulse can by such a road from without penetrate to that place in the soul where the impulse of man's own

will, acting in man, comes into existence. External natural forces, moreover, can stimulate only that in man which pertains to nature. In that case, however, there is no real expression of a free will, but the continuation of the natural event in man and through him. Man has then not yet laid hold upon his entire being, but remains as to the natural element of his external aspect an unfree agent.

The problem can by no means be-so I said to myself again and again-to answer this question: Is man's will free or not?-but to answer this quite different one: How is the way to be attained in the life of the mind which leads from the unfree natural will to that which is free-that is, which is truly moral? And if we are to find an answer to this question we must observe how the divine-spiritual lives in each individual human soul. It is from the soul that the moral proceeds; in its entirely individual being, therefore, must the moral impulse have its existence.

Moral laws-as commands-which come from an external environment within which man finds himself, even though these laws had their primal origin in the spiritual world, do

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not become moral impulses within man by reason of the fact that he directs his will in accordance with them, but only by reason of the fact that he himself, purely as an individual, experiences the spiritual and essential nature of their thought content. Freedom has its life in human thought; and it is not the will which is of itself free, but the thinking which empowers the will.

So, therefore, in my \*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\* I had found it necessary to lay all possible emphasis upon the freedom of thought in discussing the moral nature of the will. This idea also was confirmed in very special degree through the life of meditation. The moral world-order stood out before me in ever clearer light as the one clearly marked realization on earth of such ordered systems in action as are to be found in the spiritual regions ranged above. It showed itself as that which only he lays hold upon in his conceptual world who is able to recognize the spiritual.

During just that epoch of my life which I am here describing, all these insights were linked up for me with the lofty comprehensive truth that the beings and events of the world will not in truth be explained if man employs his thinking to "explain" them; but only if man by means of his thinking is able to contemplate the events in that connection in which one explains another, in which one becomes the riddle and another its solution, and man himself becomes the word for the external world which he perceives. Herein, however, was experienced the truth of the conception that in the world and its working that which holds sway is the Logos, Wisdom, the Word.

I believed that I was enabled by these conceptions to see clearly into the nature of materialism. I perceived the harmful character of this way of thinking, not in the fact that the materialist directs his attention to the manifestation of a being in the form of matter, but in the way in which he conceives the material. He contemplates matter without becoming aware that in reality he is in the presence of spirit, which is simply manifesting itself in material form. He does not know that spirit metamorphoses itself into matter in order to attain to ways of working which are possible only

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in this metamorphosis. Spirit must first take on the form of a material brain in order to lead in this form the life of the conceptual world, which can bestow upon man in his earthly life a freely acting

self-consciousness. To be sure, in the brain spirit mounts upward out of matter; but only after the material brain has arisen out of spirit.

I must reject the form of thinking of physics and physiology only on the ground that this makes of matter that is not vitally experienced but only conceived through thought the external cause of man's spiritual experience; and, moreover, this matter is so conceived in thought that it is impossible to trace it to the point where it is spirit. Such matter, which this way of thinking postulates as real, is in no sense real. The fundamental error of the materialistically-minded thinkers about nature consists in their impossible idea of matter. Through this they bar before themselves the way leading to spiritual existence. A material nature which stimulates in the soul merely that which man experiences within nature makes the world an "illusion." The intensity with which these ideas entered into my mental life led me four years later to elaborate them in my work *Conception of the World and of Life in the Thirteenth Century*, in the chapter entitled "Die Welt als Illusion." (1) (In later enlarged editions this work was given the title *\*Rätsel der Philosophie\** (2).)

In the biological form of conceptions it is impossible in the same manner to fall into typical ways of thought which remove the thing so conceived wholly out of the sphere that is open to man's experience, and therefore to leave behind in his mind an illusion as to this. Here one cannot actually arrive at this explanation: "Outside of man there is a world of which he experiences nothing, which makes an impression on him only through his senses; an impression, however, which may be utterly unlike that which causes it." If a man suppresses within his mental life the more weighty elements of thinking, he may believe, indeed, that he has uttered something when he asserts that to the subjective perception of light the objective counterpart consists of a wave-form in ether-such was then the conception; but one must be an absolute fanatic

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1 "The World of Illusion".

2 *Riddles of Philosophy*.

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if one proposes to "explain" in this way that also which is perceived in the realm of the living.

In no case, so I said to myself, does such a conception of ideas pertaining to nature penetrate to ideas concerning the moral order of the world. Such a conception can view this only as something which drops down into the physical world of man from a sphere foreign to man's knowledge.

The fact that these questions confronted my mind I cannot consider as having a significance for the third phase of my life; for they had confronted me for a long time. But it was significant for me that the whole sphere of knowledge within my mind-without changing anything essential in its content-attained by means of these questions to a quickness of vital activity in a greatly heightened sense as compared with what had hitherto been the case. In the Logos lives the human soul; how does the external world live in this Logos? This is the basic question in my *\*Theory of Cognition in Goethe's World-Conception\** (of the middle of the 'eighties); such it continued for my writing *\*Wahrheit und Wissenschaft\** (1) and *\*The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\**. There were dominant in this orientation of soul all the ideas I was able to formulate in the effort to penetrate into the substrata of the soul from which Goethe sought to bring light for the phenomena of the world.

That which especially concerned me during the phase of my life here set forth was the fact that the ideas which I was forced to oppose so strongly had laid hold with the utmost intensity upon the thinking of that period. People lived so completely according to these tendencies of mind that they were not in a position to realize at all the range of anything which pointed in the opposite direction. I so experienced the opposition between that which was to me plain truth and the opinions of my age that this experience gave the prevailing colour to my life, especially in the years near the turn of the century.

In every manifestation of the spiritual life the impression made upon me was drawn from this opposition. Not that

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I Truth and Science, the dissertation offered for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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I regretted everything brought forward by this spiritual life; but I had a sense of profound distress in the presence of the many good things that I could hold dear, for I believed that I saw the powers of destruction ranging themselves against these good things, the evolutionary germs of the spiritual life.

So from all directions my life was focused upon this question: " How can a way be found whereby that which is inwardly perceived as true may be set forth in such forms of expression as can be understood by this age ? " When one has such an experience, it is as if the necessity faced one of climbing in some way or other to the scarcely accessible peak of a mountain. One attempts it from the most varied points of approach; one remains there still, forced to feel that all the struggles one has put forth have been in vain.

I spoke once during the 'nineties at Frankfort-am-Main concerning Goethe's conception of nature. I said in my introduction that I would discuss only Goethe's conceptions of life, since his ideas regarding light and colours were such that there was no possibility in contemporary physics of throwing a bridge across to these ideas. As for myself, however, I was forced to view this impossibility as a most significant symptom of the spiritual orientation of the age.

Somewhat later I had a conversation with a physicist who was an important person in his field, and who also worked intensively at Goethe's conception of nature. The conversation reached its climax when he said that Goethe's conception regarding colours is such that physics cannot possibly lay hold of it; and I was speechless.

How much there was then which said that what was truth to me was such that the thought of the age could " not in the least lay hold of it."

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So this question became a part of my experience: " Must one remain speechless ? "

With this shaping of my mental life I then faced the necessity of introducing into my outer activity an entirely new note. No longer could the forces which determined my outward destiny remain in

such unity with those inner directive tendencies which came from my experience of the spiritual world, as had till now been true.

For a long time previously I had thought of bringing to bear upon my age through a journal those spiritual impulses which I believed ought to be brought before the public of that time. I would not be "speechless," but would say as much as it was possible to say.

To found a newspaper myself was something not to be thought of at that time. The necessary funds and the connections essential to the founding of such a paper were utterly lacking to me. So I seized the opportunity which came to me to secure the editorship of the *Magazin für Literatur*.

This was an old weekly. It was founded in the year of Goethe's death (1832), at first as the *\*Magazin für Literatur des Auslandes\**(1). It carried translations of whatever foreign productions in all aspects of the intellectual life the editors thought worthy of being incorporated into the intellectual life of Germany. Later on the weekly was changed into a *\*Magazin für die Literatur des In- und Auslandes\**(2). Now it contained poetry, character studies, criticism, from the whole expanse of the intellectual life. Within certain limits it was able to do well in this task. Its activity thus defined fell at a time when a

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1 Magazine for Foreign Literature.

2 Magazine for German and Foreign Literature.

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sufficiently large number of persons in the German-speaking regions desired each week to have whatever was "forthcoming" in the intellectual sphere laid before their minds in brief, summary fashion. Then in the 'eighties and the 'nineties, when the new literary objectives of the younger generation entered into this peaceful and superior way of sharing in the intellectual, the Magazine was soon swept into this movement. Its editorship was rather suddenly changed, and it took its colour for the time being from those who in one way or another belonged to the new movements. When I succeeded in securing it in 1897, it was in close relationship with the strivings of the young literature without having placed itself in strong opposition to what lay outside these strivings. But at all events it was not in a position to maintain itself financially solely on the basis of its contents. For this reason it had become, among other things, the organ of the *\*Freie literarische Gesellschaft\**(1). This added a little to the otherwise no longer extensive subscription list. But, in spite of all this, the situation was such in connection with my taking over of the Magazine that one had to include all the subscribers, even the less certain ones, in order just barely to reach the minimum needed for a livelihood. I could take over the paper only in case I could include as part of my work an activity which seemed likely to increase the circle of subscribers. This was the activity of the Free Literary Society. I had so to determine the content of the paper that this Society should be adequately represented. In the Free Literary Society one expected to find those who had an interest in the productions of the younger generation. The headquarters of the Society was at Berlin, where younger Litterateurs had founded it. But it had branches also in many other German cities. Of course, it soon came about that many a "branch" led a very distinctive existence of its own. It now became my task to deliver lectures before this Society in order that the mediation of intellectual life which was to be effected by the Magazine should also be given a personal expression. I had thus a circle of readers for the Magazine into whose

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1 Free Literary Society.

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intellectual needs I had to find my way. In the Free Literary Society I had an organized group which expected something quite definite because something quite definite had till now been offered them. In any case they did not expect that which I should have liked to give them from my innermost being. The stamp of the Free Literary Society was determined by the fact that it wished to form a sort of opposite to the \*Literarische Gesellschaft\*(1) to which such persons, for instance, as Spielhagen gave the predominant tone.

It was now a necessity of my status within the spiritual world that I should truly share in a wholly inward fashion in this relationship into which I had entered. I made every effort to root myself in my circle of readers and in the membership of the Society in order to discover out of the spiritual nature of these men the forms into which I should have to pour what I wished in a spiritual way to give them.

I cannot say that I had yielded to illusions at the beginning of this activity and that these were gradually destroyed. But the very fact of working outward from the circle of readers and hearers, as it was necessary for me to do, met with greater and greater opposition. One could count upon no strong and earnest spiritual motive on the part of the men who had been drawn about the Magazine before I took it over. The interests of these men were only in a few cases deeply rooted. And even in the case of these few there were no strong underlying forces of the spirit, but rather a general desire seeking for expression in all sorts of artistic and other intellectual forms. So the question soon arose for me whether I was justified inwardly and before the spiritual world in working within this circle. For, even though many persons who were concerned were very dear to me, although I felt bound to them by ties of friendship, yet even these belonged among those persons who caused the question to arise with respect to that which I vitally experienced within me: Must one be speechless ?

Then another question arose. In regard to a great many persons who had until now come into near and friendly relations with me, I was privileged to feel that, although they

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1 The Literary Society.

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did not go along with me very far in our mental life, yet they assumed something in me which gave value in their eyes to whatever I did in the sphere of knowledge, and in many other sorts of life relationships. They so often shared in my way of life, without further testing of me, after we had come into relationship.

Those who had till now published the Magazine had no such feeling. They said to themselves: " In spite of many traits of a practical life in Steiner, he is nevertheless an idealist." And since the sale of the Magazine had been made under such conditions that partial payments were to be made to the former owner within the course of the year, and that this person had the chief interest in point of

fact in the continuance of the weekly, therefore from his point of view he could not do otherwise than to provide for himself, and for the affair in hand, another guarantee than that consisting in my own personality, regarding which he was unable to say what effect it would have within the circle of persons who had till now rallied about the Magazine and the Free Literary Society. Therefore it was added to the terms of the purchase that Otto Erich Hartleben should be co-editor, sharing actively in the work.

Now in reflection upon the orientation of my editorial work I would not have had it different. For one who stands within the spiritual world must, as I have made clear in the preceding pages, learn to know fully through experience the facts of the physical world. And this had become for me, especially by reason of my mental revolution, an obvious necessity. Not to yield to that which I clearly recognized as the forces of destiny would have been to me a sin against my experience of the spirit. I saw not only " facts " which then associated me for some years with Otto Erich Hartleben, but " facts woven by destiny " (Karma).

Yet there resulted from this relationship insurmountable difficulties. Otto Erich Hartleben was a person absolutely dominated by the aesthetic. There was something appealing to me in every manifestation of his utterly aesthetic philosophy, even in his gestures, in spite of the really questionable \*millieus\* in

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which he often met me. Because of this attitude of mind he felt the need, every now and then, of staying for months at a time in Italy. And, when he returned, there was actually something Italian in what came to expression out of his nature. Besides, I felt a strong personal affection for him.

Only it was really impossible to work jointly at what was now our common field. He did not direct his efforts in the least toward transplanting himself into the sphere of ideas and interests pertaining to the readers of the Magazine or the circle of the Free Literary Society, but wished in both cases to " impose " what his aesthetic feelings said to him. This acted upon me like something alien. Besides, he often insisted upon his right as a co-editor, but also often did this not at all for a long while. Indeed, he was often absent in Italy for a long time. In this way there came to be a certain lack of consistency in the Magazine. And, with all his " ripe aesthetic philosophy," Otto Erich Hartleben could never overcome the " student " in himself. I mean the questionable aspect of " studentship," not, of course, that which may be brought into later life as a beautiful force of one's existence out of one's student days.

At the time when I had to bind myself to him, an added circle of admirers had become his on account of his drama \*Die Erziehung zur Ehe\*(1). This production had not come into existence at all from the graceful aesthetic which was so charming in one's association with him; it was the product of that " exuberance " and " unrestraint " which caused everything that came from him, both by way of intellectual productions, and also in his decisions regarding the Magazine, to issue, not from the depths of his nature, but from a certain superficiality-the Hartleben known to very few of his personal associates.

It came about, as a matter of course, that, after I removed to Berlin, where I had to edit the Magazine, I associated with the circle formed about Otto Erich Hartleben. For this was the one that rendered it possible for me to supervise what pertained to the weekly and to the Free Literary Society in the manner necessary.



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## 1 Education for Matrimony.

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This caused me, on the one hand, much suffering; for I was thus hindered from seeking out those men, and getting close to them, with whom delightful relationships had existed in Weimar. And how I should also have enjoyed calling frequently on Eduard von Hartmann !

Nothing of this sort happened. The other side claimed me wholly. And so at one stroke much was taken from me of a valuable human element which I would gladly have retained. But I recognized this as a dispensation of destiny (Karma). It has always been perfectly possible for me, by reason of the substratum of the soul which I have here described, to apply my mind with complete interest to two such utterly different human groups as those associated with Weimar and those existing round the Magazine. Only neither of these groups would have found any permanent satisfaction in a person who associated by turns with those belonging in soul and mind to polarically opposed world spheres. Besides, I should have been forced in such an intercourse to explain continually why I was devoting my labour exclusively to that service to which I was obliged to devote it by reason of what the Magazine was.

More and more it became clear to me that I could no longer place myself in such a relationship to men as I have described in connection with Vienna and Weimar. LittŽrateurs assembled and learned in literary fashion to know one another as little littŽrateurs. Even with the best, even in the case of the most clearly marked characters, this element of the writer (or painter or sculptor) was so deeply embedded in the soul that the purely human retired wholly into the background.

Such was the impression I received when I sat among these persons, much as I valued them. All the deeper for this reason was the impression which I myself received of the human soul background. Once after I had given a lecture, and O. J. Bierbaum a reading, in the Free Literary Society in Leipzig, I sat amid a group in which was also Frank Wedekind. I could not take my eyes from this truly rare figure of a man. I use the term " figure " here in a purely physical sense. Such hands! -as if from a previous earthly life in which they had achieved things such as only those men can

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achieve who cause their spirits to stream into the most delicate branching of the fingers. This may have given an impression of brutality, because energy had been used up in work, yet the deepest interest was attracted to what streamed forth from those hands. And that expressive head-altogether like a gift of that which came from the unusual note of will in the hands. He had something in his glance and the play of his features which gave itself so arbitrarily to the world, but which especially could withdraw itself again, like the gestures of the arms expressing what the hands felt. A spirit alien to the present time spoke from that head. A spirit that really set itself apart from the human impulses of the present. Only a spirit that could not inwardly attain to clear consciousness as to which world of the past was that to which he belonged As a writer-I express now only what I perceived in him, and not a literary judgment-Frank Wedekind was like a chemist who utterly rejects contemporary views in chemistry and practises alchemy, even this without sharing inwardly in it but with cynicism. One could learn much about the working of the spirit on the form if one

received into the vision of the soul the outer appearance of Frank Wedekind. In this, however, one must not employ the look of that sort of " psychologist " who " proposes to observe man," but the look which shows the purely human against the background of the spiritual world through an inner dispensation of destiny, which one does not seek, but which simply comes.

A person who notices that he is being observed by a " psychologist " may justly be indignant; but the passing over from the purely human relationship to " perceiving the spiritual background " is also purely human, somewhat like passing from a casual to an intimate friendship.

One of the most unusual personalities of Hartleben's Berlin circle was Paul Scheerbarth. He had written poems which at first appeared to the reader arbitrary combinations of words and sentences. They are so grotesque that one for this reason feels oneself drawn on to get beyond the first impression. Then one finds that a fantastic sense for all sorts of generally unobserved meanings in words strives to bring to expression a spiritual content derived from a fantasy of soul, not only

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without foundation, but not in the least seeking for a foundation. In Paul Scheerbarth there was a vital inner cult of the fantastic, but one that moved in the sought-out forms of the grotesque. It is my opinion that he had the feeling that the man of wit should set forth whatever he does set forth only in grotesque forms, because others tease everything into humdrum form. But this feeling of his will not develop even the grotesque into rounded artistic form, but in a lordly, purposely senseless mood of soul. And what was revealed in these grotesque forms must spring from the inner realm of the grotesque. There was a basic quality of soul in Paul Scheerbarth of not seeking for clarity in reference to the spiritual. What comes out of common sense does not go over into the region of spirit-so said this " fantast." Therefore one does not need to be sensible in order to express spirit. But Scheerbarth made not one step from the fantastic to fantasy. And so he wrote out of a spirit that was interesting but remained fixed in the wild fantastic, a spirit in which whole worlds of the cosmos gleam and glisten as framework for stories caricaturing the realm of spirit and yet containing elevated human experiences. Such is the case in \*Tarub, Bagdads berYhmte Kšchin\*(1).

One did not see the man in this light when one came to know him personally. A bureaucrat, somewhat lifted up into the spiritual. The " outer appearance," which was so interesting in Wedekind, was in him quite ordinary, commonplace. And this impression was still further strengthened if one entered into conversation with him in the early stages of one's acquaintance. He bore within him the most burning hatred of the Philistines, but had the gestures of a Philistine, their manner of speech, and behaved as if the hatred came out of the fact that he had taken on too much from Philistine circles in his own appearance and was conscious of this and yet had the feeling that he could not overcome it. One read at the bottom of his soul a sort of recognition: " I should like to annihilate the Philistines because they have made me one of themselves."

But if one passed from this outer appearance to the inner

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1 Tarub, Bagdad's Famous Cook.

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nature of Paul Scheerbarth independent of this, there was revealed an altogether fine spirit-man, only fixed in the grotesque-fantastic, and remaining incomplete. Then one realized in his " luminous " head, in his " golden " heart, the manner in which he stood in the spiritual world. One had to say to oneself what a strong personality, penetrating in vision into the realm of spirit, might there have come into the world if that incomplete had been at least in some measure completed. One saw at the same time that the " devotion to the fantastic " was already so strong that even a future completion during this earthly life was no longer within the realm of the possible.

In Frank Wedekind and Paul Scheerbarth there stood before me personalities who, in their whole being, afforded the most significant experience to one who knew the truth of the repeated earthly lives of men. They were, indeed, riddles in the present earthly life. One perceived in them what they had brought with them into this earthly life, and an unlimited enrichment of their whole personalities stood forth. But one understood also their incompletenesses as the result of earlier earthly lives which could not in the present spiritual environment reach complete unfolding. And one saw how that which might come out of these incompletenesses needed future earthly lives.

Thus did many personalities of this group stand before me. I recognized that meeting them was for me a dispensation of destiny (Karma).

A purely human, heartfelt relationship I could never win even with that so entirely lovable Paul Scheerbarth. It was always the case that in our intercourse the littŽrateur in Paul Scheerbarth, as in the others, invariably intervened. So my feelings for him, affectionate to be sure, were finally restricted to the attention and interest which I was impelled to feel for his personality, in such high measure noteworthy.

There was, indeed, one personality in the group whose living presence was not that of a littŽrateur but in the fullest sense human- W. Harlan. But he talked little, always really sitting as a silent observer. When he spoke, however, his talk was always either in the best sense brilliant or else genuinely

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witty. He really wrote a great deal, but not exactly as a littŽrateur; rather as a man who must speak out what he had in his mind. It was just at that time that the \*Dichterbörse\*(1) had come from his pen, a representation of life full of excellent humour. I was always glad when I came somewhat early to our meetings and found Harlan, as the first arrival, sitting there all alone. One then got close to him. I exclude him, therefore, when I say that in this group I found only littŽrateurs and no " persons." And I think he understood that I had to view the group in this light. Utterly different paths of life soon bore us far apart.

The men associated with the Magazine and the Free Literary Society were evidently woven into my destiny. But I was in no manner whatever woven into theirs. They saw me appear in Berlin, became aware that I would edit the Magazine and work for the Free Literary Society, but did not understand why I should do this. For the way in which, as regards the eyes of their minds, I went about among them, offered them no inducement to go more deeply into me. Although there did not cling to me a single trace of theory, yet my spiritual activity appeared to their theoretical dogmatizing as something theoretical. This was something in which they, as " artistic natures," thought they need take no interest. But I learned in direct perception to know an artistic current in its representatives. This was no longer so radical as that appearing in Berlin at the end of the 'eighties and in the early

years of the 'nineties. It was also no longer such that it represented absolute naturalism as the salvation of art-as in the theatrical transformation under Otto Brahms. They were without any such comprehensive artistic conviction. They relied more upon that which streamed together out of the wills and the gifts of individual personalities, which was, however, utterly without any unified endeavour toward style.

My place within this group became mentally unendurable because of the feeling that I knew why I was there but the others knew not.

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1 Poets' Exchange

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ASSOCIATED with the Magazine group was a free Dramatic Society. It did not belong so intimately with the Magazine as did the Free Literary Society; but the same persons were on the board of directors here as in the other Society, and I was elected a member of this board immediately after I came to Berlin.

The purpose of this Society was that of producing plays which, because of their special character, because they fell outside the usual taste and tendencies and the like, were at first not produced by the theatres. It was no light task that rested upon the directors, to succeed in the midst of so many dramatic attempts with the "misunderstood" plays.

The productions were carried out in such a way that in each case a company of actors was made up of artists who played on the most varied stages. With these actors the play was given in the morning in a theatre rented or else lent freely by its managers. The actors proved to be very unselfish in relation to this Society, for it was not able by reason of its limited means to offer adequate compensation. But neither actors nor managers had any inner reason to object to the production of works of an unusual sort. They simply said: "Before the ordinary public and at an evening performance, this cannot be done, since it would cause financial injury to any theatre. The public is simply not ripe for the idea that the theatre should serve exclusively the cause of art." The activity associated with this Dramatic Society proved to be of a character in a high degree suited to me; most of all the part having to do with the staging of the plays. Along with Otto Erich Hartleben I took part in the rehearsals. We felt that we were real stage-managers. We gave the plays

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their stage forms. In this very art it became evident that all theorizing and dogmatizing are of no use unless they come from a vital artistic sense which intuitively grasps in the details the general requirement of style. One must steadfastly resist the resort to general rules. Everything which the circumstances in such a sphere render possible must appear in a flash from one's sure sense for style in action, in arrangement of the scenes. And what one then does, without any logical reflection but from the sense for style, gives a feeling of satisfaction to every artist in the cast, whereas a rule derived from the intellect gives them the feeling that their inner freedom is being interfered with. To the experiences in this field which were then mine, I had occasion afterwards again and again to look back with satisfaction.

The first play that we produced in this way was Maurice Maeterlinck's \*L'intruse\*(1). Otto Erich Hartleben had made the translation. Maeterlinck was then considered by the aesthetes as the dramatist who was fitted to bring upon the stage before the eyes of the susceptible spectator the invisible which lies amid the gross events of life. That which is ordinarily called incident in drama, the form of development in dialogue, Maeterlinck so employs as to produce thereby upon the susceptible the effect of symbols. It was this symbolizing that attracted many whose taste had been repelled by the preceding naturalism. All who were seeking for the " spirit," but who did not desire a form of expression in which a world of spirit is directly revealed, found their satisfaction in a symbolism that spoke a language not expressed in naturalistic form and yet entered into the spiritual only to the extent that this was revealed in the vague blurred form of the mystic-presentimental. The less one could "tell distinctly " what lay behind the suggestive symbols, the more were many enraptured by them.

I did not feel at ease in the presence of this spiritual glimmering. Yet it was delightful to work at the management of such a play as \*The Intruder\*. For the representation of just such symbols by appropriate stage means required in

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1 The Intruder.

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an unusual degree a managerial function guided in the way described above.

Moreover, it became my task to precede the production with a brief introductory address. This practice, common in France, had at that time been adopted also in Germany in connection with individual plays. Not, of course, in the ordinary theatre, but in connection with such undertakings as were adapted to the Dramatic Society. This did not occur, indeed, at every production of the Society, but infrequently: when it seemed necessary to introduce the public to an artistic purpose with which it was unfamiliar. The task of giving this brief stage address was satisfying to me for the reason that it afforded me an opportunity to make dominant in my speech a mood radiated to me myself from the spirit. And I was happy to do this in a human environment which had otherwise no ear for the spirit.

Being vitally within this dramatic art was, at all events, really important for me at that period. From that time on I myself wrote the dramatic criticisms for the Magazine. Concerning such " criticism," moreover, I had my own views, which, however, were little understood. I considered it unnecessary that an individual should pass " judgment " upon a play and its production. Such judgments, as these were generally given, should really be reached by the public for itself alone.

He who writes about a theatrical production should cause to arise before his readers in an artistic-ideal picture what combination of fantasy-form stands behind the play. In artistically fashioned thoughts there should arise before the reader an ideal poetic reproduction as the living, though unconscious, germ from which the author produced his play. For to me thoughts were never merely something by means of which reality is abstractly and intellectually expressed. I saw that an artistic activity is possible in thought-conceptions just as in colours, in forms, in stage devices. And such a minor work of art should be created by one who writes about a theatrical production. But that such a thing should come about when a play is produced before an audience seemed to me a necessary co-operation in the life of art.

Whether a play is " good," " bad," or " mediocre " will be evident in the tone and bearing of such an " art-thought form." For this cannot be concealed even though one does not say it in the form of crass judgments. Anything which is an impossible artistic structure will be visible in the thought art reproduction. For one there sets forth the thoughts, but they appear as utterly unreal if the work of art has not come from true and living fantasy.

Such a vital working in unison with the living art I wished to have in the Magazine. In this way something would have come about that would have given to the journal a character different from that of merely theoretical discussion and judgment upon art and the spiritual life. The Magazine would actually become a member of this spiritual life. For everything which the art of thinking can do for dramatic poetry is possible also for theatrical art. It is possible by means of thought-fantasy to bring into existence that which the art of the manager has introduced into the stage-conception; in this way it is possible to follow the actor, and, not through criticism but by " positive " presentation, cause that which is alive in him to stand forth. Then one becomes as a " writer " a formative participant in the artistic life of the time, and not a " judge " standing in the corner, " dreaded," " pitied," or even despised and hated. When this is practised for all branches of art, a literary-artistic periodical is in the midst of actual life. But in such things one always has the same experience. If one seeks to bring them into effect with persons who are engaged in writing, they either fail completely to enter into these things, because they are contrary to the writer's habits of thought, or else they laugh and say: " Yes, that's right, but I have always done so." They do not observe at all the distinction between what one proposes and what they themselves " have always done."

One who can go alone on his spiritual path need not be disturbed in mind by this. But whoever has to work among persons united in a spiritual group will be affected to the depths of his soul by these relationships. Especially so if his inner tendency is one so fixed, grown into him, that he cannot withdraw from this into another vitally real.

Neither my articles in the Magazine nor my lectures gave me at that time inner satisfaction. Only, anyone who reads them now and thinks that I intended to be a representative of materialism is mistaken. That I never wished to do. This can clearly be seen from the essays and abstracts of lectures that I wrote. It is only necessary to set over against those individual passages which have a materialistic note others in which I speak of the spirit, of the eternal. So it is in the article \*Ein Wiener Dichter\*(1). Of Peter Attenberg I say there . " What most interests the person who enters deeply into the world harmony seems foreign to him.... From the eternal ideas no light penetrates into Attenberg's eyes . . ." (\*Magazin\*, July 17, 1897). And the fact that this " eternal world harmony " cannot be meant to signify something materialistic and mechanical becomes clear in utterances such as those in the essay on Rudolf Heidenhain (November 6, 1897): " Our conception of nature is clearly striving toward the goal of explaining the life of the organism according to the same laws by which the phenomena of inanimate nature must also be explained. General laws of mechanics, physics, chemistry are sought for in the bodies of animals and plants. The same sort of laws that control a machine must also be operative in the organism-only in immeasurably more complicated and scarcely comprehensible form. Nothing is to be added to these laws in order to

render possible an explanation of the phenomenon we call life.... The mechanistic conception of the phenomena of life steadily gains ground. But it will never satisfy one who has the capacity to cast a deeper glance into nature's processes. Contemporary researchers in nature are too cowardly in their thinking. Where the wisdom of their mechanistic explanations fails, they say the thing is to us inexplicable... A bold thinking lifts itself to a higher manner of perception. It seeks to explain by higher laws that which is not of a mechanical character. All our natural-scientific thinking remains behind our natural scientific experience. At present the natural-scientific form of thinking is much praised. In regard to this, it is said that we live in a natural-scientific age. But at bottom this natural-

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1 "A Viennese Poet."

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scientific age is the poorest that history has to show. Its characteristic is to hang fast to the mere facts and the mechanistic forms of explanation. Life will never be grasped by this form of thinking because such a grasp requires a higher manner of conceiving than that which belongs to the explanation of a machine."

Is it not obvious that one who speaks thus of the explanation of " life " cannot think materialistically of the explanation of " spirit " ?

But I often spoke of the fact that the " spirit issues " from the bosom of nature. What is meant here by " spirit " ? All that out of human thinking, feelings, and willing which begets " culture." To speak of another " spirit " would then have been quite futile. For no one would have understood me if I had said: " That which appears in man as spirit and lies at the basis of nature is neither spirit nor nature, but the complete unity of both." This unity-the creative Spirit which in its creating brings matter into existence and thereby is at the same time matter, but which also shows itself wholly as spirit-this unity is grasped by an idea which lay as far as possible from the habits of thought of that period. But it would have been necessary to speak of such an idea if one was to present in a spiritual form of thinking the primal state of the evolution of earth and man and the spiritual material Powers still active to-day in man himself, which on the one hand form his body and on the other cause to issue forth the living spiritual by means of which he creates culture. But external nature would have needed to be so discussed that in it the primal spiritual-material is represented as dead in natural laws.

All this could not be given. It could be linked up only with natural-scientific experience, not with natural-scientific thinking. In this experience there was something present which could set in shining light before a man's own mind a true, spirit-filled thinking regarding the world and man-something out of which might again be found the spirit now lost from the sort of knowledge confirmed by tradition and accepted on faith. The perception of spirit-nature I desired to draw from the experience of nature. I wished to speak of what is to be found

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on " this side " as the spiritual-natural, as the essentially divine. For in the knowledge confirmed by tradition the divine had come to belong to " the beyond " because the spirit of " this side " was not recognized and was therefore sundered from the perceptible world. It had become something which

had been submerged in man's consciousness into an ever increasing darkness. Not the rejection of the divine-spiritual, but its setting within the world, its calling to " this side," lay in such sentences as the following in one of the lectures before the Free Literary Society: " I believe that natural science can give back to us the consciousness of freedom in a form more beautiful than that in which men have yet possessed it. In the life of our souls there operate laws which are just as natural as those which send the heavenly bodies round the sun. \*But these laws represent something which is higher than all the rest of nature. This something is present nowhere save in man alone. Whatever flows from this, in that is man free. He lifts himself above the fixed necessity of laws of the inorganic and organic; he heeds and follows only himself.\*" (The last sentences are italicized here(1) for the first time; they were not italicized in the Magazine. For these sentences see the Magazine of 12th February, 1898.).

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1 That is, in the German text.

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INDIVIDUAL assertions regarding Christianity which I wrote or uttered in lectures at this time appear to be contrary to the expositions I gave later. In this connection the following must be noted. At that time, when I used the word " Christianity," I had in mind the " beyond " teaching which is operative in the Christian creeds. The whole content of religious experience refers to a world of spirit which is not attainable by man in the unfolding of his spiritual powers. What religion has to say, what it has to give as moral precepts, is derived from revelations that come to man from without. Against this my view of spirit opposed itself, desiring to experience the world of spirit just as much as the sense-world in what is perceptible in man and in nature. Against this likewise was my ethical individualism opposed, desiring to have the moral life proceed, not from without by way of precepts obeyed, but out of the unfolding of the human soul and spirit, wherein lives the divine.

What then occurred in my soul in viewing Christianity was a severe test for me. The time between my departure from the Weimar task and the production of my book \*Das Christentum als mystische Tatsache\*(1) is occupied by this test. Such tests are the opposition provided by destiny (Karma) which one's spiritual evolution has to overcome.

In my thoughts I perceived that there could result from the knowledge of nature-though this did not result at that time- the basis upon which man might attain to insight in the world of spirit. I therefore laid much stress upon the knowledge of the foundation of nature which must lead to the knowledge of spirit. For one who did not stand in living reality within the world of spirit, such a sinking of himself into a certain course

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1 Christianity as Mystical Fact.

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of thought signified a mere activity of thought. For one who experiences the world of spirit, it signifies something quite different. He is brought into contact with Beings in the world of spirit who desire to make such tendencies of thought the sole predominant ones. Their one-sidedness in thinking does not merely lead to abstract error; there is a spiritual and living intercourse with a



being which in the human world is error. Later I spoke of Ahrimanic beings when I wished to make reference to this. For these it is an absolute truth that the world must be a machine. They live in a world which touches directly upon the sense-world.

In my own ideas I never for one moment fell into this world, not even in the unconscious. For I took pains that all my knowledge should be reached in a state of discriminating consciousness. So much the more conscious was my inner struggle against the demonic Powers who would cause to come about from the knowledge of nature, not perception of spirit, but a mechanistic-materialistic form of thinking. He who seeks for knowledge of spirit must experience these worlds: for him a mere theoretical thinking about them does not suffice. At that time I had to save my spiritual perception by inner battles. These battles stood behind my outer experience.

In this time of testing I succeeded in advancing farther only when in spiritual perception I brought before my soul the evolution of Christianity. This led to the knowledge which was expressed in the book \*Christianity as Mystical Fact\*. Before this the Christian content to which I had referred had always been that found in existent creeds. This was true of Nietzsche also.

In an earlier passage in this biography I have narrated a conversation concerning Christ that I had with the learned Cistercian who was a professor in the faculty of Catholic theology of the University of Vienna. I was in the presence of a sceptical mood. The Christianity which I had to seek I did not find at all in the creeds. After the time of testing had set before me stern battles of the soul, I had to submerge myself in Christianity and in the world in which the spiritual speaks thereof.

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In my attitude toward Christianity it can clearly be seen that I have by no means sought and found in spiritual science by the path which many persons have ascribed to me. These state the matter as if I had collected together the knowledge of spirit left in ancient traditions. I am supposed to have elaborated gnostic and other teachings. What is achieved of the knowledge of spirit in \*Christianity as Mystical Fact\* is brought directly out of the spiritual world. Only when I wished to show to those who heard my lectures and to the readers of the books the harmony between the spiritual perception and the historic traditions did I first take these traditions and blend them in the content. But nothing existing in these documents have I blended in the content unless I had first had this before me in the spirit.

At the time when I made the statements concerning Christianity so opposed in literal content to later utterances, it was also true that the real content of Christianity was beginning germinally to unfold within me as an inner phenomenon. About the turn of the century the germ unfolded more and more. Before this turn of the century came this testing of the soul here described. The evolution of my soul rested upon the fact that I stood before the mystery of Golgotha in most inward, earnest joy of knowledge.

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THE thought then hovered before me that the turn of the century must bring a new spiritual light to humanity. It seemed to me that the exclusion of human thinking and willing from the spirit had

reached a climax. A revolutionary change in the process of human evolution seemed to me a matter of necessity.

Many were talking in this way. But they did not see that man will seek to direct his eyes toward a world of real spirit as he directs them through the senses toward nature. They only supposed that the subjective spiritual temper of the soul would undergo a revolution. That a real, new objective world could be revealed-such a thought lay beyond the range of vision of that time.

With the experiences that came to me from my perspective of the future and from the impressions received from the world about me, I was forced to turn the eyes of my mind more and more to the development which marked the nineteenth century.

I saw how, with the time of Goethe and Hegel, everything disappeared which knowingly takes up conceptions of a spiritual world into human forms of thought. Thenceforth knowledge must not be "confused" by conceptions from the spiritual world. These conceptions are assigned to the sphere of faith and "mystical" experience.

In Hegel I perceived the greatest thinker of the new age. But he was just that -only a thinker. To him the world of spirit was in thinking. Even while I admired immeasurably the way in which he gave form to all his thinking, yet I perceived that he had no feeling for the world of spirit which I beheld and which is revealed behind thinking only when thinking is empowered to become an experience whose body, in a certain

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measure, is thought, and which takes up into itself as soul the Spirit of the world.

Since in Hegelianism everything spiritual has become thought, Hegel represented to me the person who brought the ultimate twilight of the ancient spiritual light into a period in which the spirit became hidden in darkness from human knowledge.

All this appeared thus before me whether I looked into the spiritual world or looked back in the physical world upon the century drawing to an end. But now there came forth in this century a figure which I could not trace on into the spiritual world-Max Stirner.

Hegel was wholly the man of thought, who in his inner unfolding strives after a thinking which goes ever deeper, and in going deeper extends to farther horizons. This thinking, in its deepening and broadening, becomes at last one with the thinking of the World-Spirit which includes the whole world-content. And Stirner was all that man unfolds from himself, bringing this wholly from his individual personal will. What exists in humanity lies only in the juxtaposition of single personalities.

I dared not just at that time fall into one-sidedness. As I stood completely within Hegelianism experiencing this in my soul as my own inner experience, so must I also wholly submerge myself inwardly in this opposite.

Against the one-sidedness of endowing the World-Spirit merely with knowledge must, indeed, the opposite appear, the assertion of man merely as a will-being.

Had the situation been such that this opposition had simply appeared in me as an experience of my own mind in its evolution, I would never have permitted anything of this to enter into my writing or lecturing. I have always observed this rule with regard to such mental experiences. But this particular contradiction-Hegel and Stirner-belonged to the century. Through this the century expressed itself.

And, indeed, it is true that philosophers are not to be principally considered in relation to their influence on their times. Certainly one can mention very strong influences proceeding from Hegel. But this is not the main thing. Philosophers

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show in the content of their thinking the spirit of their age as a thermometer shows the warmth of a place. In the philosophers that becomes conscious which lives unconsciously in the age.

And so the nineteenth century in its two extremes lived through the impulses expressing themselves through Hegel and Stirner: impersonal thinking which most delights to yield itself to a contemplation of the world in which man with his inner creative powers has no part; and wholly personal will with little feeling for the harmonious co-operation of men. To be sure, all possible "social ideals" appear, but they have no power to influence reality. This more and more takes on the form of what can come about when the wills of individuals work side by side.

Hegel would have the thought of the moral take objective form more and more in the associated life of men; Stirner feels that the "individuals" (single persons) are harmed by everything which thus gives harmonious form to the life of men.

My own consideration of Stirner was connected at that time with a friendship which had a decisive effect upon very much in what we are here considering. This was my friendship with the important Stirner scholar and editor J. H. Mackay. It was while still in Weimar that I was brought in contact by Gabrielle Reuter with this personality, to me likewise altogether congenial. He had occupied himself with those chapters in my \*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\* which deal with ethical individualism. He found a harmony between my discussions and his own social views.

At first it was the personal impression I received from ; J. H. Mackay that filled my soul when in company with him. He bore the "world" in him. In his whole inner and outer bearing there spoke world-experience. He had spent some time in both England and America. All this was suffused with a boundless amiability. I conceived a great affection for him.

When, therefore, J. H. Mackay came to reside permanently at Berlin, there developed a delightful friendship between us. This also, unfortunately, has been destroyed by life and especially by my public discussion of anthroposophy.

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In this instance I must only describe quite objectively how the work of J. H. Mackay seemed to me at that time, and still seems, and what effect it had upon me. For I am aware that he would express himself quite differently about it.

Profoundly hateful to this man was everything in human social life which is force, \*Archie\*. The greatest failure, he felt, was the introduction of force into social control. In "communistic anarchy" he saw a social idea in the highest degree objectionable because this proposed to bring about a better state of humanity through the employment of force.

Now it was a risky thing for J. H. Mackay to battle against this idea and the agitation based upon it while choosing for his own social thought the same name which his opponents had, only with another adjective preceding it. "Individualistic anarchy" was his name for what he himself represented, and that, too, as the very opposite of what was then called "anarchy." This naturally led the public to form nothing but a biased view concerning Mackay's ideas. He was in accord with the American, B. Tucker, who stood for the same conception. Tucker visited Mackay at Berlin, and in this way I came to know him.

Mackay is also a poet of his conception of life. He wrote a novel \*Die Anarchisten\*(1). I read this after I had become acquainted with the author. This is a noble work based upon faith in the individual man. It describes penetratingly and with great vividness the social condition of the poorest of the poor. But it also sets forth how out of the world's misery those men will find a way to improvement who, being wholly devoted to the good forces, so bring these forces to their unfolding that they become effective in the free association of men rendering compulsion unnecessary. Mackay had the noble confidence that men could of themselves create a harmonious order of life. He considered, however, that this would be possible only after a long time, when by spiritual ways a requisite revolution should have been completed within men. He therefore demanded for the present that those individuals who were far enough advanced should propagate the idea of

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1 The Anarchist.

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this spiritual way. A social idea, therefore, which would employ only spiritual means.

Destiny had now given such a turn to my experience with J. H. Mackay and Stirner that here also I had to submerge myself in a thought-world which became to me a spiritual testing. My ethical individualism I felt to be a pure inner experience of man. It was by no means my intention when I formulated this to make it the basis of a philosophy of politics. Now at this time, about 1898, a sort of abyss had to be opened in my mind in regard to this purely ethical individualism. It had to be changed from something purely human and inward to something external. The esoteric must be shifted to the exoteric.

Then, in the beginning of the new century, when I had succeeded in stating my experience of the spiritual in \*Die Mystik im Aufgange\*(1) and \*Christianity as Mystical Fact\*, ethical individualism again stood after the test in its rightful place.

Yet the testing took such a course that the outward expression played no part in full consciousness. It took its course just below this full consciousness, and because of this very proximity it could influence the forms of expression in which, during the last years of the past century, I spoke regarding things social. Certain discussions of that time, however, which seem all too radical must be compared with others in order to arrive at a correct conception.

One who sees into the spiritual world always finds his own being externalized when he ought to express opinions and conceptions. He enters the spiritual world, not in abstractions, but in living perceptions. Nature likewise, which is the sensible copy of the spiritual, does not represent opinions and conceptions, but places these before the world in their forming and becoming.

A state of inner movement, which drove into billows and waves all the forces of my soul, was at that time my inner experience.

My external private life became one of absolute satisfaction by reason of the fact that the Eunicke family was drawn to Berlin and I could live with them under the best of care after

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1 Mysticism at the Beginning of the Modern Spiritual Life.

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having experienced for a short time the utter misery of living in a home of my own. My friendship with Frau Eunicke was soon thereafter transformed into a civil marriage. Only this shall be said concerning this private affair. Of my private life I do not wish to introduce anything into this biography except what concerns my process of development. Living in the Eunicke home enabled me to have an undisturbed basis for a life of inner and outer movement. Otherwise, private relationships do not belong to the public. It is not concerned in these.

Indeed, my spiritual development is, in reality, utterly independent of all private relationships. I am conscious of the fact that this would have been quite the same had the shaping of my private life been entirely different.

Amid all the movement in my life at that time came now the continual anxiety concerning the possibility of an existence for the Magazine. In spite of all the difficulties I faced, it would have gained a circulation if there had been available to me the material means. But a periodical which at the utmost could afford only sufficient compensation to give me the bare necessities of a material existence, and for which nothing whatever could be done to make it known, could not thrive upon the limited circulation it had when I took it over.

So long as I edited the Magazine it was a constant source of anxiety to me.

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AT this difficult time of my life the executive committee of the Berlin Workers' School came to me with the request that I should take charge of the courses in history and practice in "speaking" in the school. I was at first little interested in the socialistic connections of the school. I saw the beautiful task offered me of teaching mature men and women of the working class, for few young people were among the "pupils."

I explained to the committee that, if I took over the teaching, I must lecture entirely according to my own views of the course of evolution in human history, not in the style in which this is customary according to Marxism in Social-Democratic circles. They still wished to have me as a teacher.

After I had made this reservation, it could no longer disturb me that the school was a Social-Democratic foundation of the elder Liebknecht (the father). For me the school consisted of men and women of the proletariat; the fact that the great majority were Social-Democrats did not at all concern me.

But I obviously had to do with the mental character of the " pupils." I had to speak in forms of expression to which I had till then been quite unaccustomed. I had to familiarize myself with the forms of conception and judgment of these persons in order to be in some measure understood.

These forms of conceptions and judgments came from two directions. First, from life. These people knew manual labour and its results. The spiritual Powers guiding mankind forward in history did not enter into their minds. It was for this reason that Marxism, with its " materialistic conception of history," had such an easy way with them. Marx maintained that the impelling forces in the historic process are merely economic-material forces, those operative in manual labour. The " spiritual factors " are considered merely a

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sort of by-product which arises from the material-economic factors-as a mere ideology.

A craving for scientific education had long before grown up among the workers. But this could be gratified only by means of the popular materialistic scientific literature.

For this literature alone dealt in the forms of conceptions and judgments known to the workers. Whatever was not materialistic was written in such a way that the workers could not possibly understand it. Thus came about the unspeakably tragic fact that, while the developing proletariat desired knowledge with the most intense craving, this craving of theirs was satisfied only by means of the grossest materialism.

It must be confessed that half-truths are imbedded in the economic materialism which the workers take from Marxism as the " materialistic conception of history." And these half-truths are just the thing they easily understand. If I had taught idealistic history to the complete ignoring of these half-truths, the students would have found involuntarily in the lack of these materialistic half-truths the very thing which would have repelled them in my lectures.

I therefore took as my starting-point a truth which could be grasped by my hearers also. I showed that to speak of a mastery by the economic forces up to the sixteenth century, as Marx does, is nonsense. That from the sixteenth century on the economic first comes into a relationship which can be conceived in a Marxian way; and that this process then reaches its climax in the nineteenth century.

In this way it was possible to speak quite as a matter of fact of the ideal-spiritual impulses in connection with the preceding periods of history, and to show that in the most recent times these had grown weak in comparison with the material-economic impulses.

In this way the workers arrived at conceptions of capacities for knowledge, of religious, artistic, and moral impulses in history, and abandoned the habit of thinking these mere " ideology." It

would have been senseless to resort to polemics against materialism; I had to cause realism to arise out of materialism.

In the " practice in speaking " little could be done in this

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direction. After I had discussed at the beginning of each course the formal principles of lecturing and speaking, the pupils made practice speeches. Inevitably they then brought forward what was familiar to them from their materialistic nature. The " leaders " of the labour unions did not at first trouble themselves at all about the school, and so I had a perfectly free hand.

It became more difficult for me when the teaching of the natural sciences was annexed to that of history. There it was especially difficult to ascend to true conceptions from the materialistic conceptions dominant in science, especially among its popularizers. I did this as well as I possibly could.

Now, however, my teaching activity was extended through the sciences among the workers themselves. I was requested by numerous workers' unions to lecture on natural science.

Especially was instruction desired concerning that book then creating a sensation, Haekel's \*Weltr̄stsel\*. In the positive biological third of this book I saw a comprehensive handbook on the metamorphosis of living beings. My general conviction that mankind can be led from this side to spirituality I held to be true also for the workers. I connected my reflections with this third of the book and said often enough that the other two-thirds must be considered worthless and really ought to be cut out of the book and thrown away.

At the celebration of the Gutenberg jubilee I was entrusted with the festival address before 7,000 type-setters and printers in a Berlin circus. My manner of speaking to the workers must therefore have been found congenial.

With this activity destiny had once more transplanted me into a piece of life into which I had to submerge myself. I came to see how the single souls among this workers' group slumbered and dreamed, and how a sort of mass-soul laid hold upon men, revolutionizing their conception, judgment, bearing.

But it must not be imagined that the single souls were dead. In this respect I was able to look deeply into the souls of my pupils and of the whole workers' group. This brought me to the task which I set myself in all this activity. The attitude

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1 The Riddle of the Universe.

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toward Marxism was not yet what it became two decades later. Marxism was still something which they elaborated with complete deliberation as a sort of economic gospel. Later it became something with which the mass of the proletariat were apparently obsessed.

The proletariat consciousness then consisted of feelings which manifested themselves like the effect of mass suggestion. Many of the single souls said again and again: " A time must come in which the world shall evolve spiritual interests; but for the present the proletariat must be freed by purely economic means."

I found that my lectures wrought much good in their souls. Even that element was taken up which contradicted materialism and the Marxian conception of history. Later, when the leaders learned of my way of working, they fought against it. In a gathering of my pupils one of these " minor leaders " spoke. He made this statement: " We do not wish freedom in the proletarian movement; we wish rational compulsion." Because of this the desire arose to drive me out of the school against the will of my pupils. This activity gradually became so burdensome to me that, soon after I began my anthroposophic work, I dropped it.

It is my impression that if the workers' movement had been followed with interest by a greater number of unprejudiced persons, and if the proletariat had been dealt with understandingly, this movement would have developed quite differently. But we have left the people to live in their own class, and we have lived in ours. The conceptions of each class of men held by the others were merely theoretical. There was discussion of wages when strikes and the like forced it; and all sorts of welfare movements were established. These latter were exceedingly creditable.

But the submerging of these world-stirring questions into a spiritual sphere was wholly lacking. And yet only this could have taken from the movement its destructive forces. It was the time in which the " higher classes " had lost the community feeling, in which egoism spread abroad with its fierce competitive struggles-the time in which the world catastrophe of the second decade of the twentieth century

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was already being prepared. Side by side with this, the proletariat evolved the community sense in its own way as the proletarian class-consciousness. It took up the culture which had been developed in the " upper classes " only so far as this provided material for the justification of the proletarian class-consciousness. Gradually there ceased to be any bridge between the different classes. Thus by reason of the Magazine I was under the necessity of submerging myself in the being of the citizen, and through my activity among the workers in that of the proletariat. A rich field, wherein one could knowingly experience the motive forces of the time.

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FROM the spiritual sphere new light on the evolution of humanity sought to break through in the knowledge acquired during the last third of the nineteenth century. But the spiritual sleep in which this acquired knowledge was given its materialistic interpretation prevented even a notion of the new light, much less any proper attention to it.

So that time arrived which ought by its own nature to have evolved in the direction of the spirit, but which belied its own being-the time wherein it began to be impossible for life to make itself real.



I wish to set down here certain sentences taken from articles which I wrote in March 1898 for the \*Dramaturgische Blätter\*(1) which had become a supplement of the Magazine at the beginning of 1898). Referring to the art of lecturing, I said: " In this field more than in any other is the learner left wholly to himself and to chance.... Because of the form which our public life has taken on, almost everybody nowadays has frequent need to speak in public.... The elevation of ordinary speech to a work of art is a rarity. We lack almost wholly the feeling for the beauty of speaking, and still more for speaking that is characteristic.... To no one devoid of all knowledge of correct singing would the right be granted to discuss a singer.... In the case of dramatic art the requirements imposed are far slighter.... Persons who know whether or not a verse is properly spoken become steadily scarcer.... People nowadays often look upon artistic speaking as ineffective idealism. We could never have come to this had we been more aware of the educative possibilities of speech...."

What then hovered before me could come to a form of

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realization only much later, within the Anthroposophical Society. Marie von Sievers (Marie Steiner), who was enthusiastic on behalf of the art of speech, first dedicated herself to genuinely artistic speaking; and then for the first time it became possible with her help to work for the elevation of speech to a true art by means of courses in speaking and dramatic representations.

I venture to introduce this subject just here in order to show how certain ideals have sought their unfolding all through my life, though many persons have tried to find contradictions in my evolution.

To this period belongs my friendship with the young poet, now dead, Ludwig Jacobowski. He was a personality whose dominant mood of soul breathed the breath of inner tragedy. It was hard for him to bear the fate that made him a Jew. He represented a bureau which, under the guidance of a liberal deputy, directed the union " Defence against Anti-Semitism " and published its organ. An excessive burden in connection with this work rested upon Ludwig Jacobowski. And a sort of work which renewed every day a burning pain; for it brought home to him daily the realization of the feeling against his people which caused him so much suffering.

Along with this he developed a fruitful activity in the field of folk-lore. He collected everything obtainable as the basis for a work on the evolution of the peoples from primitive times. Individual papers of his, based upon his rich fund of knowledge in this field, are very interesting. They were at first written in the materialistic spirit of the time; but, had Jacobowski lived longer, he would certainly have been open to a spiritualizing of his research.

Out of this activity streamed the poetry of Ludwig Jacobowski. Not wholly original; and yet born of deeply human feeling and filled with an experience of the powers of the soul. \*Leuchtende Tage\*(1) he called his lyrical poems. These, when the mood bestowed them upon him, were in his life-tragedy really something that affected him like days of spiritual sunlight. Besides, he wrote novels. In \*Werther der Jude\*(2) there lived all the inner tragedy of Ludwig Jacobowski.

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1 Lununous Days.

2 Werther the Jew.

In *\*Loki, Roman eines Gottes\**(1), he produced a work born of German mythology. The soulful quality which speaks from this novel is a beautiful reflection of the poet's love of the mythological element in a folk.

A survey of what Ludwig Jacobowski achieved leaves one astonished at its fulness in the most divers fields. Yet he associated with many persons and enjoyed social life. More over, he was then editing the monthly *\*Die Gesellschaft\**(2), which meant for him an enormous burden of work. He had a consuming passion for life, whose essence he craved to know in order that he might mould this into artistic form.

He founded a society, *\*Die Kommenden\**(3), consisting of writers, artists, scientists, and persons interested in the arts. The meetings there were weekly. Poets read their poems; lectures were given in the most divers fields of knowledge and life. The evening ended in an informal social gathering. Ludwig Jacobowski was the central point of his ever growing circle. Everybody was attached to the lovable personality, so full of ideas, who, moreover, developed in this club a fine and noble sense of humour.

Away from all this he was snatched by an early death, when he had just reached thirty years. He was taken off by an inflammation of the brain, caused by his unceasing labours.

There remained to me only the duty of giving the funeral address for my friend and editing his literary remains. A beautiful memorial of him was made by his friend, Marie Stona, in the form of a book consisting of papers by friends of his. Everything about Ludwig Jacobowski was lovable: his inner tragedy, his striving outward from this to his "luminous days," his absorption in the life of movement. I keep always alive in my heart thoughts of our friendship, and look back upon our brief association with an inner devotion to my friend.

Another friend with whom I came to be associated at that

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- 1 *Locki, the Romance of a God.*
- 2 *Society.*
- 3 *The Coming Ones.*

time was Martha Asmers, a woman philosophically thoughtful but strongly inclined to materialism. This tendency, however, was modified through the fact that Martha Asmers kept intensely alive the memory of her brother Paul Asmers, who had died early, and who was a decided idealist.

During the last third of the nineteenth century Paul Asmers had lived, like a philosophical hermit, in the idealism of the time of Hegel. He wrote a paper on the ego, and a similar one on the Indo-Germanic religion-both characteristically Hegelian in form, but both thoroughly independent.

This interesting personality, who had then long been dead, was brought really close to me through the sister Martha Asmers. It seemed to me that in him the spirit-tending philosophy of the beginning of the century flamed forth like a meteor toward its end.

Less intimate, but of constant significance for a long time thereafter, were the relationships which came about between the "Friedrich Hagen-ers"-Bruno Wille and Wilhelm Bšlsche -and myself. Bruno Wille is the author of a work entitled *\*Philosophie der Befreiung\* durch das reine Mittel*\*(1). Only the title coincides with my *\*Philosophie der Freiheit\**. The content moves in an entirely different sphere. Bruno Wille became very widely known through his important *\*Offenbarungen des Wachholderbaumes\**(2), a philosophical book written out of the most beautiful feeling for nature, permeated by the conviction that spirit speaks from every material existence. Wilhelm Bšlsche is known through numerous popular writings on the natural sciences which are extraordinarily popular among the widest circles of readers. From this side came the founding of a Free Higher Institute, into which I was drawn. I was entrusted with the teaching of history. Bruno Wille took charge of philosophy, Bšlsche of natural sciences, and Theodor Kappstein, a liberally minded theologian, the science of religion. A second foundation was the Giordano Bruno Union. In this the idea was to bring together such persons as were sympathetic toward a spiritual-monic philosophy. Emphasis

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1 Philosophy of Freedom through the Pure Means.

2 Revelations of the Juniper Tree.

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was placed upon the idea that there are not two world-principles -matter and spirit-but that spirit constitutes the sole principle of all existence. Bruno Wille inaugurated the Union with a very brilliant lecture based upon the saying of Goethe: "Never matter without spirit." Unfortunately a slight misunderstanding arose between Wille and me after this lecture. My words following the lecture-that long after Goethe had coined this beautiful expression, he had supplemented it in impressive fashion, in that he had seen polarity and ascent as the concrete spiritual shapings in the actual spiritual activity in existence, and that in this way the general saying first received its full content-this remark of mine was interpreted as a reflection upon Wille's lecture, which, however, I had fully accepted in the sense he himself intended.

But I brought upon myself the direct opposition of the leadership of the Giordano Bruno Union when I read a paper on monism. In this I laid stress upon the fact that the crude dualistic conception, "matter and spirit," is really a creation of the most recent times, and that likewise only during the most recent centuries were spirit and nature brought into the opposition which the Giordano Bruno Union would oppose. Then I indicated how this dualism is opposed by scholastic monism. Even though scholasticism withdrew from human knowledge a part of existence and assigned this part to "faith," yet scholasticism set up a world-system marked by a unified (monistic) constitution, from the Godhead and the divine all the way to the details of nature. I thus set even scholasticism higher than Kantianism.

This paper of mine aroused the greatest excitement. It was supposed that I wished to open the road for Catholicism into the Union. Of the leading personalities, only Wolfgang Kirchbach and Martha Asmers stood by me. The rest could form no notion as to what I really meant to do with the "

misunderstood scholasticism." In any case, they were convinced that I was likely to bring the greatest confusion into the Giordano Bruno Union.

I must call attention to this paper because it belongs to a time during which, according to the later views of many persons, I was a materialist. But at that time this materialist passed

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with many persons as the one who would swear afresh by medieval scholasticism.

In spite of all this I was able later to deliver before the Giordano Bruno Union my basic anthroposophic lecture, which became the point of departure for my anthroposophic activity.

In imparting to the public that which anthroposophy contains as knowledge of the spiritual world, decisions are necessary which are not altogether easy. The character of these decisions can best be understood if one glances at a single historical fact.

In accordance with the quite differently constituted temper of mind of an earlier humanity, there has always been a knowledge of the spiritual world up to the beginning of the modern age, approximately until the fourteenth century. This knowledge, however, was quite different from anthroposophy, which is adapted to the conditions of cognition characterizing the present day.

After the period mentioned, humanity could at first bring forth no knowledge of the spiritual world. Men could only confirm the "ancient knowledge," which the mind had beheld in the form of pictures, and which was also available later only in symbolic-picture form.

This "ancient knowledge" was practised in remote times only within the "mysteries." It was imparted to those who had first been made ripe for it, the "initiates." It was not to reach the public because there the tendency was too strong to use it in an unworthy manner. This practice has been maintained only by those later personalities who received the lore of the "ancient knowledge" and continued to foster it. They did this in the most restricted circles with men whom they had previously prepared. And thus it has continued even to the present time. Of the persons maintaining such a position in relation to spiritual knowledge whom I have encountered, I may select one who was active within the Viennese circle of Frau Lang to which I have referred but whom I met also in other circles with which I was associated in Vienna. This was Friedrich Eckstein, the distinguished expert in the "ancient knowledge."

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While I was associated with Friedrich Eckstein, he had not written much. But what he did write was filled with the spirit. No one, however, sensed from his essays the intimate expert in the "ancient knowledge." This was active in the background of his spiritual work. Long after life had removed me from this friend also, I read in a collection of his writings a very significant paper on the Bohemian Brothers.

Friedrich Eckstein represented the earnest conviction that esoteric spiritual knowledge should not be publicly propagated like ordinary knowledge. He was not alone in this conviction; it was and is that of almost all experts in the "ancient wisdom." To what extent this conviction of the guardians

of the " ancient wisdom," strongly enforced as a rule, was broken through in the Theosophical Society founded by H. P. Blavatsky-of this I shall have occasion to speak later.

Friedrich Eckstein wished that, as " initiate in the ancient knowledge," one should clothe what one treats publicly in the force which comes from this " initiation," but that one should separate the exoteric strictly from the esoteric, which should remain within the most restricted circles of those who fully understood how to honour it.

If I was to develop a public activity on behalf of spiritual knowledge, I had to determine to break with this tradition. I found myself faced by the requirements of the contemporary intellectual life. In the presence of these the preservation of mysteries such as were inevitable in ancient times was an impossibility. We live in the time which demands publicity wherever any sort of knowledge appears. The point of view favouring the preservation of mysteries is an anachronism. The sole and only possibility is that persons should be taught spiritual knowledge by stages, and that no one should be admitted to a stage at which the higher portions of this knowledge are to be imparted until he knows the lower. This, indeed, corresponds with the practice in lower and higher schools even of an ordinary sort.

Moreover, I was under no obligation to anyone to guard mysteries, for I received nothing from the " ancient wisdom "; what I possess of spiritual knowledge is entirely

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the result of my own researches. When any knowledge has come to me, only then I set beside it whatever of the " ancient knowledge " has already been made public from any side, in order to point out the harmony in mood and, at the same time, the advance which is possible to contemporary research.

So, after a certain point of time, it was quite clear to me that in coming before the public with spiritual knowledge I should be doing the right thing.

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The decision to give public expression to the esoteric from my own inner experience impelled me to write for the Magazine for August 28, 1899, on the occasion of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Goethe's birth, an article on Goethe's fairy-tale of \*The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily\*, under the title \*Goethes Geheime Offenbarung\*(1). This article was, of course, only slightly esoteric. But I could not expect more of my public than I there gave. In my own mind the content of the fairy-tale lived as something wholly esoteric, and it was out of an esoteric mood that the article was written.

Since the 'eighties I had been occupied with imaginations which were associated in my thought with this fairy-tale. I saw set forth in the fairy-tale Goethe's way from the observation of external nature into the interior of the human mind as he placed this before himself, not in concepts, but in pictures of the spirit. Concepts seemed to Goethe far too poor, too dead, to be capable of representing the living and working forces of the mind.

Now in Schiller's letters concerning education in aesthetics, Goethe saw an endeavour to grasp this living and working by means of concepts. Schiller sought to show how the life of man is under subjection to natural necessity by reason of his corporeal aspect and to mental necessity through his reason. And he thought the soul must establish an inner equilibrium between the two. Then in this equilibrium man lives in freedom a life really worthy of humanity.

This is clever, but for the real life of the soul it is far too simple. The soul causes its forces, which are rooted in the depths, to shine into consciousness, but to disappear again

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1 Goethe's Secret Revelation.

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in the very act of shining forth after they have influenced other forces just as fleeting. These are occurrences which even in arising also pass away; but abstract concepts can be linked only to that which continues for a longer or shorter time. All this Goethe knew through experience; he placed his picture-knowledge in a fairy-tale over against Schiller's conceptual knowledge. In experiencing this creation of Goethe's, one had entered the outer court of the esoteric.

This was the time when I was invited by Count and Countess Brockdorff to deliver a lecture at one of their weekly gatherings. At these meetings there came together seekers from all sorts of circles. The lectures there delivered had to do with all aspects of life and knowledge. I knew nothing of all this until I was invited to deliver a lecture; nor did I know the Brockdorffs, but heard of them then for the first time. The theme proposed was an article about Nietzsche. This lecture I gave. Then I observed that among the hearers there were persons with a great interest in the spiritual world. Therefore, when I was invited to give a second lecture, I proposed the subject "Goethe's Secret Revelation," and in this lecture I became entirely esoteric in relation to the fairy-tale. It was an important experience for me to be able to speak in words coined from the world of spirit after having been forced by circumstances throughout my Berlin period up to that time only to let the spiritual shine through my presentation.

The Brockdorffs were leaders of a branch of the Theosophical Society founded by Blavatsky. What I had said in connection with Goethe's fairy-tale led to my being invited by the Brockdorffs to deliver lectures regularly before those members of the Theosophical Society who were associated with them. I explained, however, that I could speak only about that which I vitally experienced within me as spiritual knowledge.

In truth, I could speak of nothing else. For very little of the literature issued by the Theosophical Society was known to me. I had known theosophists while living in Vienna, and I later became acquainted with others. These acquaintance ships led me to write in the Magazine the adverse review

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dealing with the theosophists in connection with the appearance of a publication of Franz Hartmann. What I knew otherwise of the literature was for the most part entirely uncongenial to me

in method and approach; I could not by any possibility have linked my discussions with this literature.

So I then gave the lectures in which I established a connection with the mysticism of the Middle Ages. By means of the ideas of the mystics from Master Eckhard to Jakob Böhme, I found expression for the spiritual conceptions which in reality I had determined beforehand to set forth. I published the series of lectures in the book *\*Die Mystik im Aufgange des neuzeitlichen Geisteslebens\**(1). At these lectures there appeared one day in the audience Marie von Sievers, who was chosen by destiny at that time to take into strong hands the German section of the Theosophical Society, founded soon after the beginning of my lecturing. Within this section I was then able to develop my anthroposophic activity before a constantly increasing audience.

No one was left in uncertainty of the fact that I would bring forward in the Theosophical Society only the results of my own research through perception. For I stated this on all appropriate occasions. When, in the presence of Annie Besant, the German section of the Theosophical Society was founded in Berlin and I was chosen its General Secretary, I had to leave the foundation sessions because I had to give before a non-theosophical audience one of the lectures in which I dealt with the spiritual evolution of humanity, and to the title of which I expressly united the phrase "Eine Anthroposophie."(2) Annie Besant also knew that I was then giving out in lectures under this title what I had to say about the spiritual world.

When I went to London to attend a theosophical congress, one of the leading personalities said to me that true theosophy was to be found in my book *\*Mysticism....\**, I had reason to be satisfied. For I had given only the results of my spiritual vision, and this was accepted in the Theosophical Society.

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1 *Mysticism at the Beginning of the Modern Spiritual Life.*

2 "An anthroposophy."

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There was now no longer any reason why I should not bring forward this spiritual knowledge in my own way before the theosophical public, which was at first the only audience that entered without restriction into a knowledge of the spirit. I subscribed to no sectarian dogmatics; I remained a man who uttered what he believed he was able to utter entirely according to what he himself experienced in the spiritual world. Prior to the founding of the section belongs a series of lectures-which I gave before *\*Die Kommenden\**, entitled *\*Von Buddha zu Christus\**(1). In these discussions I sought to show what a mighty stride the mystery of Golgotha signifies in comparison with the Buddha event, and how the evolution of humanity, as it strives toward the Christ event, approaches its culmination. In this circle I spoke also of the nature of the mysteries.

All this was accepted by my hearers. It was not felt to be contradictory to lectures which I had given earlier. Only after the section was founded-and I then appeared to be stamped as a "theosophist"-did any objection arise. It was really not the thing itself; it was the name and the association with the Society that no one wished to have.

On the other hand, my non-theosophical hearers would have been inclined to permit themselves merely to be "stimulated" by my discussions, to accept these only in a "literary" way. What lay

upon my heart was to introduce into life the impulse from the spiritual world; for this there was no understanding. This understanding, however, I could gradually find among men interested theosophically.

Before the Brockdorff circle, where I had spoken on Nietzsche and the on Goethe's secret revelation, I gave at this time a lecture on Goethe's Faust, from an esoteric point of view.

The lectures on mysticism led to an invitation during the winter from the same theosophical circle to speak there again on this subject. I then gave the series of lectures which I later collected into the volume \*Christianity as Mystical Fact\*.

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1 From Buddha to Christ.

2 This was the lecture which was later published, together with my discussions of Goethe's fairy-tale, by the Philosophische-Anthroposophische Verlag.

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From the very beginning I have let it be known that the choice of the expression " as Mystical Fact " is important. For I did not wish to set forth merely the mystical bearing of Christianity. My object was to set forth the evolution from the ancient mysteries to the mystery of Golgotha in such a way that in this evolution there should be seen to be active, not merely earthly historic forces, but spiritual supramundane influences. And I wished to show that in the ancient mysteries cult-pictures were given of cosmic events, which were then fulfilled in the mystery of Golgotha as facts transferred from the cosmos to the earth of the historic plane.

This was by no means taught in the Theosophical Society. In this view I was in direct opposition to the theosophical dogmatics of the time, before I was invited to work in the Theosophical Society. For this invitation followed immediately after the cycle of lectures on Christ here described.

Between the two cycles of lectures that I gave before the Theosophical Society, Marie von Sievers was in Italy, at Bologna, working on behalf of the Theosophical Society in the branch established there.

Thus the thing evolved up to the time of my first attendance at a theosophical congress, in London, in the year 1902. At this congress, in which Marie von Sievers also took part, it was already a foregone conclusion that a German section of the Society would be founded with myself-shortly before invited to become a member-as the general secretary.

The visit to London was of great interest to me. I there became acquainted with important leaders of the Theosophical Society. I had the privilege of staying at the home of Mr. Bertram Keightley, one of these leaders. We became great friends. I became acquainted with Mr. Mead, the very diligent secretary of the Theosophical Movement. The most interesting conversations imaginable took place at the home of Mr. Keightley in regard to the forms of spiritual knowledge alive within the Theosophical Society.



Especially intimate were these conversations with Bertram Keightley himself. H. P. Blavatsky seemed to live again in these conversations. Her whole personality, with its wealth of spiritual content, was described with the utmost vividness

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before me and Marie von Sievers by my dear host, who had been so long associated with her.

I became slightly acquainted with Annie Besant and also Sinnett, author of *\*Esoteric Buddhism\**. Mr. Leadbeater I did not meet, but only heard him speak from the platform. He made no special impression on me.

All that was interesting in what I heard stirred me deeply, but it had no influence upon the content of my own views.

The intervals left over between sessions of the congress I sought to employ in hurried visits to the natural-scientific and artistic collections of London. I dare say that many an idea concerning the evolution of nature and of man came to me from the natural-scientific and the historical collections.

Thus I went through an event very important for me in this visit to London. I went away with the most manifold impressions, which stirred my mind profoundly.

In the first number of the Magazine for 1899 there appears an article by me entitled *\*Neujahrsbetrachtung eines Ketzers\**(1). The meaning there is a scepticism, not in reference to religious knowledge, but in reference to the orientation of culture which the time had taken on.

Men were standing before the portals of a new century. The closing century had brought forth great attainments in the realm of external life and knowledge. In reference to this the thought forced itself upon me: " In spite of all this and many other attainments-for example, in the sphere of art- no one with any depth of vision can rejoice greatly over the cultural content of the time. Our highest spiritual needs strive for something which the time affords only in meagre measure." And reflecting upon the emptiness of contemporary culture, I glanced back to the time of scholasticism in which, at least in concepts, men's minds lived with the spirit. " One need not be surprised if, in the presence of such phenomena, men with deeper intellectual needs find the proud structure of thought of the scholastics more satisfying than the ideal content of our own time. Otto Willmann has written a noteworthy book, his *\*Geschichte des Idealismus\**(2) in which he appears as the eulogist of the world-conception of

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1 New Year Reflections of a Sceptic.

2 History of Idealism.

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past centuries. It must be admitted that the human mind craves those proud comprehensive illuminations through thought which human knowledge experienced in the philosophical systems of the scholastics.... Discouragement is a characteristic of the intellectual life at the turn of the century. It disturbs our joy in the attainments of the youngest of the ages now past."

And in contrast to those persons who insisted that it was just " true knowledge " itself which showed the impossibility of a philosophy comprising under a single conception the totality of existence, I had to say: " If matters were as they appear to the persons who give currency to such voices, then it would suffice one to measure, weigh, and compare things and phenomena and investigate them by means of the available apparatus, but never would the question be raised as to the higher meaning of things and phenomena."

This is the temper of my mind which must furnish an explanation of those facts that brought about my anthroposophic activity within the Theosophical Society. When I had entered into the culture of the time in order to find a spiritual background for the editing of the Magazine, I felt after this a great need to recover my mind in such reading as Willmann's \*History of Idealism\*. Even though there was an abyss between my perception of spirit and the form of Willmann's ideas, yet I felt that these ideas were near to the spirit.

At the end of September 1900, I was able to leave the Magazine in other hands.

The facts narrated above show that the purpose of imparting the content of the spiritual world had become a necessity growing out of my temper of mind before I gave up the Magazine; that it has no connection with the impossibility of continuing further with the Magazine.

As into the very element suited to my mind, I entered upon an activity having its impulse in spiritual knowledge.

But I still have to-day the feeling that, even apart from the hindrance here described, my endeavour to lead through natural-scientific knowledge to the world of spirit would have succeeded in finding an outlet. I look back upon what I expressed from 1897 to 1900 as upon something which at

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one time or another had to be uttered in opposition to the way of thinking of the time; and on the other hand I look back upon this as upon something in which I passed through my most intense spiritual test. I learned fundamentally to know where lay the forces of the time striving away from the spirit, disintegrating and destructive of culture. And from this knowledge came a great access of the force that I later needed in order to work outward from the spirit.

It was still before the time of my activity within the Theosophical Society, and before I ceased to edit the Magazine, that I composed my two-volume book \*Conceptions of the World and of Life\* in the Nineteenth Century, which from the second edition on was extended to include a survey of the evolution of world-conceptions from the Greek period to the nineteenth century, and then appeared under the title \*Ratzel der Philosophie\*(1). The external occasion for the production of this book is to be considered wholly secondary. It grew out of the fact that Cronbach, the publisher of the Magazine, planned a collection of writings which were to deal with the various realms of knowledge and life in their evolution during the nineteenth century. He wished to include in this collection an exposition of the conceptions of the world and of life, and this he entrusted to me.

I had for a long time held all the substance of this book in my mind. My consideration of the world-conceptions had a personal point of departure in that of Goethe. The opposition which I had to set up between Goethe's way of thinking and that of Kant, the new philosophical beginning at the

turning-point between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Fichte, Schelling, Hegel-all this was to me the beginning of an epoch in the evolution of world-conceptions. The brilliant books of Richard Wahle, which show the dissolution of all endeavour after a world-conception at the end of the nineteenth century, closed this epoch. Thus the attempt of the nineteenth century after a world-conception rounded itself into a whole which was vitally alive in my view, and I gladly seized the opportunity to set this forth.

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1 Riddles of Philosophy.

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When I look back to this book the course of my life seems to me symptomatically expressed in it. I did not concern myself, as many suppose, with anticipating contradictions. If this were the case, I should gladly admit it. Only it was not the reality in my spiritual course. I concerned myself in anticipation to find new spheres for what was alive in my mind. And an especially stimulating discovery in the spiritual sphere occurred soon after the composition of the \*Conceptions of the World and of Life\*.

Besides, I never by any means penetrated into the spiritual sphere in a mystical, emotional way, but desired always to go by way of crystal-clear concepts. Experiencing of concepts, of ideas, led me out of the ideal into the spiritual-real.

The real evolution of the organic from primeval times to the present stood out before my imagination for the first time after the composition of \*Conceptions of the World and of Life\*.

During the writing of this book I had before my eyes only the natural-scientific view which had been derived from the Darwinian mode of thought. But this I considered only as a succession of sensible facts present in nature. Within this succession of facts there were active for me spiritual impulses, as these hovered before Goethe in his idea of metamorphosis.

Thus the natural-scientific evolutionary succession, as represented by Haeckel, never constituted for me something wherein mechanical or merely organic laws controlled, but as something wherein the spirit led the living being from the simple through the complex up to man. I saw in Darwinism a mode of thinking which is on the way to that of Goethe, but which remains behind this.

All this was still thought by me in ideal content ; only later did I work through to imaginative perception. This perception first brought me the knowledge that in reality quite other beings than the most simple organisms were present in primeval times. That man as a spiritual being is older than all other living beings, and that in order to assume his present physical form he had to cease to be a member of a world-being which comprised him and the other organisms. These latter are rejected elements in human evolution; not something out of

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which man has come, but something which he has left behind, from which he severed himself, in order to take on his physical form as the image of one that was spiritual. Man is a microcosmic being who bore within him all the rest of the terrestrial world and who has become a microcosm by

separating from all the rest-this for me was a knowledge to which I first attained in the earliest years of the new century.

And so this knowledge could not be in any way an active impulse in \*Conceptions of the World and of Life\*. Indeed, I so conceived the second volume of this book that a point of departure for a deepening knowledge of the world mystery might be found in a spiritualized form of Darwinism and Haeckelism viewed in the light of Goethe's world-conception.

When I prepared later the second edition of the book, there was already present in my mind a knowledge of the true evolution. All through I held fast to the point of view I had assumed in the first edition as being that which is derived from thinking without spiritual perception, yet I found it necessary to make slight changes in the form of expression. These were necessary, first because the book by undertaking a general survey of the totality of philosophy had become an entirely different composition, and secondly because this second edition appeared after my discussions of the true evolution were already before the world. In all this the form taken by my \*Riddles of Philosophy\* had not only a subjective justification, as the point of view firmly held from the time of a certain phase in my mental evolution, but also a justification entirely objective. This consists in the fact that a thought, when spiritually experienced as thought, can conceive the evolution of living beings only as this is set forth in my book; and that the further step must be made by means of spiritual perception. Thus my book represents quite objectively the pre-anthroposophic point of view into which one must submerge oneself, and which one must experience in this submersion, in order to rise to the higher point of view. This point of view, as a stage in the way of knowledge, meets those learners who seek the spiritual world, not in a mystical blurred form, but in a form intellectually clear. In setting forth that which results

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from this point of view there is also present something which the learner uses as a preliminary stage leading to the higher.

Then for the first time I saw in Haeckel the person who placed himself courageously at the thinker's point of view in natural science, while all other researchers excluded thought and admitted only the results of sense-observation. The fact that Haeckel placed value upon creative thought in laying the foundation for reality drew me again and again to him.

And so I dedicated my book to him, in spite of the fact that its content-even in that form-was not conceived in his sense. But Haeckel was not in the least a philosophical nature. His relation to philosophy was wholly that of a layman. For this very reason I considered the attack of the philosophers that was just then raging around Haeckel as quite undeserved. In opposition to them, I dedicated my book to Haeckel, as I had already written in opposition to them my essay \*Haeckel und seine Gegner\*(1). Haeckel, in all simplicity as regards philosophy, had employed thought as the means for setting forth biological reality; a philosophical attack was directed against him which rested upon an intellectual sphere quite foreign to him. I believe he never knew what the philosophers wished from him. This was my impression from a conversation I had with him in Leipzig after the appearance of his \*Riddle of the Universe\*, on the occasion of a presentation of Borngräber's play \*Giordano Bruno\*. He then said: " People say I deny the spirit. I wish they could see how materials shape themselves through their forces; then they would perceive ' spirit ' in everything that happens in a retort. Everywhere there is spirit." Haeckel, in fact, knew nothing

whatever of the real Spirit. The very forces of nature were for him the " spirit," and he could rest content with this.

One must not critically attack such blindness to the spirit with philosophically dead concepts, but must see how far the age is removed from the experience of the spirit, and must seek, on the foundation which the age affords-the natural biological explanation-to strike the spiritual sparks.

Such was then my opinion. On that basis I wrote my \*Conceptions of the World and of Life\* in the Nineteenth Century.

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1 Hackel and His Opponents.

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ANOTHER collective work which represented the cultural attainments of the nineteenth century was published at that time by Hans Kraemer. It consisted of rather long treatises on the individual branches of knowledge, technical production, and social evolution. I was invited to give a description of the literary aspect of life. So the evolution of fantasy during the nineteenth century passed through my mind. I did not describe things like a philologist, who develops such things " from their sources "; I described what I had inwardly experienced of the unfolding of the life of fantasy.

This exposition also was important for me in that I had to speak of phenomena of the spiritual life without having recourse to the experience of the spiritual world. The real spiritual impulses from this world that manifest themselves in the phenomena of poetry were left unmentioned.

In this case likewise what was present to my mind was that which the mental life has to say of a phenomenon of existence when the mind is at the point of view of the ordinary consciousness without bringing the content of the consciousness into such activity that it rises up in experience into the world of spirit. Still more significant for me was this experience of standing before the doorway of the spiritual world in the case of a treatise which I had to write for another work. This was not a centennial work, but a collection of papers which were to characterize the various spheres of knowledge and life in so far as human egoism is a motor force in each sphere. Arthur Dix published this work. It was entitled \*Der Egoismus\*(1)

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1 Egoism.

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and was throughout applicable to the time-the turning-point between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The impulses of intellectualism, which had been effective in all spheres of life since the fifteenth century, have their roots in the " life of the individual soul " when these impulses are really genuine expressions of their own nature. When man reveals himself intellectually on the basis of the social life, this is not a genuine intellectual expression, but an imitation.

One of the reasons why the demand for a social feeling has become so intense in this age lies in the fact that this feeling is not experienced with original inwardness in intellectualism. Humanity in these things craves most of all that which it has not.

To my lot fell the setting forth for this book of *\*Egoismus in der Philosophie\**(1). My paper bears this title only because the general title of the book required this. The title ought really to have been *\*Individualismus in der Philosophie\**. I sought to give in very brief form a survey of occidental philosophy since Thales, and to show how the goal of its evolution has been to bring the human individual to experience the world in ideal images, just as it is the purpose of my *\*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\** to set this forth with reference to knowledge and the moral life.

Again in this paper I stand before the " gateway of the spiritual world." In the human individual were pointed out the ideal images which reveal the world-content. They appear so that they may wait for the experience whereby the mind may step through them into the world of spirit. In my description I held to this position. There is an inner world in this article which shows how far mere thinking comes in its grasp of the world.

It is evident that I described the pre-anthroposophic life of the mind from the most varied points of view before devoting myself to the anthroposophic setting forth of the spiritual world. In this there can be found nothing contradictory of my coming forward on behalf of anthroposophy; for the world-picture which arises will not be contradicted by anthroposophy, but extended and continued further.

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1 Egoism in Philosophy.

2 Individualism in Philosophy.

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If one begins to represent the spiritual world as a mystic, any one has a right to say: " You speak from your personal experiences. What you are describing is subjective." To travel such a spiritual road was not given me as my task from the spiritual world.

This task consisted in laying a foundation for anthroposophy just as objective as that of scientific thinking when this does not restrict itself to sensible facts but reaches out for comprehensive concepts. All that I set forth in scientific-philosophic manner, and in connection with Goethe's ideas is subject to discussion. It may be considered more or less correct or incorrect; but it strives after the character of the objective-scientific in the fullest sense.

And it is out of this knowledge, free of the emotional-mystical, that I have brought the experience of the spiritual world. It can be seen how in my *\*Mysticism and Christianity as Mystical Fact\** the conception of mysticism is carried in the direction of this objective knowledge. And let it be noted also how my *\*Theosophy\** is constructed. At every step taken in this book, spiritual perception stands as the background. Nothing is said which is not derived from this spiritual perception; but, while the steps are being made, the perception is clothed at first in the beginning of the book in scientific ideas until, in rising to the higher worlds, it must occupy itself more and more in freely picturing the spiritual world.

But this picturing grows out of the natural-scientific as the blossoms of a plant from the stem and leaves. As the plant is not seen in its entirety, if one fixes one's eye upon it only up to the blossom, so nature is not experienced in her entirety if one does not rise from the sensible to the spiritual.

Therefore that for which I strove was to set forth in anthroposophy the objective continuation of science, not to set by the side of science something subjective. It was inevitable that this very effort would not at first be understood. Science was supposed to end with that which antedates anthroposophy, and there was no inclination so to put life into the ideas of science as to lead to one's laying hold upon the spiritual. Men ran the risk of being excommunicated by the habit of thought built up during the second half of the nineteenth century.

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They could not muster the courage to break the fetters of mere sense-observation; they feared that they might arrive at a region where each would insist upon his own fantasy.

Such was my orientation of mind when, in 1902, Marie von Sievers and I entered upon the leadership of the German section of the Theosophical Society. It was Marie von Sievers who, by reason of her whole being, made it possible to keep what came about through us far removed from anything sectarian, and to give to the thing such a character as won for it a place within the general spiritual and educational life. She was deeply interested in the art of the drama and of declamation and recitation, and had completed courses of study in these art forms, especially in the best institutions in Paris, which had given to her talent a beautiful development. When I became acquainted with her in Berlin she was still continuing her studies in order to learn the various methods of artistic speech.

Marie von Sievers and I soon became great friends, and on the basis of this friendship there developed an united work in the most varied intellectual spheres and over a very wide area. Anthroposophy, but also the arts of poetry and of recitation-to cultivate these in common became for us the very essence of life.

Only in this unitedly cultivated spiritual life could the central point be found from which at first anthroposophy would be carried into the world through the local branches of the Theosophical Society.

During our first visit to London together, Marie von Sievers had heard from Countess Wachtmeister, an intimate friend of H. P. Blavatsky, much about the latter and about the tendencies and the evolution of the Theosophical Society. She was entrusted in the highest measure with that which was once revealed as a spiritual content to the Society and the story of how this content had been further fostered.

When I say that it was possible to find in the branches of the Theosophical Society those persons who desired to have knowledge imparted to them from the spiritual world, I do not mean that those persons enrolled in the Theosophical Society could be considered before all others as being of such a character.

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Many of these, however, proved very soon to have a high degree of understanding in reference to my form of spiritual knowledge. But a large part of the members were fanatical followers of individual heads of the Theosophical Society. They swore by the dogmas given out by these heads, who acted in a strongly sectarian spirit.

This action of the Theosophical Society repelled me by the triviality and dilettantism inherent in it. Only among the English theosophists did I find an inner content, which also, however, rested upon Blavatsky, and which was then fostered by Annie Besant and others in a literal fashion. I could never have worked in the manner in which these theosophists worked. But I considered what lived among them as a spiritual centre with which one could worthily unite when one earnestly desired the spread of spiritual knowledge. So it was not the united membership in the Theosophical Society upon which Marie von Sievers and I counted, but chiefly those persons who were present with heart and mind whenever spiritual knowledge in an earnest sense was being cultivated.

This working within the existing branches of the Theosophical Society, which was necessary as a starting-point, comprised only a part of our activity. The chief thing was the arrangement for public lectures in which I spoke to a public not belonging to the Theosophical Society that came to my lectures only because of their content. Of persons who learned in this manner what I had to say about the spiritual world and of those who through the activity in one or another theosophical tendency found their way to this mode of learning-of these persons there was comprised within the branches of the Theosophical Society that which later became the Anthroposophical Society. Among the various charges that have been directed against me in reference to my work in the Theosophical Society- even from the side of the Society itself-this also has been raised: that to a certain extent I used this Society, which already had a standing in the world, as a spring-board in order to render easier the way for my own spiritual knowledge.

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There is not the slightest ground for such a statement. When I accepted the invitation into the Society, this was the sole institution worthy of serious consideration in which there was present a real spiritual life. Had the mood, bearing, and work of the Society remained as they then were, the withdrawal of my friend and myself need never have occurred. The Anthroposophical Society might only have been formed officially within the Theosophical Society as a special section.

But even as early as 1906 things were already beginning to be manifest and effective in the Theosophical Society which indicated in a terrible measure its deterioration.

If earlier still, in the time of H. P. Blavatsky, such incidents were asserted by the outer world to have occurred, yet at the beginning of the century it was clearly true that the earnestness of spiritual work on the part of the Society constituted a compensation for whatever wrong thing had taken place. Moreover, the occurrences had been left behind.

But after 1906 there began in the Society, upon whose general direction I had not the least influence, practices reminiscent of the growth of spiritualism, which made it necessary for me to warn members again and again that the part of the Society which was under my direction should have absolutely nothing to do with these things. The climax in these practices was reached when it was asserted of a Hindu boy that he was the person in whom Christ would appear in a new earthly life. For the propagation of this absurdity there was formed in the Theosophical Society a special society, that of "The Star of the East." It was utterly impossible for my friend and me to include the



membership of this " Star of the East " as a branch of the German section, as they desired and as Annie Besant, president of the Theosophical Society, especially intended. We were forced to found the Anthroposophical Society independently.

I have in this matter departed far from the narration of events in the course of my life; but this was necessary, for only these later facts can throw the right light on the purposes to which I bound myself in entering the Society at the beginning of the century.

When I first spoke at the congress of the Theosophical Society

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in London in 1902, I said that the unity into which the individual sections would combine should consist in the fact that each one should bring to the centre what it held within itself; and I gave sharp warning that I should expect this most especially of the German section. I made it clear that this section would never conduct itself as the representative of set dogmas but as composed of places independent of one another in spiritual research, which desired to reach mutual understandings in the conferences of the whole Society in regard to the fostering of genuine spiritual life.

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IN reading discussions of anthroposophy such as appear nowadays there is something painful in having to meet again and again such thoughts, for instance, as " that the World War has been the cause of moods in men's souls fitted to set up all sorts of ' mystical ' and similar spiritual currents "; and then to have anthroposophy included among these currents.

Against this stands the fact that the anthroposophic movement was founded at the beginning of the century, and that nothing essential has been done within this movement since its foundation that has not been derived from the inner life of the spirit. Twenty-five years ago I had a content of spiritual impressions within me. I gave the substance of these in lectures, treatises, and books. What I did was done from spiritual impulses. In its essence every theme was drawn from the spirit. During the war I discussed also topics which were suggested by the events of the times. But in these there was nothing basic due to any intention of taking advantage of the mood of the time for propagation of anthroposophy. These discussions occurred because men desired to have certain events illuminated by the knowledge which comes from the spiritual world.

On behalf of anthroposophy no endeavour has ever been made for anything except that it should take that course of development made possible by its own inner force bestowed upon it from the spirit. It is as far as possible out of harmony with anthroposophy to imagine that it would desire to win something from the dark abysses of the soul during the World War. That the number of those interested in anthroposophy increased after the war, that the Anthroposophical Society increased in its membership-these things are true; only one ought to note that all these facts have never changed anything

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in the development of the anthroposophical reality in the sense in which this took its full form at the beginning of the century.

The form which was to be given to anthroposophy from inner spiritual being had at first to struggle against all sorts of opposition from the theosophists in Germany.

There was, first of all, the justification of spiritual knowledge before the " scientific " mode of thought of the time. That this justification is necessary I have stated frequently in this story of my life. I took that mode of thought which rightly passes as " scientific " in natural knowledge and extended this into spiritual knowledge. Through this means, the mode of knowledge of nature became, to be sure, something different for the observation of spirit from what it is for the observation of nature, but the character which causes it to be looked upon as " scientific " was maintained.

For this mode of scientific shaping of spiritual knowledge, those persons who considered themselves representatives of the theosophical movement at the beginning of the century never had any feeling or interest.

These were the persons grouped about Dr. Hÿbbe-Schleiden He, as a personal friend of H. P. Blavatsky, had established a theosophical society as early as the 'eighties, beginning at Elberfeld. In this foundation H. P. Blavatsky herself participated. Dr. Hÿbbe-Schleiden then published a journal, \*Die Sphinx\*, in which the theosophical world-conception should be upheld. The whole movement failed; and, when the German section of the Theosophical Society was founded, there was nothing existing except a number of persons, who looked upon me, however, as a sort of trespasser in their territory. These persons awaited the "scientific founding" of theosophy by Dr. Hÿbbe-Schleiden. They held the opinion that, until this should occur, nothing was to be done in this matter within German territory. What I began to do appeared to them as a disturbance of their " waiting," as something utterly blameworthy. Yet they did not at once withdraw; for theosophy was their affair, and, if anything should happen in this, they did not wish to be absent.

What did they understand of the " science " that

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Dr. Hÿbbe-Schleiden was to establish, whereby theosophy would be " proven " ? To anthroposophy they conceded nothing.

They understood by this term the atomistic bases of natural scientific theorizing. The phenomena of nature were " explained " when one conceived the " primal parts " of the world-substance as grouping into atoms and these into molecules. A substance was there by reason of the fact that it represented a certain structure of atoms in molecules.

This mode of thought was supposed to be figurative. Complicated molecules were constructed which were also to be the basis for spiritual effects. Chemical processes were supposed to be the results of processes within the molecular structure; for spiritual processes something similar must be found.

For me this atomic theory, in the significance given to it in natural science, was something quite impossible even within that science; to wish to carry this over into the spiritual seemed to me a confusion of thought that one could not even seriously discuss.

In this field there have always been difficulties for my way of establishing anthroposophy. People have been assured from certain sides for a long time that materialism was overcome. To those who incline to this view, anthroposophy seems to be attacking windmills when it discusses materialism in science. To me, on the contrary, it was always clear that what people call a way of overcoming materialism is just the way unconsciously to maintain it.

It was never a matter of moment to me that atoms should be conceived either in a purely mechanical or other activity in connection with processes in matter. What was important to me was that the thoughtful consideration of the atom—the smallest image of the world—should go forward and seek for an issue into the organic, into the spiritual. I saw the necessity of proceeding from the whole. Atoms, or atomic structure, can only be the results of spiritual action or organic action. From the perceived primal phenomena, and not from an intellectual construction, would I take the way leading out into the spirit of Goethe's view of nature. Profoundly impressive to me was the meaning of Goethe's words that the factual is in itself theoretical, and that one should seek for nothing behind this.

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But this demands that one must receive in the presence of nature that which the senses give, and must employ thought solely in order to go past the complicated derivative phenomena (appearances), which cannot be surveyed, and arrive at the simple, the primal phenomena. Then it will be noted that in nature one has to do with colour and other sense-qualities within which spirit is actually at work; but one does not arrive at an atomic world behind the sense-world.

That in this direction progress has occurred in the conception of nature the anthroposophic mode of thinking cannot admit. What appears in such views as those of Mach, or what has recently appeared in this sphere, is really the beginning of an abandonment of the atomic and molecular constructions; yet all this shows that this construction is so deeply rooted in the mode of thought that abandoning it means losing all reality. Mach has spoken now of concepts only as if they were economical generalizations of sense-perceptions, not something which lives in a spiritual reality; and it is the same with recent writers.

Therefore what now appears as a battle within theoretical materialism is no less remote from the spiritual being in which anthroposophy lives than from the materialism of the last third of the nineteenth century. What has been brought forward, therefore, by anthroposophy against the customary thinking of the physical sciences holds good to-day, not in lesser but in greater measure.

The setting forth of these things may appear to be theoretical obtrusions in this story of my life. To me they are not; for what is contained in these analyses was for me an experience, the strongest sort of experience, far more significant even than what came to me from without.

Immediately upon the foundation of the German section of the Theosophical Society, it seemed to me a matter of necessity to have a publication of our own. So Marie von Sievers and I established the monthly *Luzifer*. The name was naturally in no way associated at that time with the spiritual

Power whom I later designated as \*Lucifer\*, the opposite of Ahriman. The content of anthroposophy had not then been developed to such an extent that these Powers could have been

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discussed. The name was intended to signify only " The Light-bearer."

Although it was at first my intention to work in harmony with the leadership of the Theosophical Society, yet from the beginning I had the feeling that something must originate in anthroposophy which evolves out of its own germ without making itself in any way dependent upon what theosophy causes to be taught. This I could accomplish only by means of such a publication. And what anthroposophy is to-day has really grown out of what I then wrote in that monthly.

It was thus that the German section was established under the patronage and in the presence of Mrs. Besant. At that time Mrs. Besant delivered a lecture in Berlin on the goal and the principles of theosophy. Somewhat later we requested her to deliver Lectures in a number of German cities. Such was the case in Hamburg, Berlin, Weimar, Munich, Stuttgart, Cologne. In spite of all this-and not by reason of any measures taken by me, but because of the inner necessities of the thing-theosophy failed, and anthroposophy went through an evolution determined by inner requirements.

Marie von Sievers made all this possible, not only because she made material sacrifices according to her ability, but because she devoted her entire effort to anthroposophy. At first we had to work under conditions truly the most primitive. I wrote the greater part of \*Luzifer\*. Marie von Sievers carried on the correspondence. When an issue was ready, we ourselves attended to the wrapping, addressing, stamping, and personally carried the copies to the post office in a laundry basket.

Very soon \*Luzifer\* had so far increased its circulation that a Herr Rappaport, of Vienna, who published a journal called \*Gnosis\*, made an agreement with me to combine this with mine into a single publication. Then \*Luzifer\* appeared under the title \*Luzifer-Gnosis\*. For a long time also Herr Rappaport had a share in the undertaking.

\*Luzifer-Gnosis\* made the most satisfactory progress. The publication increased its circulation in a highly satisfactory fashion. Numbers which had been exhausted had to be printed a second time. Nor did it " fail." But the spread

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of anthroposophy in a relatively short time took such a form that I was called upon to deliver lectures in many cities. From the single lectures there grew in many cases cycles of lectures. At first I tried to maintain the editorship of \*Luzifer-Gnosis\* along with this lecturing; but the numbers could not be issued any longer at the right time-often coming out months later. And so there came about the remarkable fact that a periodical which was gaining new subscribers with every number could no longer be published, solely because of the overburdening of the editor.

In \*Lucifer-Gnosis\* I was able for the first time to publish what became the foundation of anthroposophic work. There first appeared what I had to say about the strivings that the human mind must make in order to attain to its own perceptual grasp upon spiritual knowledge. \*Wie erlangt man Erkenntnisse der hšhern Welten\*(1)? came out in serial form from number to number.

In the same way was the basis laid for anthroposophic cosmology in serial articles entitled \*Aus der Akasha-Chronik\*(2).

It was from what was thus given, and not from anything borrowed from the Theosophical Movement, that the Anthroposophical Movement had its growth. If I gave any attention to the teachings carried on in the Society when I composed my own writings on spiritual knowledge, it was only for the purpose of correcting by a contrasting statement one thing or another in those teachings which I considered erroneous.

In this connection I must mention something which is constantly brought forward by our opponents, wrapped in a fog of misunderstandings. I need say nothing whatever about this on any inner ground, for it has had no influence whatever on my evolution or on my public activities. As regards all that I have to describe here the matter has remained a purely " private " affair. I refer to my forming " esoteric schools " within the Theosophical Society.

The " esoteric schools " date back to H. P. Blavatsky.

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1 \*Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment\*.

The content of this book appeared in English at first

in two volumes: \*The Way of Initiation\*, and \*Initiation and Its Results\*.

2 From the Akashic Record.

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She had created for a small inner circle of the Society a place in which she gave out what she did not wish to say to the Society in general. She, like others who know the spiritual world, did not consider it possible to impart to the generality of persons certain profound teachings.

All this is bound up with the way in which H. P. Blavatsky came to give her teachings. There has always been a tradition in regard to such teachings which goes back to the ancient mysteries. This tradition was cherished in all sorts of societies, which took strict care to prevent any teaching from permeating outside each society.

But, for some reason or other, it was considered proper to impart such teaching to H. P. Blavatsky. She then united what she had thus received with revelations which came to her personally from within. For she was a human personality in whom, by reason of a remarkable atavism, the spiritual worked as it had once worked in the leaders of the mysteries, in a state of consciousness which-in contrast with the modern state illuminated by the consciousness-soul-was dreamlike in character. Thus, in the human being, " Blavatsky," was renewed that which in primitive times was kept secret in the mysteries.

For modern men there is an infallible method for deciding what portion of the content of spiritual perception can be imparted to wider circles. This can be done with everything which the investigator can clothe in such ideas as are current both in the consciousness-soul itself and also in appropriate form in acknowledged science.

Such is not the case when the spiritual knowledge does not live in the mind, but in forces lying rather in the subconsciousness. These are not sufficiently independent of the forces active in the

body. Therefore the imparting of such teachings drawn from the subconscious may be dangerous; for such teachings can in like manner be taken in only by the subconscious. Thus both teacher and learner are then moving in a region where that which is wholesome for man and that which is harmful must be handled with the utmost care.

All this, therefore, does not concern anthroposophy, because this lifts all its teachings entirely above the subconscious.

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The inner circle of Blavatsky continued to live in the " esoteric schools." I had set up my anthroposophic activity within the Theosophical Society. I had therefore to be informed as to all that occurred in the latter. For the sake of this information, and also because I considered a smaller circle necessary for those advanced in anthroposophical spiritual knowledge, I caused myself to be admitted as a member into the " esoteric school." My smaller circle was, of course, to have a different meaning from this school. It was to represent a higher participation, a higher class, for those who had absorbed enough of the elementary knowledge of anthroposophy. Now I intended everywhere to link up with what was already in existence, with what history had already provided. Just as I did this in regard to the Theosophical Society, I wished to do likewise in reference to the esoteric school. For this reason my " more restricted circle " arose at first in connection with this school. But the connection consisted solely in the plan and not in that which I imparted from the spiritual world. So in the first years I selected as my more restricted circle a section of the esoteric school of Mrs. Besant. Inwardly it was not by any means whatever the same as this. And in 1907, when Mrs. Besant was with us at the theosophical congress in Munich, even the external connection came to an end according to an agreement between Mrs. Besant and myself.

That I could have learned anything special in the esoteric school of Mrs. Besant is beyond the bounds of possibility, since from the beginning I never participated in the exercises of this school except in a few instances in which my participation was for the sole purpose of informing myself as to what went on there.

There was at that time no other real content in the school except that which was derived from H. P. Blavatsky and which was already in print. In addition to these printed exercises, Mrs. Besant gave all sorts of Indian exercises for progress in knowledge, to which I was opposed.

Until 1907, then, my more restricted circle was connected, as to its plan, with that which Mrs. Besant fostered as such a circle. But to make of these facts what has been made of

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them by opponents is wholly unjustifiable. Even the absurd idea that I was introduced to spiritual knowledge entirely by the esoteric school of Mrs. Besant has been asserted.

In 1903 Marie von Sievers and I again took part in the theosophical congress in London. Colonel Olcott, president of the Theosophical Society, was also present, having come from India. A lovable personality, as to whom, however, it was easy to see how he could become the partner of Blavatsky in the founding, planning, and guiding of the Theosophical Society. For within a brief time the Society had in an external sense become a large body possessing an impressive organization.

Marie von Sievers and I came closer to Mrs. Besant by reason of the fact that she lived with Mrs. Bright in London and we also were invited for our second London visit to this lovable home. Mrs. Bright and her daughter, Miss Esther Bright, constituted the family; persons who were like an embodiment of loveliness. I look back with inner joy upon the time I was privileged to spend in this home. The Brights were loyal friends of Mrs. Besant. Their endeavour was to knit a closer tie between us and the latter. Since it was then impossible that I should stand with Mrs. Besant in certain things-of which some have already been mentioned here-this gave pain to the Brights, who were bound with bands of steel-utterly uncritical they were-to the leader of the Theosophical Society.

Mrs. Besant was an interesting person to me because of certain of her characteristics. I observed that she had a certain right to speak from her own inner experiences of the spiritual world. The inner entrance of soul into the spiritual world she did possess. Only this was later stifled by certain external objectives that she set herself.

To me a person who could speak of the spirit from the spirit was necessarily interesting. But, on the other hand, I was strongly of the opinion that in our age the insight into the spiritual world must live within the consciousness-soul.

I looked into an ancient spiritual knowledge of humanity. It was dreamlike in character. Men saw in pictures through which the spiritual world revealed itself. But these pictures were not evolved by the will-to-knowledge in full clarity of

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mind. They appeared in the soul, given to it like dreams from the cosmos. This ancient spiritual knowledge came to an end in the Middle Ages. Man came into possession of the consciousness-soul. He no longer had dream-knowledge. He drew ideas in full clarity of mind by his will-to-knowledge into the soul. This capacity first became a living reality in the sense-world. It reached its climax as sense-knowledge in natural science.

The present task of spirit-knowledge is to carry the experience of ideas in full clarity of mind into the spiritual world by means of the will-to-knowledge. The knower then has a content of mind which is experienced like that of mathematics. One thinks like a mathematician; but one does not think in numbers or in geometrical figures. One thinks in pictures of the spiritual world. In contrast to the ancient waking dream knowledge of the spirit, it is the fully conscious standing within the spiritual world.

Within the Theosophical Society one could gain no true relationship to this new knowledge of the spirit. One became suspicious as soon as full consciousness sought to enter the spiritual world. One knew a full consciousness solely for the sense-world. There was no true feeling for the evolving of this to the point of experiencing the spirit. The process was only to the point of a return to the ancient dream consciousness with the suppression of full consciousness. And this turning back was true of Mrs. Besant also. She has scarcely any capacity for grasping the modern form of knowledge of the spirit. But what she said of the world of spirit was, nevertheless, from that world. So she was to me an interesting person.

Since among the other leaders of the Society also there was present this opposition to fully conscious knowledge of the spirit, my mind could never feel at home in the Society as regards the spiritual. Socially I enjoyed being in these circles; but their temper of mind in reference to the spiritual remained alien to me.

For this reason I was also hindered from founding my lectures upon my own experience of the spirit. I delivered lectures which anyone could have delivered even though he might

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have no perception of spirit. This perception found expression in the lectures which I delivered, not at the meetings of branches of the Society, but before those which grew out of what Marie von Sievers and I arranged from Berlin.

Then arose the Berlin, Munich, and Stuttgart work. Other places joined. Later the content of the Theosophical Society gradually disappeared; and there came into existence that which was congenial to the inner force living in anthroposophy.

While carrying out the plans together with Marie von Sievers, for the external activities, I elaborated the results of my spiritual perception. On the one hand I had, of course, a fully developed standing-within the spiritual world; but I had in about 1902-and in the succeeding years also as regards many things-" imaginations, inspirations, and intuitions." These gradually shaped themselves into what I then gave out publicly in my writings.

Through the activity developed by Marie von Sievers there came about from a small beginning the philosophical anthroposophical publication business. A small pamphlet based upon notes of a lecture I delivered before the Berlin Free Higher Institute to which I have referred was the first matter thus published. The necessity of getting possession of my \*Philosophy of Spiritual Activity\*-which could no longer be distributed by the former publisher-and of attending personally to its distribution gave the second task. We bought the remaining copies and the publisher's rights for this book.

All this was not easy for us. For we were without any considerable means. But the work progressed, for the very reason that it could not rely upon anything external but solely upon inner spiritual circumstances.

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MY first work of lecturing within the circles which grew out of the Theosophical Movement had to be planned according to the temper of mind of the groups. Theosophical literature had been read there, and people were used to certain forms of expression. I had to retain these if I wished to be understood. But with the lapse of time and the progress of the work I was able gradually to pursue my own course, even in the forms of expression used.

For this reason, in the reports of lectures belonging to the first years of the anthroposophical activity, there is spread before one a true inner and spiritual picture of the path by which I moved in order to extend the knowledge of the spirit, stage by stage, so that from what lay close at hand the remote might be grasped; but one must also take this path truly according to its inwardness.



The years, approximately, from 1901 to 1907 or 1908 were a time in which I stood with all the forces of my soul under the impression of the facts and Beings of the spiritual world coming close to me. Out of the experience of the spiritual world in general there grew the special sorts of knowledge. One experiences very much while composing such a book as \*Theosophy\*. At every step my endeavour was to remain always in touch with scientific knowledge.

With the expansion and deepening of spiritual experience, this endeavour after such a contact takes on special forms. My Theosophy seems to fall into an entirely different tone at the moment when I pass from the description of the human being to a setting forth of the " Soul-World " and the " Spirit-Land."

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While describing the human being I proceed from the results of physical science. I seek so to deepen anthropology that the human organism may appear in its differentiation. Then one can see in this how, according to its several kinds of organization, it is in different ways bound up with that penetrating it from the beings of the spheres of soul and spirit. One finds the vital activity in one form of organization; then the point of action of the etheric body becomes visible. One finds the organs of feeling (Empfindung) and of perception (Wahrnehmung); then the astral body is indicated through the physical organization. Before my spiritual perception there stood spiritually these members of man's being: etheric body, astral body, ego, etc. In setting these forth I sought to connect them with the results of physical science. Very difficult for one who wishes to remain scientific is the setting forth of the repeated earthly lives and of the destinies which are thereby determined. If one does not wish at this point to speak merely from spiritual perception, one must resort to ideas which result, to be sure, from a fine observation of the sense world, but which men fail to grasp. To such a finer manner of observation man shows himself to be, in organization and evolution, different from the animal kingdom. And if one observes this difference, life itself gives rise to the idea of repeated earthly lives; but people do not actually observe this. So such ideas seem not to be taken from life but to be conceived arbitrarily or simply taken out of more ancient world-conceptions.

I faced these difficulties in full consciousness. I battled with them. And anyone who will take the trouble to review the successive editions of my \*Theosophy\* and see how I recast again and again the chapter on repeated earthly lives, for the very purpose of attaching the truths of this to those ideas which are taken from observation of the sense-world, will find what pains I took to adjust myself rightly to the recognized scientific methods.

Even more difficult from this point of view were the chapters on the " Soul-World " and the " Spirit-Land." To one who has read the preceding discussions only to take cognizance of the content, the truths set forth in these chapters will seem

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to be mere assertions arbitrarily uttered. But it is different for one whose experience of ideas has received an access of strength from the reading of that which is linked up with the observation of the sense-world. To him the ideas have released themselves from their bondage to sense and have taken on an independent inner life. Now, therefore, the succeeding process of soul can become an

inner possession. He becomes aware of the life of released ideas. These weave and work in his soul. He experiences them as he experiences through the senses colours, tones, and sensations of warmth. And as the world of nature is given in colours, tones, etc., so is the world of spirit given to him in the experienced ideas. Of course, any one who reads the first discussions of my \*Theosophy\* without the impression of inner experience, so that he does not become aware of a metamorphosis of his previous ideal experience,-whoever, in spite of having read the preceding, goes on to the succeeding discussions as if he had begun to read the book at the chapter " The Soul-World "-such a person must inevitably reject it. To him the truths appear to be assertions set up without proof. But an anthroposophic book is designed to be taken up in inner experience. Then by stages a form of understanding comes about. This may be very weak. But it may-and should-be there. The further deepening confirmation through exercises described in \*Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment\* is simply a deepening confirmation. For progress on the spiritual road this is necessary; but a rightly understood anthroposophic book should be an awakener of the spiritual experience in the reader, not a certain quantity of information imparted. The reading of it should not be a mere reading; it should be an experiencing with inner commotions, tensions, and releasings.

I am aware how far removed is that which I have given in books from sufficing by its own forces to bring about such an experience in the mind of the reader. But I know also that in every page my inner endeavour has been to reach the utmost possible in this direction. I do not, as regards style, so describe that my subjective feelings can be detected in the sentences. In writing, I subdue to a dry, mathematical style what has come from warm and profound experience. But only such

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a style can be an awakener; for the reader must cause warmth and experience to awaken in himself. He cannot simply allow these to flow into him from the one setting forth the truth, while the clarity of his own mind remains obscured.

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IN the Theosophical Society artistic interests were scarcely fostered at all. From a certain point of view this situation was at that time quite intelligible, but it ought not to have continued if the true sense for the spiritual was to be nurtured. The members of such a society centre all their interests at first upon the reality of the spiritual life. In the sense-world man appears to them only in his transitory existence severed from the spiritual. Art seems to them to have its activity within this severed existence. It seems, therefore, to be apart from the spiritual reality for which they seek. Because this was so in the Theosophical Society, artists did not feel at home there.

To Marie von Sievers and to me it was important to make the artistic also alive within the Society. Spiritual knowledge as an experience takes hold, indeed, of the whole human existence. All the forces of the soul are stimulated. In formative fantasy there shines the light of the experience of spirit when this experience is present.

But here there enters something which creates hindrances. The artist's temperament feels a certain misgiving in regard to this shining in of the spiritual world in fantasy. He desires unconsciousness in regard to the dominance of the spiritual world in the soul. He is entirely right if what we are concerned with is the " stimulation " of fantasy by means of that element of clear-consciousness

which has been dominant in the life of culture since the beginning of the age of consciousness. This "stimulating" by the intellectual in man has a deadly effect upon art.

But just the opposite occurs when spiritual content which is actually perceived shines through fantasy. It is here that all the formative force in man arises which has ever led to art.

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Marie von Sievers had her place in the art of word-shaping; to dramatic representation she had the most beautiful relationship. Here, then, was a sphere of art for anthroposophy in which the fruitfulness of spiritual perception for art might be tested.

The "word" is the product of two aspects of the experience which may come from the evolution of the consciousness soul. It serves for mutual understanding in social life, and it serves for imparting that which is logically and intellectually known. On both these sides the "word" loses its own value. It must fit the "sense" which it is to express. It must allow the fact to be forgotten that in the tone, in the sound, in the formation of the sound, there lies a reality. Beauty, the shining of the vowels, the characteristics of the consonants are lost from speech. The vowels become soulless, the consonants void of spirit. And so speech leaves entirely the sphere in which it originates—the sphere of the spiritual. It becomes the servant of intellectual knowledge and of the social life which shuns the spiritual. Thus it is snatched wholly out of the sphere of art.

True spiritual perception falls as if wholly from instinct into the "experience of the word." It becomes experience in the soul-representing intoning of the vowels and the spiritually empowered colours of the consonants. It attains to an understanding of the secret of the evolution of speech. This secret consists in the fact that divine spiritual beings could once speak to the human soul by means of the word, whereas now the word serves only to make oneself understood in the physical word.

An enthusiasm kindled by this insight is required to lead the word again into its sphere. Marie von Sievers developed this enthusiasm. So her personality brought to the Anthroposophical Movement the possibility of fostering artistically the word and word-shaping. The cultivation of the art of recitation and declamation grew to be an activity by means of which to impart truth from the spiritual world—an activity which forms a part receiving more and more consideration in the ceremonies which found a place within the Anthroposophical Society,

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The recitations of Marie von Sievers at these ceremonies were the initial point for the entrance of the artistic into the Anthroposophical Society; for a direct line leads from these recitations to the dramatic representations which then took place in Munich along with the course of lectures on anthroposophy.

By reason of the fact that we were able to unfold art along with spiritual knowledge, we grew more and more into the truth of the modern experience of the spirit. Art has indeed grown out of the primeval dreamlike experience of spirit. At the time in human evolution when the experience of spirit receded, art had to seek a way for itself; it must again find itself united with this experience when this enters in a new form into the evolution of culture.

THE beginning of my anthroposophic activity belongs to a time when there was a sense of dissatisfaction among many persons with the tendencies in knowledge characterizing the immediately preceding period. There was a desire to find a way out of that realm of being in which men were shut up by reason of the fact that only what was grasped by means of mechanistic ideas was allowed to pass as " sure " knowledge. These endeavours of many contemporaries toward a form of spiritual knowledge came very close to me. Biologists such as Oskar Hertwig-who began as a student under Haeckel but had then abandoned Darwinism because, according to his opinion, the impulse which this theory recognized could give no explanation of the organic process of becoming-were to me personalities in whom was revealed the longing of the age for knowledge.

But I felt that a heavy burden rested upon all this longing. This burden was the ripe fruit of the belief that only what can be investigated in the realm of the senses by means of mass, number, and weight can be recognized as knowledge. Man dared not unfold an active inner process of thought in order thereby to live in closer contact with reality as one experiences reality through the senses. Thus the situation continued to be such that men said: " With the means which have been used hitherto in interpreting even the higher forms of reality, such as the organic, we can advance no further." But when men ought to have reached something positive, when they ought to have said what is at work in the activities of life, they moved about in indeterminate ideas.

In those who were attempting to escape from the mechanistic explanation of the world there was chiefly lacking the courage to admit that whoever wished to overcome that mechanism

must also overcome the habits of thought which have led to it. Such a confession as the time needed would not come forth. This should have been the confession:-With one's orientation towards the senses one penetrates into what is mechanistic. In the second half of the century men had accustomed themselves to this orientation. Now that the mechanistic leaves men unsatisfied they should not desire to penetrate into the higher realms with the same orientation. The senses in man are self-unfolding, but the unfolding which the senses undergo will never enable one to perceive anything save the mechanistic. If one wishes to know more, then out of oneself one must give to the deeper-lying forces of knowledge a form which nature gives to the forces of the senses. The forces of knowledge for the mechanistic are in themselves awake; those for the higher forms of reality must be awakened. This self-confession on the part of the endeavour to attain knowledge appeared to me to be a necessity of the time.

I felt happy when I became aware of spokesmen for this. So there lives in beautiful memory within me a visit in Jena. I had to deliver lectures in Weimar on anthroposophical themes. There was also arranged a lecture to a smaller group in Jena. After this I happened to be with a very little group. There was a desire to discuss what theosophy had to say. In this group was Max Scheler, who was at that time a \*dozent\* in philosophy in Jena. In a verbal statement of what he had felt in my lecture he soon began our discussion; and I felt at once the profound characteristic which dominated in his striving after knowledge. It was with inner tolerance that he met my view,-the very tolerance which is necessary for one who desires really to know.

We discussed the confirmation of spiritual knowledge on the basis of theories of cognition. We talked of the problem as to how the penetration into spiritual reality on the one side must be established on foundations of the theory of cognition, just as that into the sense-world must be on the other side.

Scheler's mode of thought made an agreeable impression upon me. Even till the present I have followed his way of

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1 Scholar.

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knowledge with the deepest interest. Inner satisfaction was always my feeling when I could again meet-very seldom, unfortunately-the man who at that time became so congenial to me.

Such experiences were important for me. Every time that these occurred there was an inner need to test anew the certainty of my own way of knowledge. And in these constantly recurring tests the forces were evolved which then embraced wider and wider spheres of spiritual existence. Two results had now come from my anthroposophic work: first my books published to the whole world, and secondly a great number of lectures which were at first to be considered as privately printed and to be sold only to members of the Theosophical (later the Anthroposophical) Society. These were really reports on the lectures more or less well made and which I, for lack of time, could not correct. It would have pleased me best if spoken words had remained spoken words. But the members wished the printed copies. So this came about. If I had then had time to correct the reports, the restriction " for members only " would not have been necessary. For more than a year now, this restriction has been allowed to lapse.

At this point in my life story it is necessary to say, first of all, how the two things-my published books and this privately printed matter-combine into that which I elaborated as anthroposophy.

Whoever wishes to trace my inner struggle and labour to set anthroposophy before the consciousness of the present age must do this on the basis of the writings published for general circulation. In these I explained myself in connection with all which is present in the striving of this age for knowledge. Here there was given what more and more took form for me in " spiritual perception," what became the structure of anthroposophy-in a form incomplete, to be sure, from many points of view.

Together with this purpose, however, of building up anthroposophy and thereby serving only that which results when one has information from the world of spirit to give to the modern culture world, there now appeared the other

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demand-to face fully whatever was manifested in the membership as the need of their souls or their longing for the spirit.

Most of all was there a strong inclination to hear the Gospels and the biblical writings generally set forth in that which had appeared as the anthroposophic light. Persons wished to attend courses of lectures on these revelations given to mankind.

While internal courses of lectures were held in the sense then required, something else arose in consequence. Only members attended these courses. These were acquainted with the elementary information coming from anthroposophy. It was possible to speak to them as to persons advanced in the realm of anthroposophy. The manner of these internal lectures was such as it would not have been in writings intended wholly for the public. In internal groups I dared to speak about things in a manner which I should have been obliged to shape quite differently for a public presentation if from the first these things had been designed for such an audience.

Thus in the two things, the public and the private writings, there was really something derived from two different bases. All the public writings are the result of what struggled and laboured within me; in the privately printed matter the Society itself shares in the struggle and labour. I hear of the strivings in the soul-life of the membership, and through my vital living within what I thus hear the bearing of the course is determined. Nothing has ever been said which was not to the utmost degree an actual result of the developing anthroposophy. There can be no discussion of any concession whatever to preconceptions or to previous experiences of the members. Whoever reads this privately printed material can take it in the fullest sense as that which anthroposophy has to say. Therefore it was possible without hesitation-when accusations became too insistent in this direction-to depart from the plan of circulating this printed matter among the members alone. Only it will be necessary to remember there are errors in the lectures which I did not revise.

The right to an opinion in regard to the content of such privately printed material can naturally be admitted only in the case of one who knows what is taken as the pre-requisite

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basis of this judgment. For most of those pamphlets such a pre-requisite will be at least the anthroposophic knowledge of man and of the cosmos, in so far as its nature is set forth in anthroposophy, and of that which is found in this information as " anthroposophic history " as it is taken from the spiritual world.

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A CERTAIN institution which arose within the Anthroposophical Society in such a way that there was never any thought of the public in connection with it does not really belong to the chapters of this exposition. Only it has to be described for the reason that attacks made upon me have been based upon material derived from this.

Some years after the beginning of the activity in the Theosophical Society, Marie von Sievers and I were entrusted by certain persons with the leadership of a society similar to others which have been maintained in preservation of the ancient symbolism and cultural ceremonies that embody the " ancient wisdom." I never thought in the remotest degree of working in the spirit of such a society. Everything anthroposophic should and must spring from its own sources of knowledge and truth.

There should not be the slightest deviation from this standard. But I had always felt a respect for what was historically given. In this lives the spirit which evolves in the human process of becoming. And so wherever possible I also favoured the linking of the newly given to the historically existent. I therefore took the diploma of the society referred to, which belonged to the stream represented by Yarker. It had the forms of Free Masonry of the so-called high degrees; but I took nothing else-absolutely nothing-from this society except the merely formal authorization, in historic succession, to direct a symbolic-cultural activity.

Everything set forth in content in the " ceremonies " which were employed in the institution were without historic dependence upon any tradition whatever. In the formal granting of the diploma only that was fostered which resulted in the symbolizing of anthroposophic knowledge.

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And our purpose in this matter was to meet the needs of the members. In elaborating the ideas in which the knowledge of spirit is given in a veiled form, the effort is made to arrive at something which speaks directly to perception, to the heart; and such purposes I wished to serve. If the invitation from the society in question had not come to me, I should have undertaken the direction of a symbolic-cultural activity without any historic connection.

But this did not create a " secret society." Whoever entered into this practice was told in the clearest possible manner that he was not dealing with any " order," but that as participant in ceremonial forms he would experience a sort of visualization, demonstration of spiritual knowledge. If anything took on the forms in which the members of traditional orders had been inducted or promoted to higher degrees, this did not signify that such an order was being founded but only that the spiritual ascent in the soul's experience was rendered visible to the senses in pictures.

The fact that this had nothing to do with the activity of any existing order or the mediation of things which are mediated in such orders is proved by the fact that members of the most various types of orders participated in the ceremonial exercises which I conducted and found in these something quite different from what existed in their own orders.

Once a person who had participated with us for the first time in a ceremonial came to me immediately afterward. This person had reached a very high degree in an order. Under the influence of the experience now shared, the wish had arisen to hand over to me the insignia of the order. The feeling was that, after having once experienced real spiritual content, one could no longer share in that which remained fixed in mere formalism. I put the matter right; for anthroposophy dare not draw any person out of the association in which he stands. It ought to add something to that association and take away nothing from it. So this person remained in the order, yet continued to participate further with us in the symbolic exercises.

It is only too easily understood that, when such an institution as the one here described becomes known, misunderstandings

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arise. There are, indeed, many persons to whom the externality of belonging to something seems more important than the content which is given to them. And so even many of the participants

spoke of the thing as if they belonged to an "order." They did not understand how to make the distinction that things were demonstrated among us without the environment of an order which otherwise are given only within the environment of an order.

Even in this sphere we broke with the ancient traditions. Our work was carried on as work must be carried on if one investigates in spiritual-content in an original manner according to the requirements of full clarity in the mind's experience. The fact that the starting-point for all sorts of slanders was found in certain attestations which Marie von Sievers and I signed in linking up with the historic Yarker institution means that, in order to concoct such slanders, people treated the absurd with the grimace of the serious. Our signatures were given as a "form." The customary thing was thus preserved. And while we were giving our signatures, I said as clearly as possible: "This is all a formality, and the practice which I shall institute will take over nothing from the Yarker practice."

It is obviously easy to make the observation afterwards that it would have been far more "discreet" not to link up with practices which could later be used by slanderers. But I would remark with all positiveness that, at the period of my life here under consideration, I was still one of those who assume uprightness, and not crooked ways, in the people with whom they have to do. Even spiritual perception did not alter at all this faith in men. This must not be misused for the purpose of investigating the intentions of one's fellow-men when this investigation is not desired by the man in question himself. In other cases the investigation of the inner nature of other souls remains a thing forbidden to the knower of the spirit; just as the unauthorized opening of a letter is something forbidden. And so one is related to men with whom one has to do in the same way as is any other person who has no knowledge of the spirit. But there is just this alternative--either to assume that others are

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straight-forward in their intentions until one has experienced the opposite, or else to be filled with sorrow as one views the entire world. A social co-operation with men is impossible for the latter mood, for such co-operation can be based only upon trust and not upon distrust.

This practice which gave in a cult-symbolism a content which is spiritual was a good thing for many who participated in the Anthroposophical Society. Since in this, as in every sphere of anthroposophical work, everything was excluded which lies outside the region of clear consciousness, so there could be no thought of unconfirmed magic, or suggestive influences, and the like. But the members obtained that which, on the one hand, spoke to their ideal conceptions and yet in such a way that the heart could accompany this in direct perception. For many this was something which also guided them again into the better shaping of their ideas. With the beginning of the War it ceased to be possible to continue the carrying on of such practices. In spite of the fact that there was nothing of the nature of a secret society in this, it would have been taken for such. And so this symbolic-cultural section of the anthroposophical movement came to an end in the middle of 1914.

The fact that persons who had taken part in this practice- absolutely unobjectionable to anyone who looked upon it with a good will and a sense for truth-became slanderous accusers is an instance of that abnormality in human conduct which arises when men who are not inwardly genuine share in movements whose content is genuinely spiritual. They expect things corresponding with their



trivial soul life; and, since they naturally do not find such things, they turn against the very practice to which they previously turned-though with unconscious insincerity.

Such a society as the Anthroposophical could not be formed otherwise than according to the soul-needs of its members. It could not lay down an abstract programme which required that in the Anthroposophical Society this and that should be done. The programme had to be elaborated out of reality. But this very reality is the soul-need of its members. Anthroposophy as a content of life was formed out of its own

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sources. It had appeared before the world as a spiritual creation, and many who were drawn to it by an inner attraction tried to work together with others. Thus it came about that the Society was the formation of persons of whom some sought the religious, others rather the scientific, and others the artistic. And it was necessary that what was sought should be found.

Because of this working out from the reality of the needs of the members, the private printed matter must be judged differently from that given to the public from the beginning. The content of this printed matter was intended as oral, not printed, information. The subjects discussed were determined by the soul-needs of the members as these needs appeared with the passage of time.

What is contained in the published writings is adapted to the furtherance of anthroposophy as such; in the manner in which the private printed matter evolved, the configuration of soul of the whole Society has co-operated.

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WHILE anthroposophic knowledge was brought into the Society in the way that results in part from the privately printed matter, Marie von Sievers and I through our united efforts fostered the artistic element especially, which was indeed destined by fate to become a life-giving part of the Anthroposophical Movement.

On one side there was the element of recitation, looking toward dramatic art, and constituting the objective of the work that must be done if the Anthroposophical Movement was to receive the right content.

On the other hand, I had the opportunity, during the journeys that had to be made on behalf of anthroposophy, to go more deeply into the evolution of architecture, the plastic arts, and painting.

In various passages of this life-story I have spoken of the importance of art to a person who enters in experience into the spiritual world.

But up to the time of my anthroposophic work I had been able to study most of the works of human art only in copies. Of the originals only those in Vienna, Berlin, and a few other places in Germany had been accessible to me.

When the journeys on behalf of anthroposophy were made, together with Marie von Sievers, I came face to face with the treasures of the museums throughout the whole of Europe. In this way I

pursued an advanced course in the study of art from the beginning of the century and therefore during the fifth decade of my life, and together with this I had a perception of the spiritual evolution of humanity. Everywhere by my side was Marie von Sievers, who, while entering with her fine and full appreciation into all that I was privileged to experience of perception in art and culture, also shared and

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supplemented all this experience in a beautiful way. She understood how these experiences flowed into all that gave movement to the ideas of anthroposophy; for all the impressions of art which became an experience of my soul penetrated into what I had to make effective in lectures. In the actual seeing of the masterpieces of art there came before our minds the world out of which another configuration of soul speaks from the ancient times to the new age. We were able to submerge our souls in the spirituality of art which still speaks from Cimabue. But we could also plunge through the perception of art into the spiritual battle which Thomas Aquinas waged against Arabianism.

Of special importance for me was the observation of the evolution of architecture. In the silent vision of the shaping of styles there grew in my soul that which I was able to stamp upon the forms of the Goetheanum.

Standing before Leonardo's \*Last Supper\* in Milan and before the creations of Raphael and Michelangelo in Rome, and the subsequent conversations with Marie von Sievers, must, I think, be felt with gratitude to have been the dispensation of destiny just then when these came before my soul for the first time at a mature age. But I should have to write a volume of considerable size if I should wish to describe even briefly what I experienced in the manner indicated.

Even when the spiritual perception remains in abeyance, one sees very far into the evolution of humanity through the gaze which loses itself in reflection in the \*School of Athens\* or the \*Disputa\*. And if one advances from the observation of Cimabue to Giotto and to Raphael, one is in the presence of the gradual dimming of an ancient spiritual perception of humanity down to the modern, more naturalistic. That which came to me through spiritual perception as the law of human evolution appeared in clear revelation before my mind in the process of art.

I had always the deepest satisfaction when I could see how the anthroposophical movement received ever renewed life through this prolonged submergence in the artistic. In order

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to comprehend the elements of being in the spiritual world and to shape these as ideas, one requires mobility in ideal activity. Filling the mind with the artistic gives this mobility.

And it was necessary constantly to guard the Society against the entrance of all those inner untruths associated with false sentimentality. A spiritual movement is always exposed to these perils. If one gives life to the informative lectures by means of those mobile ideas which one derives from living in the artistic, then the inner untruths derived from sentimentality which remain fixed in the hearers will be expelled. The artistic which is truly charged with experience and emotion, but which strives toward luminous clarity in shaping and in perception, can afford the most effective counterpoise against false sentimentality.

And here I feel that it has been a peculiarly fortunate destiny for the Anthroposophical Society that I received in Marie von Sievers a fellow-worker assigned by destiny who understood fully how to nourish from the depths of her nature this artistic, emotionally charged, but unsentimental element.

A lasting activity was needed against this inwardly untrue sentimental element; for it penetrates again and again into a spiritual movement. It can by no means be simply repulsed or ignored. For persons who at first yield themselves to this element are in many cases none the less seekers in the utmost depths of their souls. But it is at first hard for them to gain a firm relation to the information imparted from the spiritual world. They seek unconsciously in sentimentality a form of deafness. They wish to experience quite special truths, esoteric truths. They develop an impulse to separate themselves on the basis of these truths into sectarian groups.

The important thing is to make the right the sole directive force of the Society, so that those erring on one side or the other may always see again and again how those work who may call themselves the central representatives of the Society because they are its founders. Positive work for the content of anthroposophy, not opposition against outgrowths which appeared-this was what Marie von Sievers and I accepted as the essential thing. Naturally there were exceptional cases when opposition was also necessary.

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At first the time up to my Paris cycle of lectures was to me something in the form of a closed evolutionary process within the soul. I delivered these lectures in 1906 during the theosophical congress. Individual participants in the congress had expressed the wish to hear these lectures in connection with the exercises of the congress. I had at that time in Paris made the personal acquaintance of Edouard Schur , together with Marie von Sievers, who had already corresponded with him for a long time, and who had been engaged in translating his works. He was among my listeners. I had also the joy of having frequently in the audience Mereschkowski and Minsky and other Russian poets.

In this cycle of lectures I gave what I felt to be ripe within me in regard to the leading forms of spiritual knowledge for the human being.

This " feeling for the ripeness " of forms of knowledge is an essential thing in investigating the spiritual world. In order to have this feeling one must have experienced a perception as it rises at first in the mind. At first one feels it as something non-luminous, as lacking sharpness of contour. One must let it sink again into the depths of the soul to " ripen." Consciousness has not yet gone far enough to grasp the spiritual content of the perception. The soul in its spiritual depths must remain together with this content, undisturbed by consciousness.

In external natural science one does not assert knowledge until one has completed all necessary experiments and observations, and until the requisite calculations are free from bias. In spiritual science is needed no less methodical conscientiousness and disciplined knowledge. Only one goes by somewhat different roads. One must test one's consciousness in its relationship to the truth that is coming to be known. One must be able to " wait " in patience, endurance, and conscientiousness until the consciousness has undergone this testing. It must have grown to be strong enough in its capacity for ideas in a certain sphere for this capacity for concepts to take over the perception with

which it has to deal. In the Paris cycle of lectures I brought forward a perception which had required a long process of " ripening " in my mind.

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After I had explained how the members of the human being -physical body; etheric body, as mediator of the phenomena of life; and the " bearer of the ego "-are in general related to one another, I imparted the fact that the etheric body of a man is female, and the etheric body of a woman is male. Through this a light was cast within the Anthroposophical Society upon one of the basic questions of existence which just at that time had been much discussed. One need only remember the book of the unfortunate Weininger, \*Geschlecht und Charakter\*(1), and the contemporary poetry.

But the question was carried into the depths of the being of man. In his physical body man is bound up with the cosmos quite otherwise than in his etheric body. Through his physical body man stands within the forces of the earth; through his etheric body within the forces of the outer cosmos. The male and female elements were carried into connection with the mysteries of the cosmos.

This knowledge was something belonging to the most profoundly moving inner experiences of my soul; for I felt ever anew how one must approach a spiritual perception by patient waiting and how, when one has experienced the " ripeness of consciousness," one must lay hold by means of ideas in order to place the perception within the sphere of human knowledge.

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1 Sex and Character.

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IN what is to follow it will be difficult to distinguish between the story of my life and a history of the Anthroposophical Society. And yet I should wish to introduce from the history of the Society only so much as is needed for the narration of the story of my life. This will be considered even in mentioning the names of active members of the Society. I have come too close to the present time to avoid all too easy misunderstandings through the mention of names. In spite of entire good will, many a one who finds some other mentioned and not himself may experience a feeling of bitterness. I shall mention in essential matters only those who, apart from their activity in the Society, had an association with my spiritual life, and not those who have not brought such a connection with them into the Society. In Berlin and Munich there were destined to develop to a certain extent the two opposite poles of anthroposophical activity. There came into anthroposophy, indeed, persons who found neither in the scientific world-conception nor in the traditional sects that spiritual content for which their souls had to seek. In Berlin a branch of the Society and an audience for the public lectures could be formed only of such persons as were opposed to all those philosophies which had come about in opposition to the traditional creeds; for the adherents of philosophies based upon rationalism, intellectualism, etc., considered what anthroposophy had to give as something fantastic, superstitions, etc. An audience and a membership arose which took in anthroposophy without tending in feeling or ideas to anything else than this. What had been given them from other sources did not satisfy them. Consideration had to be given to this temper of mind. And, as this was done, the number of members steadily increased

as well as the number of those attending the public lectures. There came about an anthroposophic life which was, to a certain extent, self-enclosed and gave little attention to what else was taking form by way of endeavours to see into the spiritual world. Their hopes rested upon the unfolding of anthroposophic information imparted to them. They expected to go further and further in knowledge of the spiritual world.

It was different in Munich, where at the beginning there was effective in the anthroposophic work the artistic element. In this a world-conception like that of anthroposophy can be taken up quite otherwise than in rationalism and intellectualism. The artistic image is more spirit-like than the rationalist concept. It is also alive and does not kill the spiritual in the soul as does intellectualism. In Munich those who gave tone to the membership and audience were persons in whom artistic experience was effective in the way indicated.

This condition resulted in the formation of a unified branch of the Society in Berlin from the beginning. The interests of those who sought anthroposophy were of the same kind. In Munich the artistic experiences brought about certain individual needs in different groups, and I lectured to those groups. A sort of compromise among these groups came to be the group formed about Countess Pauline von Kalckreuth and Fraulein Sophie Stinde, the latter of whom died during the war. This group also arranged for my public lectures in Munich. The ever-deepening understanding in this group brought about a very beautiful response to what I had to say. So anthroposophy unfolded within this group in a manner which can truly be designated as very satisfying. Ludwig Deinhard, the old theosophist, the friend of Hÿbbe-Schleiden, came very early as a very congenial member into this group, and this was worth a great deal.

The centre of another group was Frau von Schewitsch. She was an interesting person, and for this reason it was well that a group formed around her also which was less concerned in going deeply into anthroposophy than in becoming acquainted with it as one of the spiritual currents among those of the period.

At that time also Frau von Schewitsch had given to the public her book *\*Wie ich mein Selbst fand\**(1). It was an unique and strong confession of theosophy. This also made it possible for this woman to become the interesting central figure of the group here described. To me and also to many who formed part of this group, Helene von Schewitsch was a notable part of history. She was the lady for whom Ferdinand Lassalle came to an early end in a duel with a Rumanian. She was afterwards an actress, and on a journey to America she became a friend of H. P. Blavatsky and Olcott. She was a woman of the world whose interests at the time when I made these lectures at her home had been deeply spiritualized. The impressive experiences through which she had passed gave to her appearance and to everything she did an extraordinary weight. Through her, I might say, I could see into the work of Lassalle and his period; through her also many a characteristic of H. P. Blavatsky. What she said bore a subjective colouring, and a manifold and arbitrary form of fantasy; yet, after allowing for this, one could see the truth under many veils, and one was faced by the revelation of an unusual personality.

Other groups at Munich possessed different characteristics. I recall a person whom I met in several of these groups—a Catholic cleric, Mÿller, who stood apart from the narrow limits of the Church. He was a discriminating student of Jean Paul. He edited a really stimulating periodical, \*Renaissance\*, through which he fostered a free Catholicism. He took from anthroposophy as much as was interesting to him from his point of view, but remained always sceptical. He raised objections, but always in such an amiable and at the same time elementary fashion that he often brought a delightful humour into the discussions which followed the lectures.

In pointing out these as the opposing characteristics of the anthroposophic work in Berlin and in Munich, I have nothing to say as to the value of the one or the other; here there simply came to view differences among persons which had to be taken into account, both of equal worth—or at least

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1 How I Found My Self.

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it is futile to judge them from the point of view of their relative values.

The form of the work at Munich brought it about that the theosophical congress of 1907, which was to be set up by the German Section, was held there. These congresses, which had previously been held in London, Amsterdam, and Paris, consisted of sessions in which theosophical problems were dealt with in lectures and discussions. They were planned on the model of the congresses of learned societies. The administrative problems of the Society were also discussed.

In all this very much was changed at Munich. In the great Concert Hall where the ceremonies were to take place, we—the committee of arrangements—provided interior decorations which in form and colour should correspond artistically with the mood that dominated the oral programme. Artistic environment and spiritual activity were to constitute a harmonious unity. I attached the greatest possible value to the avoidance of abstract inartistic symbolism and to giving free expression to artistic feeling.

Into the programme of the congress was introduced an artistic representation. Marie von Sievers had long before translated Schur's reconstruction of the Eleusinian drama. I planned the speeches for a presentation of this. This play was then introduced into the programme. A connection with the nature of the ancient mysteries—even though in so feeble a form—was thus afforded; but the important thing was that the congress had now an artistic aspect,—an artistic element directed toward the purpose of not leaving the spiritual life henceforth void of art within the Society. Marie von Sievers, who had undertaken the role of Demeter, showed already in her presentation the nuances which drama was to reach in the Society. Besides, we had reached a time when the art of declamation and recitation developed by Marie von Sievers by working out from the inner force of the word had arrived at the most varied points from which further fruitful progress could be made in this field.

A great portion of the old members of the Theosophical Society from England, France, and especially from Holland,

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were inwardly displeased by the innovations offered them at the Munich congress. What it would have been well to understand, but what was clearly grasped at that time by exceedingly few, was the fact that the anthroposophic current had given something of an entirely different bearing from that of the Theosophical Society up to that time. In this inner bearing lay the true reason why the Anthroposophical Society could no longer exist as a part of the Theosophical Society. Most persons, however, place the chief emphasis upon the absurdities which in the course of time have grown up in the Theosophical Society and have led to endless quarrelling.

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## CONCLUSION BY MARIE STEINER

HERE the life-story abruptly ends. On 30th March, 1925 Rudolf Steiner passed away.

His life, consecrated wholly to the sacrificial service of humanity, was requited with unspeakable hostility; his way of knowledge was transformed into a path of thorns. But he walked the whole way, and mastered it for all humanity. He broke through the limits of knowledge; they are no longer there. Before us lies this road of knowledge in the crystal clarity of thoughts of which this book itself constitutes an example. He raised human understanding up to the spirit; permeated this understanding and united it with the spiritual being of the cosmos. In this he achieved the greatest human deed. The greatest deed of the Gods he taught us to understand; the greatest human deed he achieved. How could he escape being hated with all the demonic power of which Hell is capable ?

But he repaid with love the misunderstanding brought against him.

He died-a Sufferer, a Leader, an Achiever  
In such a world as trod him under foot  
Yet which to raise aloft his strength sufficed.  
He lifted men; they cast themselves before him,  
They hissed with hate and blocked his forward way.  
His work they shattered even as he wrought it.  
They raged with venom and with flame;  
And now with joy they brand his memory:-  
So he is dead who led you into freedom,  
To light, to consciousness, to comprehension  
Of what is Godlike in a human soul  
To your own selves, to Christ.  
Was this not criminal, this undertaking ?

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He did what once Prometheus expiated  
What gave to Socrates the poisoned cup-  
The pardoning of Barabbas was less vile-  
A deed whose expiation is the cross.  
He made the future live before you there.

We demons cannot suffer such a thing.  
We harry, hunt, pursue who dares such deeds  
With all those souls who give themselves to us,  
With all those forces which obey our will.  
For ours are the turning-points of time  
And ours this humanity which lies,  
Without their God, in weakness, vice, and error.  
We never yield the booty we have won,  
But tear to pieces him who dares to touch it.

" He dared-and, daring, he endured his fate-  
In love, long suffering, and tolerance  
Of weak, incapable humanity  
Which ever all his work in peril set,  
Which ever wrenched his word' awry,  
Which misinterpreted his kind forbearance,  
And in their smallness did not know themselves  
Because his greatness was beyond their compass.  
'Twas thus he bore us-we were out of breath  
In following his stride, his very flight  
Which ravished us away. 'Twas our weakness  
That was the hindrance ever to his flight,  
The lead that weighed his footsteps down...

Now he is free, a helper to those high ones  
Who take whatever hath been wrung from earth  
As safeguard of their goal. So now they greet  
The son of man who his creative power  
Unfolded thus to serve the Gods' high will;  
Who to the age of hardened understanding  
And to the time of dead machinery  
Stamped clear the Spirit, called the Spirit forth...

They would not suffer him.  
The earth rolls into shadows.  
Behold those forms which now appear in space.  
The Leader waits; the heavens part and open;  
In joy and reverence stand the rangŽd hosts.

But earth is wrapped in grey enshrouding night,

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Springing from Powers of the Sun,  
Radiant Spirit-powers blessing all Worlds !  
For Michael's garment of rays  
Ye are predestined by Thought Divine.

He, the Christ-messenger revealeth in you-



Bearing mankind aloft-the sacred Will of Worlds.  
Ye, the radiant Beings of Aether-Worlds,  
Bear the Christ-Word to Man.

Thus shall the Herald of Christ appear  
To the thirstily waiting souls,  
To whom your Word of Light shines forth  
In cosmic age of Spirit-Man.

Ye, the disciples of Spirit-Knowledge  
Take Michael's Wisdom-beckoning,  
Take the Word of Love of the Will of Worlds  
Into your soul's aspiring a c t i v e I y !

--| Editorial Additions Not In Original Text |-----

From Rudolf Steiner's last published communication:

In the age of natural science, since about the middle of the nineteenth century, the civilized activities of mankind are gradually sliding downward, not only into the lowest regions of nature, but even beneath nature. Technical science and industry become sub-nature.

This makes it urgent for man to find in conscious experience a knowledge of the spirit, wherein he will rise as high above nature as in his sub-natural technical activities he sinks beneath her. He will thus create within him the inner strength not to go under.

--| EOF |---